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## Iranian officials: Kurdistan referendum is Israeli plot

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — On Tuesday, a number of top ranking Iranian political and military figures voiced strong opposition to the independence referendum in the Iraqi Kurdistan region, calling it an Israeli plot and warned about its consequences.

Iraq’s semi-autonomous Kurdistan Re-

gion held independence referendum on Monday. Kurdistan’s President Masoud Barzani turned a cold shoulder to international calls against the referendum.

Ali Akbar Velayati, a top advisor to the Supreme Leader, said “political chaos” in the Middle East would be one of the consequences of the referendum. **→2**

## Iran studying on nuclear-powered vessels: Navy chief

**POLITICS TEHRAN** — Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, the commander of the Iranian Navy, announced on Tuesday that researchers are studying on nuclear-fueled engines for submarines, warships and destroyers to make them needless of refueling in long voyages in international waters.

In December 2016 President Hassan Rouhani ordered the Atomic Ener-

gy Organization of Iran (AEOI) to start developing systems for nuclear-powered marine vessels.

Rouhani made the order in a letter to AEOI chief Ali Akbar Salehi. At the time Rouhani also said, “I have called on Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Yukiya Amano to technically help Iran devise the nuclear propulsion system.” **→2**

## European ambassadors to U.S. strongly support JCPOA

**TEHRAN** — The ambassadors from Britain, France, Germany and the European Union to the United States have expressed their countries’ strong support for a landmark international nuclear agreement Iran clinched with the P5+1 group of countries more than two years ago.

“We agree that the demise of this agreement would be a major loss,”

David O’Sullivan, the European Union’s envoy in Washington, said at an Atlantic Council panel discussion on Monday, Press TV reported.

The nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was reached between Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council - the United States, **→2**



**PERSPECTIVE**  
**Mahmood Monshipouri**  
University of California  
professor

## The Kurdish referendum: What comes next?

The underlying tension in many post-colonial states between the right to self-determination and the principle of territorial integrity is once again manifested in the new move by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to go from autonomy to outright independence. The same can be said about the October 1, 2017, Catalonia’s vote on independence from Spain. There is a need to find appropriate mechanisms that could peacefully and justly marry these two rights: the state rights to sovereignty and territorial integrity on the one hand and the rights of domestic ethnic groups to autonomy and self-determination on the other.

Although the Kurdish referendum in the KRG is not equivalent of a declaration of independence—at least its results are not legally binding—it is a move to alter the balance of power on the ground between Irbil—the capital of KRG—and the central government in the capital, Baghdad. Far from establishing a legal recourse to change the borders of the country, the vote is nevertheless more than symbolic. It is bound to undermine the Iraqi central government’s efforts to exercise full sovereignty and control over the country.

Given that the referendum is being held prior to the April 2018 Iraqi national elections, the Kurds seem determined to change the balance of power in the nation’s national politics. The divisions within the Kurds in northern Iraq is likely to complicate—if not disrupt entirely— governance in Iraq in the coming months and years. While the decision is supported by Barzani’s Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), it is only conditionally espoused by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). Other parties, like Gorran and the Kurdistan Islamic Group, seem to be against the way the vote is cast—absent the Kurdistan Parliament that has been inactive for virtually past two years. Reportedly, the opposing parties would like to see that the vote is coordinated through a new Kurdistan Parliament. **→13**

## ‘Tourism brings hope, prosperity and understanding’

**TOURISM TEHRAN** — Tourism brings hope, prosperity and understanding to so many lives and livelihoods all over the world, says secretary general of the World Tourism Organization.

“Tourism is today the third largest export industry in the world after chemicals and fuels,” Taleb Rifai said on Tuesday in a video message to the opening ceremony of an event held in Tehran to mark World Tourism Day, September 27.

“Last year alone, 1.235 million travelers crossed international borders in one single year. By 2030, this 1.2 billion will become 1.8 billion,” Rifai added.

“The question, as we celebrate World Tourism Day 2017, is how we can enable this powerful global transformative force, these 1.8 billion opportunities, to contribute to make this world a better place and to advance sustainable development.”

Travel experts, tour guides, officials and diplomats attended the ceremony, explored avenues for expansion of travel and hospitality ties with an eye to capacities and facilities as well as issues and

problems the budding industry faces.

Iran’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization Director Asghar Mounesan reminded attendees of the goals of celebrating World Tourism Day. “The tourism industry, in addition to its economic role, has also great impacts on various countries and nations in social and cultural arenas,” he said.

“Tourism is today regarded as an effective instrument for public diplomacy between countries, and paves the way for cultural exchanges, bringing nations closer together and helping nations to better understand each other.”

Mounesan who also doubles as vice president added “The purpose of commemoration of this day is to introduce the tourism industry to all people. It is [even more] important in our country to change the attitude of the government, authorities and people towards the tourism industry.”

Last month, in a meaningful comparison as the country seeks to cut reliance on oil incomes, Mounesan said every single foreign tourist visiting Iran spends an average of

\$1,200, bringing in income as much as exporting 30 barrels of oil,

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

In 2016, over 5.5 million foreign travelers from the Middle East, the Americas, Europe and South and East Asia set foot in Iran, fetching close to \$8b in revenues.

Filled from corner to corner with ancient bazaars, museums, mosques, monuments, gardens and palaces set inside bustling cities, historical ruins and rich rural landscapes, the country is increasingly filled with camera-wielding Westerners seeking adventure, archeology and art.

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

The United Nations General Assembly has designated 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, underscoring its power to help eradicate poverty.

## 9 civilians killed in fresh U.S.-led strikes on Syria’s Hasakah

Russian Tupolev Tu-95 strategic bombers have fired a barrage of cruise missiles at the positions of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) Takfiri terrorist group in Syria’s northwestern province of Idlib and the eastern province of Dayr al-Zawr, inflicting heavy losses on the terrorists.

Separately, at least nine civilians have lost their lives when the United States-led coalition purportedly fighting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) Takfiri terrorist group conducted a series of aerial assaults on Syria’s northeastern province of Hasakah.

Local sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Syria’s official news agency SANA that the airstrikes targeted the town of Markada, located nearly 100 kilometers south of the provincial capital city of Hasakah, on Tuesday. **→13**

## Thespians perform tazieh in Tehran

Thespians from a troupe led by veteran actor of stage and screen Siavash Tahmoures perform a tazieh (Iranian passion play) about the tragedy of Ashura in the courtyard of the Revayate Fath Cultural Foundation in Tehran on September 25, 2017.

The troupe will perform the tazieh titled “Rakat by Rakat of Love” at the foundation located on the southern end of Qarani Street until October 1.

In the year 680 CE on Ashura, the tenth day of the lunar month of Muharram, Imam Hussein (AS) and a number of his loyal companions were martyred in battle against the oppressive Umayyad dynasty.



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## PERSPECTIVE

Staff Writer

## UAE does not need to demonize Iran if it wants to buy ‘beautiful’ arms

The UAE foreign minister on Friday claimed that Iran is violating both the “letter and spirit” of the 2015 nuclear deal.

“It (Iran) continues to develop its nuclear program and violates the letter and spirit of that agreement,” Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahayan told the UN General Assembly.

So far even President Donald Trump and his close aides who have voiced the strongest opposition to the nuclear deal have not said that Iran has violated the letter of the nuclear deal. They have just wrongly argued that Iran has breached the spirit of the agreement.

Also through his remarks that Iran “continues to develop its nuclear program”, the UAE foreign minister proved that he has not even bothered to read the text of the nuclear deal, because according to the agreement - officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action - Iran just agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities and not stop them.

He also said there is “no sign of change” in what he called Iran’s “hostile behavior”.

There are certain reasons why Abdullah bin Zayed made such claims. Most probably the chief reason is that the United Arab Emirates, like his big brother Saudi Arabia, wants to buy more and more sophisticated weaponry from the United States. To justify spending more on weapons, which Donald Trump has called “beautiful arms”, the UAE may feel it needs to demonize Iran. **→13**

## Condolences

**Dear Mr. Hassan Lasjerdi**

Your colleagues and friends at the Tehran Times and Mehr News Agency would like to extend heartfelt and sincere condolences to you and your family on the sad demise of your beloved mother. May God bestow patience upon you and may her soul rest in peace!



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Fallen soldier's body arrives home

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — The body of Iranian soldier d e s k Mohsen Hojaji, who was beheaded by Daesh (ISIS) terrorists in Syria last month, was brought home late on Monday.

The airplane carrying Hojaji's body landed at Tehran's Mehrabad Airport at 20:30 on Monday night.

A number of high-ranking Iranian officials and IRGC commanders attended the event and paid tribute to the bravery of the fallen soldier.

The funeral ceremony for Hojaji will be held in Tehran on Wednesday morning at Imam Hossein Square. He will then be buried in his hometown, Najafabad, on Thursday.



MP: Iran won't forgive Riyadh for Mina tragedy

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Parliamentarian Hossein d e s k Naqavi Hosseini said on Tuesday that Iran will never forgive Saudi Arabia for the Mina tragedy in which thousands of pilgrims lost their lives in September 2015.

Naqavi Hosseini, who serves as a spokesman with the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said the incident is unforgettable and tragic because thousands of people lost their lives due to mismanagement during the Hajj ritual.

He also called on Riyadh to accept blame for the disaster and act responsibly.



Iran to ramp up nuclear enrichment if nuclear deal violated: top lawmaker

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Alaeddin Boroujerdi, chairman of the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, says if all sides of the nuclear deal decide to halt the implementation of the agreement, Iran will continue its enrichment program at a higher speed, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

In reference to the U.S. government's stance on the nuclear deal, Boroujerdi said the agreement was signed by several countries and endorsed by a UN Security Council resolution.

"So, the Americans have only isolated themselves by taking such positions," he added.



Iran sends more missile gear to western areas

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Iran has intensified d e s k activities along the western borders, deploying new missile equipment there, a commander in Iran's air defense forces said on Tuesday.

Second Brigadier General Alireza Elhami said additional missile equipment has been deployed to the western areas to strengthen the air defense coverage of the border regions, Tasnim reported.

The air defense has enhanced preparedness for "decisive response" to any act of aggression, he added.

The deployment of missiles coincides with the IRGC's military drills across the country's western borders.



High-ranking Turkish military team to visit Iran next week

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — Turkey's Chief of the d e s k General Staff of Armed Forces, Hulusi Akar, will visit Iran next week, the Iranian military announced on Tuesday.

General Akar, who will be accompanied by a high-ranking military delegation, will hold meetings with top Iranian authorities, Mehr reported.

Last month, Major General Mohammad Baqeri, the Iranian armed forces chief of staff, visited Ankara to exchange views with Turkish officials on security issues and campaign against terrorism in view of new developments in the region.



Iran, Turkey to boost anti-narcotics co-op

**POLITICS** **TEHRAN** — In a meeting on Tuesday, d e s k Iran's anti-narcotics police chief and Turkish officials highlighted the need for enhancement of cooperation between the two neighboring countries in fight against drug trafficking.

Brigadier General Mohammad Masoud Zahedian, who is in Ankara, exchanged views with Turkish anti-narcotic officials on the importance of sharing intelligence on smuggling networks and cooperating on conducting anti-narcotic operations, IRNA reported.

During his stay in Turkey, Zahedian is expected to meet Turkish anti-drugs and customs authorities and visit border areas.

# Iranian officials: Kurdistan referendum is Israeli plot



Ali Larijani



Amir Hatami



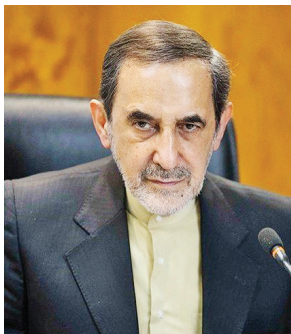
Mohammadi Golpayegani



Mohammad Hossein Baqeri



Yahya Rahim Safavi



Ali Akbar Velayati

**1 →** He also said, "The Kurds will definitely topple Barzani before the Iraqi government would do so."

Velayati noted that the U.S. and the Zionist regime of Israel are behind Barzani's decision.

Iran insists on the territorial integrity of regional countries including Iraq, Velayati noted. However, he called the referendum "insubstantial" with no "positive result".

**■ 'Iran will not accept partition of Iraq'**

Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani also said that Iran "will not accept" the partition of regional countries including Iraq and said Tehran will stand beside the Iraqi central government.

He added a separation of Kurdistan will cause new crisis in Iraq.

He said that disintegration of regional countries is an "Israeli policy" and would not meet the interests of any ethnic group.

**■ Iran against disintegration of regional countries: defense minister**

Defense Minister Amir Hatami also said Iran is against any move to disintegrate regional countries and change their geographical borders.

During a meeting with Turkish Ambassador to Tehran Riza Hakan Tekin, Hatami said it is Iran's principled policy to respect national sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries.

**■ 'Referendum is a plot intended to foment new crisis'**

Mohammadi Golpayegani, the chief of staff of the Supreme Leader's office, also said that the independence referendum in the Iraqi Kurdistan is a Zionist plot intended to foment new crisis after the end of the Daesh era in Iraq.

"You may be assured that it is a plot by the Zionist regime now that Daesh is collapsing and after (Quds Force chief) General Soleimani announced that we will soon celebrate the end of Daesh," Mohammadi remarked. "Now they have raised a new issue in the region."

He warned that "referendum and its related issues will cause many problems for the Kurds and the neighboring countries."

**■ Iranian general calls referendum 'Zionist plot'**

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri blamed the Zionist regime for orchestrating the independence referendum in the Iraqi Kurdistan.

The Zionist regime of Israel and the global arrogance are behind the referendum, he said.

Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi, a top military advisor to Leader of the Islamic Revolution, also called the referendum a new U.S.-Israeli plot in the region.

"After the defeat of Daesh in Syria and Iraq, Kurdistan's referendum will result in escalation of tension in the region."

## Psychoanalyst: Trump is 'depressed'

By Negar Asadi

**TEHRAN** — A prominent Iranian psychoanalyst says U.S. President Donald Trump is "dangerous" because he has a "lot of power" and is "depressed".

"A person who is depressed and deeply sad can easily use his power as an instrument in quasi-suicidal way," Modjtaba Sadria told Tehran Times in an interview on Tuesday.

He added, "Trump is not dangerous because he is crazy."

"When you look at him, you don't see expression of joy in that man. Of course you see the expression of arrogance, but you don't see the expression of joy. And that is the most dangerous aspect of Trump."

He added that a depressed person who has power can cause "bad damages".

"Understanding Trump requires understanding of three persons. One person is the one who sits in the Oval Office. Another is the person who has grown as a main capitalist in capitalism of the U.S., who is a manager of a business. The third person is a human being who has his own deformations, trauma and psychological problems," the expert stated.

Sadria said as a person who sits in the Oval Office, Trump cannot do whatever he likes.

"The U.S. is an advanced capitalistic society and interests



in that society are very well organized and there is a federal state there which is extremely articulated as a solid foundation. So, the structure of the state apparatus of the U.S. prevents Trump from doing whatever he wants."

The scholar added that Trump has to speak in line with the interests of the U.S. and has to protect those interests even during his speech at the UN General Assembly.

"Because those interests are organized and Trump, or whoever that sits at the Oval Office, cannot radically transform them."

And as a person who has "grown as a main capitalist"

he "behaves basically as an erratic, successful and egocentric businessman", Sadria stated.

"Any power, including in the area of business, requires a psychological capacity to deal with it which Trump does not have. He has not the mental capacity to deal with his success."

Sadria said that the U.S. president is like the "new rich" who has the financial capital but lacks appropriate "cultural capital".

"So, I think Trump is a person who cannot cope with his success."

He also said that Trump as an individual and a human being is a very sad person.

**■ 'Iran will be stronger if U.S. quits nuclear deal'**

Sadria said that Iran will be stronger in the Middle East region if the U.S. quits the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and the 5+1 group.

The U.S. will have much less power in the region if it withdraws from the nuclear agreement known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, he said.

In his speech at the UN General Assembly last week, Trump made the harshest attack against the July 2015 nuclear deal, saying it was an "embarrassment" to the U.S. and hinted that he may not recertify the agreement when it comes up for a mid-October deadline.

## Iran studying on nuclear-powered vessels: Navy chief

**1 →** Salehi at that time said naturally the fuel used in the propulsion systems are enriched to the levels between 5% and 90% depending on the type of fuel, the goal of their use, and the needed refueling period.

"We will certainly carry the job within the framework of the nuclear deal and the safeguards agreements and will not do anything beyond that," Salehi underlined.

**■ Iran building new destroyer**

Sayyari also announced that experts

will finish building a new destroyer in the current Iranian year, ending on March 20.

He underlined that the new destroyer will be more advanced than its predecessors, Jamaran and Damavand.

In January 2016 Iran's navy test fired

advanced torpedoes from Jamaran and Alvand destroyers

According to Press TV, on September 2 Iran also sent a flotilla of warships to high seas to guard commercial ships and oil tankers in the face of piracy threats.

## European ambassadors to U.S. strongly support JCPOA

**1 →** France, Britain, Russia and China - plus Germany in July 2015 and took effect in January 2016.

O'Sullivan said that if the U.S. scrapped the JCPOA and moved to penalize European companies for doing business with Iran, Europe could respond with its own measures against the U.S.

"I've no doubt that if this scenario materializes, the European Union will act to protect the legitimate interests of our companies," he said.

German Ambassador Peter Wittig asked, "What kind of signal would this send to countries like North Korea?"

"It would send a signal that diplomacy is not reliable, that you can't trust diplomatic agreements, and that would affect, I believe, our credibility in the West when we're not honoring an agreement that Iran has not violated."

During his speech at the UN General Assembly on September 19, U.S. President Donald Trump described the JCPOA as "the worst and most one-sided transaction the U.S. has ever entered into," a characterization he often used during his presidential campaign.

The Trump administration has desperately sought a pretext to scrap or weaken the 2015 deal and get rid of the limits the deal imposes on the U.S. ability to pursue more hostile policies against Iran.

The U.S. Republican president faces an October 15 deadline for certifying that Iran is complying with the deal. If Trump refuses to do that, then the Republican-controlled Congress will have 60 days to decide whether to reimpose sanctions waived under the deal. That would let Congress effectively decide whether to kill the deal.

However, the European ambassadors vowed to do everything possible to protect any companies based in Europe that continue to do business with Iran from possible U.S. sanctions.

Britain's ambassador, Kim Darroch, pointed to a last week meeting between Trump and Prime Minister Theresa May in New York and said the two sides devoted about

**European Union's ambassador to Washington said that if the U.S. scrapped the JCPOA and moved to penalize European companies for doing business with Iran, Europe could respond with its own measures against the U.S.**

## Judiciary chief: U.S. root of terrorist acts

**TEHRAN (FNA)** — Iran's Judiciary Chief Sadeq Amoli Larijani blasted U.S. President Donald Trump for his anti-Iran remarks, and said Washington is the main sponsor of extremism and terrorism in the region.

"The U.S. is itself origin of most criminal acts across the globe," Amoli Larijani said.

He reiterated that the world has not forgotten the U.S.' massacre in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Iranian judiciary chief also slammed Washington for its support for Israel in a bid to oppress the Palestinians and the Yemeni people.

"Threats will boost the great Iranian nation's commitment for resistance against the distrustful government of the U.S.," Amoli Larijani added.

In a relevant development in Monday, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani communicated a law earlier approved by the parliament to the foreign ministry to confront the U.S. measures in the region.

"The law to confront the U.S. human rights violation and adventurist and terrorist acts in the region" was communicated to the foreign ministry in a letter yesterday.

Iran has always blasted the U.S. for sup-

porting the terrorist groups in the region, stressing that Washington is using terrorism instrumentally to meet its interests.

"The U.S. and certain regional states speak loudly about fighting against terrorism, but today it has become clear that they support the terrorists using different means," Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said in June.

"Actually, playing with terrorism is the U.S. strategy," he added.

Also, in February, former Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan lashed out at Washington for cre-

ating, supporting and nurturing the terrorist groups, specially the ISIL, in the region.

"The entire world has today accepted that the ISIL Takfiri-terrorist groups are the biggest threat to regional and international security," General Dehqan said, addressing a forum in Tehran.

Noting that U.S. President Donald Trump has admitted that the former U.S. administration has founded the Takfiri terrorism, he lambasted Washington for raising terrorism allegations against Tehran which has fought against the terrorist groups with all its power and has been a victim of terrorism itself.



# U.S. rejects North Korea war allegations as ‘absurd’

The United States has dismissed North Korea's accusation that President Donald Trump has declared war against the country, calling it "absurd".

The comments come as South Korea's National Intelligence Service (NIS) said that Pyongyang had moved to bolster its coastal defenses by re-locating its warplanes along the east coast.

Regional leaders on Tuesday warned that war on the Korean Peninsula would result in "catastrophic consequences".

The warnings came after Pyongyang said on Monday that it was ready to defend itself by shooting down American bombers, and accusing Trump of declaring war on the country.

Speaking to reporters outside his New York hotel, North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho responded to Trump tweeting at the weekend that North Korea's leadership "won't be around much longer" if it keeps up its threats.

Ri, who attended this year's United Nations General Assembly session, said the international community had hoped that a "war of words" would "not turn into real actions".

"However, last weekend, Trump claimed our leadership would not be around much longer," Ri said. "He declared a war on our country."

Later on Monday, the White House rejected Ri's interpretation of Trump's tweets.

"We have not declared war against North Korea and frankly the suggestion of that is absurd," White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said.

Alarm over Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile programs dominated this year's gathering of world leaders at the UN, amid fears the heated rhetoric could accidentally trigger a war.

Those fears were sharpened after the U.S. bombers flew off the coast of North Korea on Saturday - going the furthest north of the demilitarized zone that any the U.S. aircraft has flown this century.



"Since the United States declared war on our country, we will have every right to take counter-measures including the right to shoot down U.S. strategic bombers even when they are not yet inside the airspace border of our country," Ri said.

"The question of who won't be around much longer will be answered then."

A Pentagon spokesman stressed on Monday that the bombers flew in international airspace and had every right to do so.

As the rhetoric heated up, South Korea appealed for an easing of tensions, with Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha saying that further provocations can be expected from Pyongyang but must not be allowed to get out of control.

South Korea has reacted with unease to Trump's threat to "totally destroy" North Korea as its densely-populated capital Seoul is located just 56 kilometers from the demilitarized zone dividing the Korean Peninsula.

In his UN address last week, Trump delivered the blunt threat, deriding leader Kim Jong-un as "Rocket Man" and declaring he was "on a suicide mission".

Kim hit back with a personal attack on Trump, branding him "mentally deranged" and a "dotard" and warning

he would "pay dearly" for his threat.

There have been repeated appeals for calm from the United Nations, Russia and China. On Tuesday, China said that war on the Korean Peninsula will have no winner.

Lu Kang, the spokesman for the Chinese foreign ministry, said Beijing hopes that U.S. and North Korean politicians can realize that resorting to military means would never be a viable way out.

Russia's foreign ministry also said on Tuesday that a military conflict on the Korean Peninsula would lead to "catastrophic consequences".

It added that it would work behind-the-scenes to find a political solution to the rising tensions with North Korea, and that the U.S. approach is a "dead in".

Earlier this month, the UN Security Council imposed new sanctions on North Korea over its sixth and most powerful nuclear test. In recent months, Pyongyang also test-fired intercontinental missiles - saying it needs to defend itself against the threat of a U.S. invasion.

Asked about the North Korean minister's latest remarks, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said: "When you have the rise of tension, the rise of rhetoric, so does the risk of miscalculation."

In his UN address, Ri warned that Trump's threat to destroy North Korea made "our rockets' visit to the entire U.S. mainland all the more inevitable".

The rhetoric comes as international alarm mounts over Pyongyang's weapons ambitions - including a suggestion by Ri last week that the country is considering detonating an H-bomb over the Pacific.

The U.S. Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis has said such a move would be a "shocking display of irresponsibility."

**■ U.S. 'student' was 'tortured beyond belief' by North Korea: Trump**

Meantime, the United States President Donald Trump has accused North Korea of abusing an American "student" who had been imprisoned in the Asian country for over a year over espionage charges.

Otto Warmbier, 22, spent 17 months in a North Korean jail over spying charges and was released to his family back in the U.S. after falling into a coma due to a "severe neurological injury." He died on June 19.

"Otto was tortured beyond belief by North Korea," Trump said on Tuesday on Twitter.

Pyongyang said Warmbier's release had been based on a court decision and "on humanitarian grounds." No further details were provided.

He had been convicted of crimes against the state for trying to steal a propaganda poster from a hotel in Pyongyang and sentenced to 15 years in prison.

The U.S. president had previously accused Pyongyang's "brutal regime" of Warmbier's predicament but it was the first time he publicly blamed North Korea for torture in the case.

Following the young man's death, the United States issued a ban prohibiting its citizens traveling to North Korea.

North Korea has detained at least 17 American citizens over the past decade and three of them remain imprisoned there, according to official reports.

(Source: agencies)

## Monk-led mob attacks Rohingya refugees in Sri Lanka

**■ HRW: Myanmar committing 'crimes against humanity'**

Radical Buddhist monks have stormed a United Nations safe house for Rohingya Muslim refugees who have fled violence against them in Myanmar's Rakhine state.

A police official said on Tuesday that Saffron-robed Buddhist monks led a mob that broke down gates and entered the walled multi-storied compound near Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo.

"We have pushed back the mob and the refugees will be relocated in a safer place," AFP quoted the unnamed official as saying.

The police official said the refugees were taken into "protective custody" and had been brought back to their safe house when the mob returned and started throwing stones.

The official added that they were authorized to remain in Sri Lanka pending processing of their papers. The Rohingya were eventually to be resettled in a third country.

Meanwhile, a monk who stormed into the building was filmed by his radical Sinhalese National Force as he urged others to join him and smash the premises.

"These are Rohingya terrorists who killed Buddhist monks in Myanmar," the monk said in a message posted on Facebook, pointing to Rohingya mothers with small children in their arms.

In May, over 30 Rohingya refugees were rescued by the Sri Lankan navy after they were found drifting in a boat off the island's northern waters.

Sri Lanka's extremist Buddhist monks have close links with their ultra-nationalist counterparts in Myanmar. Both have been accused of orchestrating violence against minority Muslims in the two countries.

**■ HRW: Myanmar committing 'crimes against humanity'**

Meantime, Human Rights Watch (HRW) has decried Myanmar's military crackdown on Rohingya in Rakhine State, accusing security forces of committing "crimes against humanity". The international rights group said on Tuesday that Myanmar's security forces have committed "serious violations" that include rape and other sexual violence, murder, forced deportation and persecution of the Rohingya.

"The Burmese [Myanmar] military is brutally expelling the Rohingya from northern Rakhine State," James Ross, legal and policy director at Human Rights Watch, told Reuters news agency.

"The massacres of villagers and mass arson driving people from their homes are all crimes against humanity," he said.

In the past, HRW has also accused Buddhist monks in the area, as well as Myanmar security forces of "crimes against humanity".

Last week, HRW called for the United Nations Security Council to impose an arms embargo and sanctions on the Burmese military to end its "ethnic cleansing campaign" against the Rohingya.

**■ UN experts urge Aung San Suu Kyi to meet Rohingya**

Elsewhere, a group of UN human rights experts says Myanmar's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi should personally meet members of the persecuted Muslim community in the country.

The group of seven UN officials, who include the special rapporteurs on human rights in Myanmar, on minority issues and on racism, made the demand in a statement on Tuesday. "We call on Aung San Suu Kyi to meet the Rohingya personally."

The implementation of promises by Suu Kyi to address the crisis, including that perpetrators would be held accountable, would amount to an "empty gesture" since so many Rohingya have fled, the statement said.

Myanmar's forces have been attacking Rohingya Muslims and torching their villages in Rakhine since October 2016. The attacks have seen a sharp rise since August 25, following a number of armed attacks on police and military posts in the troubled western state.

Suu Kyi's government has snubbed and obstructed UN officials who have sought to investigate the situation. The government has prevented aid agencies from delivering food, water and medicines to the refugees.

Suu Kyi has also rejected UN accusations that Myanmar's forces are engaged in the ethnic cleansing of Rohingya Muslims.

The Muslims have been subject to communal violence by Myanmar's military and extremist Buddhists for years.

The latest eruption of violence in Rakhine has killed more than 1,000 people and triggered an exodus of the Rohingya to Bangladesh.

The latest figures by the UN indicate that some 480,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled to Bangladesh since violence broke out on August 25. The UN has increased its estimate by 45,000 in two days.

According to a report by UN agencies and international charities, the change was due "in large part" to an estimated 35,000 Rohingya moving into two refugee camps who had not been accounted for before.

The report also said numbers crossing the border had started to rise again.

The UN gave a figure of 435,000 Rohingya arrivals on September 23.

A 2,000-acre (eight square kilometer) space near existing camps has been set aside to house the new arrivals.

Refugees in Bangladesh have told numerous eyewitness accounts of summary executions, rapes, and arson attacks by the Myanmar military since the crackdown against the minority group began.

Myanmar's government brands more than one million Rohingya Muslims in the country as "illegal immigrants" from Bangladesh. Rohingya Muslims, however, have had roots in the country that go back centuries. They are considered by the UN the "most persecuted minority group in the world."

(Source: agencies)

## Palestinian gunned down after killing 3 Israelis

Israeli forces have killed a Palestinian who they say killed three Israelis - two security officers and a border police - in the north of the Israeli-occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem).

The Palestinian had "arrived at the rear gate of Har Adar along with Palestinian laborers entering the settlement," Israeli police said on Tuesday. He "pulled out a weapon and opened fire at the force at the site."

A fourth Israeli sustained injuries in the attack, they said. The Palestinian was identified as a 37-year-old from the nearby Palestinian village of Beit Surik. Israel's internal spy agency Shin Bet said the shooter was a father of four with no previous "security background."

He held a work permit for the settlement.

Over the past two years, Israeli forces have killed many Palestinians protesting Tel Aviv's restrictions on access to the al-Aqsa Mosque compound, which is located in al-Quds' Old City. The mosque is Islam's third holiest site after Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia.

Israel fully closed off the compound to Muslims after a reported shootout on July 14 near the site that left two Israeli soldiers and three Palestinians dead. The closure sparked far-and-wide condemnation across the Muslim world.

Israel restored access to the compound later, but placed metal detectors at its front, prompting Muslims to continue their rallies and refuse to enter the site. Tel Aviv later also removed the detectors, but has set up CCTV cameras at the site's entrances, a measure that Palestinians still consider to be a provocation.

Palestinians say Tel Aviv is trying to change the status quo at the site and manipulate the demographic configuration of occupied territories.

Tel Aviv has been occupying the West Bank, including East al-Quds, since taking the Palestinian territory by force in 1967.

Ever since the occupation, it has been propping up settlements throughout the land, in a move condemned by the United Nations, and considered illegal under international law banning construction on occupied territory.

**■ Hamas: Intifada enters new phase**

Meanwhile, a spokesman for the Palestinian resistance movement of Hamas, Hazem Qassem, reacted to the news by saying that the reported incident showed that Intifada (the Palestinian Uprising) had entered a new phase.

"The operation," he said, indicated that the young Palestinian generation would carry on the



uprising "until full liberation of the [Palestinian] soil and nation." It also showed that the Palestinian people would not beg international organizations to reclaim their rights, he said.

"Israel's efforts to change al-Quds' identity do not go unpunished... skewing the facts does not change them," Hazem said.

Since September 2015, Palestinians have killed 48 Israelis, two visiting Americans and a British tourist in stabbings, shooting and car-ramming attacks.

During that same time, Israeli forces have killed over 255 Palestinians; Israel says most of them were attackers, others died in clashes with Israeli forces.

Most of the attacks have been stabbings against Israeli soldiers, primarily in the occupied West Bank.

**■ Netanyahu order demolition of Palestinian's house**

Elsewhere, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, has ordered the destruction of the family house of the alleged attacker. He has also said that all building permits held by his relatives would be revoked and whatever they had built so far would likewise be demolished.

**■ Israeli settlement activities go on despite UNSC resolution**

The developments follow as the UN has said that Israel's settlement activities are continuing at "a high rate," despite demands by the Security Council for the Tel Aviv regime to end its expansions.

"Israel's illegal settlement activities have contin-

ued at a high rate, a consistent pattern over the course of the year," said the UN envoy for the Middle East Nickolay Mladenov on Monday.

"Israeli officials continue to use provocative rhetoric in support of expansion," which is "making the two-state solution increasingly unattainable," he added.

Mladenov made the remarks after an unnamed Israeli official told reporters that plans for the construction of 2,000 new settler units in the occupied West Bank are expected to be approved by the end of next week.

The Tel Aviv regime is expected to approve plans for the construction of 2,000 new settler units in the occupied West Bank.

About 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 illegal settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East al-Quds (Jerusalem).

Palestinians want the West Bank as part of a future independent state, with East al-Quds (Jerusalem) as its capital.

A UN Security Council resolution passed last year condemned all Israeli settlement construction on the occupied Palestinian territories. The landmark Resolution 2334, passed on December 23, 2016, called the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East al-Quds (Jerusalem) a "flagrant violation of international law." The resolution also called on Israel to stop all such construction.

(Source: agencies)



NEWS IN BRIEF



**Iranian delegation to embark for Georgia on Oct. 8**

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — According to the portal of **d e s k** Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), the Iranian private body will dispatch its trade delegation to Georgia on October 8, 2017 to attend the 6th meeting of Iran-Georgia Economic Committee in Tbilisi.

The delegation is led by Hossein Salah-Varzi the deputy head of ICIMMA from October 8 to 11 to the Georgian capital, the report added.

Iranian Labor Minister Ali Rabiei will also attend the mentioned meeting.

China imports N. Korean coal for 1st time since Feb.

China resumed coal imports from North Korea five months after suspending them to comply with a United Nations Security Council resolution over the country's nuclear program.

China imported 1.64 million tons of coal from Kim Jong Un's regime in August, the first such shipments since February, according to General Administration of Customs data emailed Tuesday. Shipments in the first eight months of this year totaled 4.31 million tons, a 71 percent decline from the same period in 2016.

China's Ministry of Commerce said in February that coal imports from North Korea would be halted from Feb. 19 to Dec. 31 in accordance with the UN resolution, including cargoes at Chinese ports that hadn't completed customs clearance.

"I can assure you, that as a permanent member of the Security Council we have always strictly implemented UN Security Council resolutions," said Lu Kang, China's foreign ministry spokesman in a regular briefing. Asked if the import figures were inaccurate, Lu referred questions to GAC.

(Source: Bloomberg)

Japan stocks are among the world's most attractive

State Street Corp's asset management unit is bullish on stocks, especially those in Japan.

Richard Lacaille, who helps oversee \$2.56 trillion in assets as the chief investment officer at State Street Global Advisors, said valuation measures show Japan is one of the most-attractive markets among developed countries. Improving corporate governance, increasing dividends and a weaker currency are helping Japanese companies deliver good earnings consistently, he said in an interview in Tokyo last week.

"We are overweighting equities although we are not ignorant of the risks of euphoria," Lacaille said. "When we look at the combination of relatively low interest rates and improving earnings growth, that's a combination that leads us to conclude that we should be risk on."

Japan's snap election may support sentiment in the stock market, though it's unlikely to generate much excitement, Lacaille said.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told his coalition partner he will dissolve the lower house of parliament on Sept. 28 for a general election. So-called Abenomics has helped spur six consecutive quarters of economic growth -- the longest expansion in a decade.

If Abe's Liberal Democratic Party fails to win a simple majority of 232 seats, his ability to push through policies will be weakened, according to a note dated Sept. 25 by UBS Group analysts led by Daiju Aoki.

The Topix index of Japanese stocks has risen 25 percent over the past 12 months, outperforming the MSCI World Index, which has climbed 16 percent.

While the yen is near a two-month low against the dollar, it is likely to appreciate toward 90 over the next year, according to Lacaille.

(Source: Bloomberg)

World's biggest wealth fund faces tighter reins at \$1t

After hitting the \$1 trillion milestone this month, the Norwegian wealth fund can expect even more scrutiny going forward.

The government is currently looking at a proposal from a committee led by a former central bank governor to separate out the fund from Norges Bank. This idea is now being seized on as a means to tighten oversight, with more people arguing that the fund has grown too large and complex to handle for the central bank, which is stocked with economists but lacks expertise in overseeing investments.

"With a separate board you'll be able to appoint professional people who really understand asset management, and who can have the necessary critical attitude toward the fund's management," said Knut Anton Mork, a professor at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

The issue got added attention this month when the fund proposed a plan to dump the bond index it follows. Top economists and academics in Norway say the move raises concerns the managers of the fund are asking for too much free rein in how to oversee the wealth of future generations of Norwegians.

The fund proposed a plan to change the index for its \$330 billion bond portfolio, reducing its 23 currencies to three -- dollars, euros and pounds -- and dumping corporate bonds. It said it doesn't make sense to take currency risk amid converging global bond yields and only wants the most liquid bonds. Corporate debt is unnecessary risk, it argues, after getting permission to raise its stock holdings to 70 percent of its portfolio.

(Source: Bloomberg)

‘With current oil prices, Iran is a haven for investors’

**ENERGY** **TEHRAN** — Saeid Khoshrou, director of international affairs at the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), said with oil prices near \$60 per barrel Iran would be a great place for oil investment.

In an interview with CNBC on Tuesday, the official said that currently, Iran's cost of production on average is around \$10 per barrel and considering the ratio between Iran's oil reserves and production capacity the country is a good prospect for investors.

"If you take a look at the reserve and the production ... this ratio itself gives the signal (that) it is a good place to put money and invest on it," he stated.

Khoshrou further noted that low, fluctuating prices in the oil market will push the investors back, but with prices hovering near \$60, lots of investors will be able to invest in developing oil fields.

"I think something around \$60 would stabilize the market...it is good enough to attract investors to the field, especially in the Middle East," he said.

According to the official, in line with OPEC production quota, Iran is currently producing around 3.8 million barrels per day while the country has the capacity of producing around four million barrels per day.

Iran's energy exports suffered previously under Western-imposed sanctions. Those sanctions were lifted earlier in 2016, allowing the OPEC producer to reclaim its share in the international energy markets.

No restrictions to cooperate with Iran: CESCE head

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Head of Compañía Española de Seguros de Crédito a la Exportación (CESCE), translated in English as the Spanish Export Credit Insurance Company, Jaime García-Legaz announced that his company has no restrictions to cooperate with Iran, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) quoted him as saying on Monday.

In a meeting with ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafeie, who paid a visit to Spain leading a trade delegation, García-Legaz said: "We have bravely commenced cooperating with Iranians despite the U.S. disagreement, and as of starting our collaboration, regarding the current banking conditions, we have covered €2.7 billion of export credits for Iranians."

During the meeting, ICCIMA head for his turn, said that under the new conditions, Iranian government

Western allies diverge further over Iran, with Europe offering finance as U.S. launches new travel ban

European banks have begun a fresh wave of investment in Iran, just as Washington launches another attempt at restricting links between the U.S. and Iran.

Over the past week, banks in Austria, Denmark and France have announced investment deals with Iran worth a collective €2 billion (\$2.4 billion), while in contrast the White House on September 24 announced a fresh travel ban on the citizens of Iran and seven other countries.

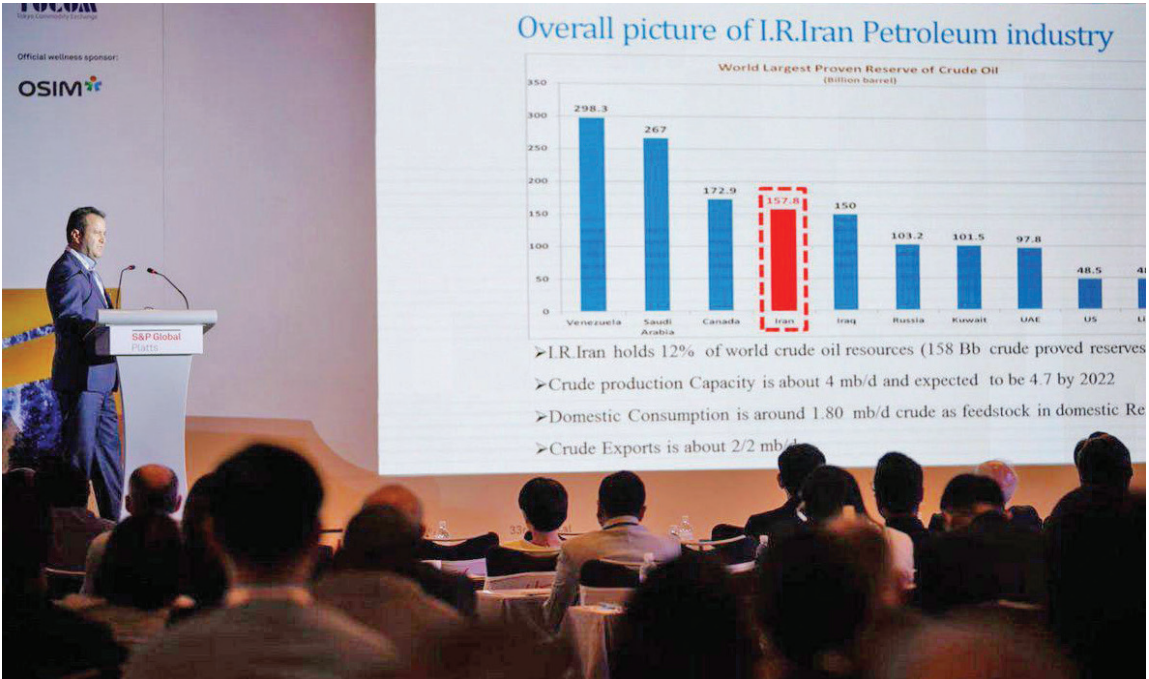
The wave of European financing began on September 21, when Austria's Oberbank agreed to extend a €1 billion line of credit to 14 Iranian banks. The money will be used for infrastructure projects in Iran. On the same day, Denmark's Danske Bank signing a deal for a €500 million line of credit with ten Iranian banks. Since then, French state-owned bank BPI France has said it will also provide a €500 million credit line to French companies wanting to invest in Iran.

Iran has set up similar arrangements over the past couple of months with Export-Import Bank of Korea for €8 billion and with a number of Chinese banks covering \$35 billion worth of financing. These deals have not necessarily come easily. Oberbank says it spent one and a half years negotiating a framework agreement for export loans, with several rounds of talks held in Iran and Austria.

Those involved also have to be careful they do not get caught by fines for breaking the ongoing U.S. sanctions against Iran. BPI for example was able to conclude its agreement because it has no operations in the U.S. In an interview published in Le Journal du Dimanche on September 24, Nicolas Dufourcq, chief executive of BPI France, said "We are the only French bank that can do it without risking U.S. sanctions for a possible breach of remaining embargo rules."

The Iranian government says that, in total, it has attracted around \$14 billion of foreign direct investment since the nuclear deal -- formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) -- was agreed between Tehran and six international powers in July 2015. The agreement came into force in January 2016.

(Source: Forbes)



The lifting of the sanctions, along with Iran's low cost of production and untapped energy reserves,

make the country a potentially attractive investment destination.



has expansion of trade bonds with other countries, specifically European ones, on its agenda and accordingly, the Iranian private sector has started its activities in this regard.

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# Iran vows to keep up oil exports despite Trump threat



Iran will persist with exporting its oil to global customers, unfettered by Donald Trump's intensifying offensive against the country, according to the Middle East nation's state-run producer.

The OPEC member is shipping a combined 2.6 million barrels a day of crude and the ultra-light oil known as condensate, and expects to export more at the end of 2017, said Saied Khoshrou, director of international affairs at National Iranian Oil Company.

The country is "not worried" about its ability to send cargoes overseas to Asia and Europe despite rising tensions with the U.S., he said in an interview in Singapore.

President Trump said at the UN General Assembly last week that a deal between nations easing sanctions on Iran and curbing its nuclear program was "an embarrassment to the United States" and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson laid out the U.S. case to European allies about flaws in the accord. Before the 2015 agreement, trade and financial restrictions imposed on the Middle East nation had hampered its crude exports to customers in Asia, the world's biggest oil market, as well as Europe.

While the recent rhetoric from the U.S. may make "some investors worried about the future," refinery customers have a need for Iranian crude and "there is no document from the United Nations that forces them not to work with Iran," Khoshrou said.

Iran currently ships about 2.2 million barrels a day of oil and also exports 400,000-450,000 barrels a day of condensate, he said. About 60 percent of the Iranian crude sent overseas is consumed by Asian processors, while the remaining 40 percent is taken up by those in Europe.

The Middle East producer currently isn't storing any crude or condensate supply on tankers at sea, according to Khoshrou.

Iran was the second-biggest producer in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries before the European Union banned purchases of its crude in July 2012.

Countries including China, India and Japan had to get a waiver from the U.S. to buy limited amounts of Iranian oil or risk losing access to parts of the global financial system.

Iran's crude oil exports fell to about 923,000 barrels a day in November 2015, according to Bloomberg esti-

mates, as the international sanctions impeded buyers' access to shipping insurance and U.S. dollar-denominated payments.

The country's exports have rebounded after the restrictions were eased as part of a pact it signed with the U.S., China, France, Germany, Russia, the U.K. and the European Union after months of negotiations.

Iran also plans to introduce its new heavy crude grade from the West Karoun oil field as soon as six months from now, said Khoshrou, adding that it's now blended with other varieties. NIOC had previously said the new crude would be available by early 2017. In May, Iran Oil Terminals Co. was preparing a marine terminal to export oil from West Karoun, the country's oil ministry news service Shana had reported, citing the company's chief, Pirouz Mousavi.

## Trump decision

Trump said last week he's made a decision on whether the U.S. will continue to abide by the Iran nuclear deal, but refused to say whether he intends to quit the accord, stand by it or seek to add new constraints on the Islamic Republic.

Most countries backing the agreement cite findings by the International Atomic Energy Agency that Iran is meeting the letter of its responsibilities under the accord.

French President Emmanuel Macron said in his UN speech last week that the Iran agreement is "robust" and "to put it into question without anything to replace it is a grave error." Germany has a strong interest in the pact and the accord shouldn't be jeopardized "for no reason at all," the nation's Economy Minister, Brigitte Zypries, said.

The "whole Europe won't follow policy of U.S.," NIOC's Khoshrou said. "For exports, I'm not worried about that."

(Source: Bloomberg)

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## The shame of Myanmar

By Amitai Etzioni

The continuing campaign to exterminate the Rohingya people in Myanmar summons the memory of Srebrenica. In Srebrenica, UN troops stood idle as thousands of Bosnian Muslim men and boys were slaughtered, while women and young children were bussed away to Bosniak-held territory. The main UN troops involved were Dutch, subject to an order from their government not to bring home any body bags; in other words, not to risk their lives. Ever since, most Dutch consider the slaughter that resulted to be a great stain on the national conscience, referred to as the Shame of Srebrenica.



In Myanmar, the world witnesses thousands of Rohingya fall victim to ethnic cleansing, carried out by the Burmese nationalist military through murder, rape, arson, and forced displacement. This time women and children are not spared. Satellite images show scores of decimated, burnt-out villages in Rakhine state, and more than 400,000 Rohingya forced to flee to Bangladesh. More than half of the refugees are children.

### ■ Full-throated condemnation

Oh, there have been speeches galore, even a full-throated condemnation by the head of the UN's Human Rights Council. Words of condemnation issued from leaders in Indonesia, Pakistan, and Turkey. Words. However, the Burmese junta (which hides behind the banner of democracy) has not been put on notice that its leaders will be held accountable, that they will have to face the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity and, if deemed guilty, a life sentence at the Hague. The junta leaders ought to be reminded of the fate of Slobodan Milosevic and Ratko Mladic.

Beyond reaffirming the universal jurisdiction of international law, why has the Burmese regime been spared sanctions for its military's actions? U.S. sanctions on Myanmar had been in effect for decades but were terminated by President Barack Obama in October 2016, and no new measures have since been imposed, though the U.S. and its allies have been more than willing to sanction countries, including Russia, Iran, Syria, and Venezuela, for rights abuses. Revoking the Noble Peace Prize of Aung San Suu Kyi, for betraying the cause for which she was celebrated, would amount to some small degree of international recognition of Myanmar's disgraceful actions.

All 191 UN member nations endorsed the principle of Responsibility to Protect in 2005. The responsibility requires a nation to protect its own people or forfeit its sovereignty, building on the 1948 Geneva Convention on genocide that enjoins all nations to prevent, stop, and punish genocides, ethnic cleansing, and large-scale atrocities. The UK and France, with the help of the U.S., invoked R2P and invaded Libya after its leader Muammar Gaddafi threatened the rebels in Benghazi with a bloodbath. Yet the crimes against humanity in Myanmar are much more troubling; here we are confronted not with threats but with action, on a much larger scale.

Samantha Power pointed out in her book *The Problem from Hell* that, genocide after genocide – in Cambodia, Iraq, Bosnia, Rwanda – world powers failed to act. Genocides happen often enough for the UN, and the powers that support it, to prepare a response ahead of time. There should be UN troops, specially trained for such a mission, supported with budget allocations made ahead of time, to jump in when nations do not protect their own people, giving meaning to warnings that the world will no longer tolerate Srebrenica. For now, a few well-placed missiles on the barracks of the junta should get their attention.

One suspects that a key reason Myanmar is not subject to these kinds of meaningful acts, from sanctions to threats of limited military interventions, is that the country is being courted by the U.S. to become part of its strategy to contain China. Broadly, this approach entails building alliances and military ties with nations on China's border, as the U.S. did in Vietnam. This courting is one reason Obama was the first president to visit Myanmar while in office. At the same time, China is keen to try to maintain, if not increase, its influence in Myanmar.

These geopolitical considerations have their place. However, when a country's military is acting as savagely as Myanmar's, geopolitics should be set aside. Otherwise, the often-voiced commitments to human rights will ring hollow. Leaders of the world face the same question, posed by us, by our children, and by future generations: where were you, and what did you do when the Rohingya were slaughtered in Myanmar? You let Rwanda happen; Srebrenica to take place; what will it take to make you live up to your speeches? Shame on you, shame on us.

(Source: *The Diplomat*)

# British officials harbor doubts about Saudi-led investigations into alleged war crimes in Yemen

By Alastair Sloan

Internal emails obtained by MEMO show that British diplomats appear to be nervous about the quality of the investigation being carried out by the Saudi-led coalition into alleged war crimes by its forces in Yemen. The news comes as NGOs claim that Britain is set to obstruct an attempt to launch an independent investigation this Thursday at the UN about the allegations.

The emails show that following the attendance of British officials at a conference organized by the Joint Incident Assessments Team (JIAT), the UK-trained group tasked by the Saudi-led coalition with investigating the alleged war crimes, a Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) official warned colleagues that the findings "will be controversial and no doubt disputed."

The JIAT meeting was hosted by its most senior official, Mansour Al-Mansour. MEMO has revealed previously how Mansour sentenced doctors, politicians and torture survivors to prison during the 2011 Arab Spring in his capacity as a military prosecutor in Bahrain. His findings on Yemen have largely exonerated the Saudis and their coalition partners of wrongdoing, but groups including Médecins Sans Frontières, which say that they were targeted by the coalition, dispute this strongly.

In January 2017, the inclusion of Al-Mansour in JIAT was questioned by the Liberal Democrats and Labour in a Westminster parliamentary debate on Yemen.

One of Al-Mansour's investigations probed the bombing of a Médecins Sans Frontières mobile clinic in Taiz. In August 2016, JIAT blamed the attack on the NGO, saying, "It is necessary to keep the mobile clinic away from military targets so as not to be subjected to any incidental effects" before praising "the soundness of the measures taken by the Coalition Forces in accordance with... international laws."

In contrast, MSF's own Incident Report found that the tented clinic had actually been set up "in an empty field in a residential neighborhood where many internally displaced people had gathered... There were no obvious potential military targets nearby."

The newly-obtained emails also show that FCO staff were notified about



## Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn has called on the British government to stop selling arms to the Kingdom.

MEMO's findings on Al-Mansour in an email sent to Whitehall staff by one of their communications agencies, Gorkana, with a circular sent to all FCO officials working in the Persian Gulf. The Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) obtained the emails through a Freedom of Information Act request before sharing them with MEMO.

### ■ Releasing the information

Although government bodies are supposed to respond to Freedom of Information requests within twenty working days, the FCO took five months to answer this one, said BIRD. According to the FCO, there were concerns that releasing the information "could potentially damage the bilateral relationship between the UK and Saudi Arabia."

In 2016, Britain's Ministry of Defense provided training to the Saudi Coalition's JIAT, further calling into question its independence.

There have been two previous attempts to establish an independent UN probe, but they have failed on both occasions. Last year, Britain blocked the European Union's efforts. Despite mounting civilian casual-

ties, which the UN blames primarily on the Saudi-led bombing campaign, Britain looks set to continue obstructing calls for a UN probe this week when the issue is discussed by the Human Rights Council.

"Yemeni civilians are suffering on an unprecedented scale," said David Mepham, UK director of Human Rights Watch, accusing the British government of placating critics "with the laughable notion that the Saudi-led coalition, which is bombing homes, schools and hospitals, can investigate itself" The coalition, he explained, has proven time and again that it is far more interested in whitewashing its own abuses — or using its financial clout to bully others into doing so — than in credibly investigating the deaths of civilians it has killed. "The UK government," he added, "still has time to change course, and should support efforts to create an impartial, international inquiry into abuses by all sides to the Yemen conflict at the United Nations Human Rights Council this week."

The Labour Party has barred Saudi Arabia from attending its annual conference which opened in Brighton at the

weekend. Leader Jeremy Corbyn has called on the British government to stop selling arms to the Kingdom.

### ■ Condemnation of British support

Condemnation of British support by Human Rights Watch, as well as the Bahrain Institute for Human Rights, was echoed by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Prince Zeid Ra'ad Al-Hussein, who earlier this month said, "The reticence of the international community in demanding justice for the victims of the conflict in Yemen is shameful."

Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei, the Director of Advocacy at BIRD, told MEMO that the email chain "not only smashes the UK government's credibility in Yemen, but also its credibility when it calls for accountability elsewhere."

Last week, Britain's Ministry of Defense announced a new Military and Security Cooperation Agreement with Saudi Arabia. Britain has sold nearly £6 billion worth of arms to the Persian Gulf Kingdom since the start of its involvement in the Yemen war in March 2015.

(Source: *middleeastmonitor.com*)

## More sanctions, fewer insults against North Korea

Trump's tweets and statements increase tension and anxiety among both allies and enemies.

No one knows how North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will respond to growing pressure on his regime, other than by scouring the thesaurus. But the U.S. and China seem to be stumbling toward a more effective strategy for confronting him. More boldness from the latter, and restraint from the former, will be necessary to see it through.

New U.S. sanctions that give the Treasury Department the authority to block banks and businesses that do business with North Korea from using the U.S. financial system are a powerful tool. Existing United Nations sanctions haven't yet forced a change in Kim's behavior, while the known military options remain inconceivable in anything but the direst circumstances.

And the U.S. has every right to decide for itself who can and cannot participate in its financial system. China seems to recognize this, judging by recent instructions to Chinese banks not to hold accounts for North Koreans. In fact, Treasury would be wise not to deploy its new powers immediately, in order to test whether Chinese leaders are prepared to go even further.

They should. China isn't wrong to insist that, in the long run, the only way to defuse this crisis is through dialogue. But the "freeze-for-freeze" proposal Beijing



continues to push -- whereby the U.S. and South Korea would suspend joint military exercises in exchange for the North temporarily halting its nuclear and missile testing -- should be abandoned, not least because Kim himself shows no interest in it.

On the other hand, fears that additional sanctions will provoke a collapse in North Korea are overblown. Furthermore, that's not their purpose: They're meant to slow the North's progress toward a nuclear-armed ICBM and squeeze the economy enough that the regime seeks to alleviate the pressure. There's some evidence that cur-

## Libya again: When will they ever learn?

**Tehran (FNA)** — African Command (AFRICOM) claims that the drone strikes targeted a desert camp which "had been connected to multiple attacks across Europe." Such a claim is common in U.S. military attacks in nations the U.S. is not engaged in a war. That's because legally speaking such strikes rest on them being special cases involving specific threats to allies. This language features in official reports on myriad U.S. airstrikes across Africa in recent years.

The last U.S. airstrikes in Libya took place the day before Trump's inauguration, killing over 80 civilians around Sirte. The Pentagon regime gave almost an identical justification at the time that everyone killed was "external plotters" for ISIL, and tried to connect the murders to a recent attack in Germany – and subsequently continue the bogus War on Terror apace.

American victory certainly hasn't materialized, but the greatest military the world has ever known (as they regularly refer to) cannot admit defeat. Nor can the failed state of Libya acknowledge that it has failed to become anything other than a failure. The same is true about America's

NATO allies, who started this whole mess in the first place. They have also given up the idea that Libya will one day become a fully functioning state. They know and the whole world knows that they are unable to fix the country.

### ■ Obama's war

Meanwhile, halfway around the world, President Donald Trump has forgotten his denunciation of "Obama's war," adopted the "expertise" of his generals, and re-ignited a fading fire. This time around, he swears, "We are not nation-building again. We are killing terrorists."

Meaning, the American effort in Libya is now to be exclusively military. There will be no limits on troop numbers or time spent in the Middle East and North Africa, nor any disclosure of plans to the enemy or the American public. There is to be no more talk of democracy or women's rights or human rights or peace negotiations and such like.

Announcing his new militarized "strategy" in a long, vague, typically self-congratulatory speech last month, President Trump lacked even the courtesy to mention those who are fighting the Real War on Terror in – mainly the peoples and the

governments of those failed states along with Iran and Russia. President Trump often makes such gaffes, but he read this particular speech from a teleprompter and so it was surely written or at least vetted by the very military which now is to dictate the future of Libya and U.S. involvement there – and yet, many years later, seems to know no more about the country and its actual inhabitants than it ever did.

Of course, the international civil society cannot allow Libya become a permanent safe haven for terrorists. But for this to happen, no country should be allowed to do it single-handedly, including the United States. Now, as more troops depart for the region and more airstrikes are being carried out, the first lesson is this:

There is no such thing in the American military as a negative after-action report. Military plans are always brilliant; strikes always occur as expected; U.S. soldiers are heroic; and goals are naturally accomplished without fail. This nonsense has to stop. U.S. drone and air strikes almost always kill innocent civilians; most of the times the targets are not brilliant; U.S. soldiers have drone war crimes in

many cases; and military goals have repeatedly failed.

The second lesson: The military brass who routinely file such positive reports are blindsided by the bogus reports of others, mainly NATO and Arab allies. Judging by the experience on Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen and Iraq, it is not that hard to guess about the future of the Trump war on Libya, as the latest drone strikes indicate. It will be little different from the awful past. It will produce a surfeit of Libyan civilian casualties and Trump's self-congratulation.

And then, of course, there is the inevitable conclusion: With drone and air strikes America cannot win the hearts and minds of the international civil society, much less the war on Libya. The people of Libya and the world community are in an uproar. The Pentagon regime, all these years after destroying Libya, still doesn't get this thing about accountability and the rule of International Law. The obscurity of such a simple fact to the Pentagon regime brings criminality to mind, and with it, this simple question: When will they ever learn that they lost the war on Libya?



# Merkel's bitter victory

By Hanif Ghaffari

The German parliamentary elections were held in the middle of a media tumult in the West. Although the coalition of Christian parties was able to become the strongest political alliance in Germany, the reduction in Merkel's coalition votes compared to the previous round of elections and the victory of far-right wing has left the bitter victory for the Chancellor of Germany.

Beyond that, the election results show that once again Germany is formed by a coalition government. European experts and analysts believe that this government can't be a successful government at the top of the political and administrative equations of Germany.

## Formation of polar space in Germany

The coalition of Christian parties in the national elections of Germany won 33 percent of the vote and will be elected as the strongest political stream in the country's parliament. The Social Democrats, as the main rival of the coalition of Christian parties, were only able to win about 20 percent of the public vote. The result, for people like Steinmeier, Siegmund Gabriel, Steinbrock, and beyond them, Martin Schultz is a big defeat. The German extreme radicals, having gained 12.6 percent of votes, became German parliamentarians for the first time.

The German Liberal Democrats returned to parliament this time with a 10.7% vote, after their defeat in the previous parliamentary election when they did not pass the 5% barrier for entering parliament. The left-wing party also received 9.2 percent of the vote, and the Greens won 8.9 percent of the citizens' vote in this election. Thus, we see a multipolar space in the German political equation. At present, 6 parties have been able to enter this country's parliament. In this way, the struggle between Ger-



man parties and political groups over the next four years will be at its peak. German Chancellor Angela Merkel has said in her latest position that she will take responsibility for the current polar atmosphere in Germany. However, many analysts believe that the management of this space is beyond the control of Merkel and her entourage.

## Merkel's negotiations to form a coalition government

The German Chancellor has begun her negotiations to form a coalition government. Martin Schulz, a candidate for the Social-Democratic Party's Leadership, and the person whose party has accepted a severe defeat in the election, has explicitly stated that he will not form a coalition with the Christian Democrats and Merkel. However, the Chancellor of Germany has announced that she will enter into negotiations with the Social Democratic Party over the formation of a coalition government.

Over the past years, there has been a great deal of disagreement between the two big parties over issues such as how to deal with the asylum seekers crisis and the increased military spending of Germany. During the electoral campaign, Martin Schultz announced that the Social Democratic Party would only form a coalition with the Christian Democrats.

It is worth mentioning that Donald Trump has pushed NATO member states for 2 percent of their gross domestic product into military affairs. This issue has been accepted by Merkel. However, the Social Democrats believe that Merkel should not retreat in the face of the US pressures. Merkel is now well aware that, in order to satisfy the Social Democrats for the coalition, she must abandon her decision to increase the military budget of Germany.

But the challenge is not over here. It is obvious that if the coalition government of the Social Democrats and the coalition of Christian parties in this regard work ineffectively, the number of supporters of the "Far-right" party will be expanded exponentially. In this case, we will see a strong jump in the party's vote in the next election of Germany. If there is no coalition between the two traditional German parties, the Social Democrats will retain their position as the most powerful opposition party in Germany.

Some other German analysts believe that Merkel will eventually have to negotiate with the Democrats (Liberal Democrats) and the Green Party to form the government. This is while Green Party supporters have a negative attitude toward the Christian Democrats and consider Merkel's policies to be contrary to their principles. In the previous round of electoral

campaigns in Germany, Merkel also entered into a coalition government with the Green Party, but ultimately failed.

## The main message of the German parliamentary election

The main message of the current election campaign in Germany was the decrease of popularity of traditional parties and the increase in the popularity of the extreme right wing in the country. Over the past five decades, there has been no record that the right-wing extremist can get to the German parliament. Now the "Far-right" which is an anti-Islam, anti-immigration, anti-euro and anti-European Union party, has been able to reach parliament by a nationalist approach, with about 90 parliamentary seats. This issue has been welcomed by prominent politicians of the far-right wing in Europe. Leader of the French National Front, Marine Le Pen, congratulated this victory on the "AFD" party. It should be noted that none of the German parties want a coalition with the "AFD" party. On the other hand, the leaders of the replacement party for Germany are trying to increase their popularity in the next election cycle by adopting opposing positions toward the coalition government (regardless of which parties form a coalition government). In the coming years, the "AFD" will take a sharp turning point on issues such as the immigration crisis in Germany. The extreme right-wing movement in Germany also emphasizes its opposition to the existence of the Eurozone and even the European Union.

The leaders of the Christian Democratic Party have explicitly stated that they are not satisfied with the results of the election. Undoubtedly, with the formation of a coalition government, Merkel's power in Berlin's political and administrative equations will be limited to a great extent. On the other hand, the presence of the "AFD" in the German parliament will create a lot of trouble for the Chancellor of Germany.

# Ending Erdogan's dreams in Europe

By Hossein Yari

He struggle between Turkey and the European Union is becoming more and more serious every day. Turkey's membership in the European Union is next to impossible. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and other officials of the country are completely disappointed with what is

happening between Ankara and the European Union. On the other hand, in the run up to the national elections in Germany, the two main parties of the country, the Christian Democrat and the social Democrat, have both emphasized opposition to Ankara. Both German Chancellor Angela Merkel and his rival, Martin Schultz, believe Turkey's membership of the European Union should be stopped.

This is the worst possible news for Erdogan.

The reality is that Turkey must now think seriously about other options, including membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The cold relations between Turkey and the European Union have also affected NATO's internal relations. Many members of the European Union are also members of NATO. Therefore, the conflict between Turkey and Europe directly affects the current ties in NATO. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg is deeply concerned about what is happening between Ankara and the European Union. Turkey and Germany are two NATO members whose conflicts have intensified. Recent remarks by the German Chancellor on Turkey's membership in the European Union show that a good future is not waiting for the Ankara-European relations. Angela Merkel said she would seek an end to Turkey's membership talks with the European Union in an apparent shift of her position during a televised debate weeks before a German election.

"The fact is clear that Turkey should not become a member of the EU," Merkel said in the debate with her Social Democrat (SPD) challenger Martin Schulz. "I'll speak to my (EU) colleagues to see if we can reach a joint position on this so that we can end these accession talks."

An overview of Reuters's analysis of this issue is plausible: "The comments are likely to worsen already strained ties between the two NATO allies that have deepened since Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's crackdown on opponents in the aftermath of a failed coup attempt in July of last year."

Merkel's comments came after Schulz appeared to surprise her by vowing to push for an end to the negotiations if he was elected chancellor in the Sept. 24 federal election.

"If I become German chancellor, if the people of this country give me a mandate, then I will propose to the European Council that we end the membership talks with Turkey," Schulz said. "Whether we can win over all the countries for this I don't know. But I will fight for this."

Merkel's conservative party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), has long opposed Turkish membership in the European Union. But the green light for membership talks was given months before Merkel became chancellor in 2005 and she has always said that she will respect that decision, referring to the negotiations as "open ended". The accession talks have ground to a virtual halt and EU leaders have stepped up their criticism of Erdogan.

What is embedded in the analysis of Reuters is that the victory of each Social Democratic Party and Christian Democrats in the national elections in Germany will have an adverse effect on the relations between Turkey and the European Union. The opposition of both major German parties to Turkey's membership in the European Union has caused Erdogan to be disappointed with the results of the country's general election.

The main question is, will Turkey's membership of the European Union be concluded in the near future? Will Merkel's reoccupation with power, or even the presence of Moratin Schulz in power, mean the official announcement of the end of Turkey's accession negotiations in the European Union?

## Clinton Will Reappear!

## Reflection on the Remarks Made by the Former U.S. Secretary of State

By Ana Sadat Hosseini Ford

Although nearly one year has passed since the 2016 U.S. presidential election, public opinion has not forgotten Hillary Clinton's poor performance against Donald Trump. Clinton, on the other hand, is still trying to blame her weakness in the election and the failure of this political summit on FBI



and the U.S. security agencies. In the meantime Hillary Clinton's drastic fall in polls is more likely to be due to her apparent lack of marginalization with Republicans. Many American citizens have rightly concluded that there is essentially no distinction between Clinton and the Republicans.

The Secretary-General's recent remarks on last year's electoral competitions should be taken into consideration.

Democrat nominee for the 2016 presidential election in the United States believes that using her personal emails was her biggest mistake. She believes that this mistake has changed the presidential election equations for the last year to Donald Trump. Hillary Clinton, of course, has said she will continue to survive despite a failure in the 2016 election. As for the remarks made by the former U.S. Secretary of State, there are some points that need to be addressed:

First, unlike what she said, Hillary Clinton's main mistake was not to use her personal email during Obama's presidency! The main mistake of Hillary Clinton and other Democrat leaders was the illegal lobbying to strike Bernie Sanders of the Democratic electoral campaign. At that time, the Democratic super-delegates played an important role in climbing Hillary Clinton in the final round of the electoral campaign. After Hillary Clinton's defeat in New Hampshire and Sanders' spectacular showdown in this state, Democrat leaders did nothing to stop the Sanders smash. Preventing three million Democrats in New York to vote, the majority of which belonged to Sanders, led to Clinton's victory in this important state. Subsequently, Sanders did not actually act against Clinton.


While according to polls conducted in the United States, Sanders could have defeated Trump by 15 percent, Democrat Squad and the Clintons family planned the scene in a way that eventually Hillary Clinton reaches the end of the race. She eventually could not resist Donald Trump and accepted the defeat of the controversial Republican candidate. Therefore, the main mistake of Hillary Clinton and the Democrat leaders was to prevent a healthy competition from the Democratic Party. A competition that naturally resulted in Sanders winning and his progress in the final round.

Of course, neither Hillary Clinton nor Democrat leaders admit to this big mistake. This mistake has been the subject of betrayal of Democratic supporters. In other words, Democrat leaders, by supporting Hillary Clinton, have been willing to lead Democratic supporters of the party in her favor. Hillary Clinton spoke of her political career in the United States. It's a common mistake to leave no room for maneuver in the American political space after Clinton's defeat in the 2008 presidential race (vs. Obama) and 2016 (v. Trump). Many American voters, and especially Democrat supporters, believe that there is practically no difference between Clinton and the Republicans over stubbornly fighting stances.


It should not be forgotten that during the presidency of George W. Bush, when Clinton was present at the Senate of the United States and as Senator of New York, she supported the Iraq war. Meanwhile, many Democrat supporters expected her to stand up against Bush and his entourage. Later, Hillary Clinton made another mistake defending the Iraq war after Republicans failure in Iraq! The mistake that ended in costing the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent people in Iraq and Middle East.

Of course, here's another point that can't be easily overtaken. Along with the blunders of Hillary Clinton and Democrat leaders, the FBI's actions affected Clinton's defeat. Hillary Clinton's secret disclosure of secretive and secret emails (on the eve of the election) is a well-calculated plan by U.S. security agencies. However, Hillary Clinton's poor performance in televised and electoral debates was the main reason for her defeat in the election. On the other hand, if the Democratic leaders would compete in a healthy election and send Sanders to compete with Trump, then the Democratic supporters would vote for Sanders. Sanders also had no security mistakes in his work, (like the disclosure of Hillary Clinton's secret emails).

The same thing could increase Sanders's maneuverability against Trump. It was not unreasonable that many Republican leaders were afraid of Bernie Sanders' participation in the final round of the presidential election last year. However, choosing Hillary Clinton as the Democratic Republican nominee put the Republican party leaders mind at ease. Obviously, in such a situation, Hillary Clinton's talk of a return to the American political atmosphere is more like a political satire! Hillary Clinton is trying to distract the public opinion of the United States and its fellow members of the Democratic Party from her most important mistake. An attempt that ultimately won't be to her advantage. Undoubtedly, Hillary Clinton and Democrat leaders will have to make more general comment on the secret dimensions of their rivalry with Bernie Sanders in the near future.



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- Cold turkey (no outside help). About 90% of people who try to quit smoking do it without outside support -- no aids, therapy, or medicine. Although most people try to quit this way, it's not the most effective or successful method. Only between 4% and 7% are able to quit by doing it alone.

- Behavioral therapy. This involves working with a counselor to find ways not to smoke. Together, you'll find your triggers (such as emotions or situations that make you want to smoke) and make a plan to get through the cravings.

- Nicotine replacement therapy. Nicotine gum, patches, inhalers, sprays, and lozenges are nicotine replacement therapies. They work by giving you nicotine without the use of tobacco. You may be more likely to quit with nicotine replacement therapy, but it works best when combined with behavioral therapy and lots of support from friends and family. And remember that the goal is to end your addiction to nicotine, not simply to quit using tobacco.

- Medication. Bupropion (Zyban) and varenicline (Chantix) are prescription medications that can help with your cravings and symptoms from withdrawals.



- Combo treatments. Using a combination of treatment methods might increase your chances of quitting. For example, using both a nicotine patch and gum may be better than a patch alone. Other combination treatments that are helpful include behavioral therapy and nicotine replacement therapy; prescription medication used together a nicotine replacement therapy patch; and a nicotine replacement therapy patch and nicotine spray. The FDA hasn't approved using 2 types of nicotine replacement therapies at the same time, so be sure to talk with your doctor first to see if this is the right approach for you.

No matter which method you choose, an important part of quitting is to build the quit plan that works for you. Pick a quit date that gives you time to prepare without losing your motivation. Tell friends and family that you are quitting. Get rid of all cigarettes and ashtrays from your home, work, and car. Figure out your smoking triggers, and decide how you're going to deal with them.

## How to stay on track

There will be days when all you want to do is give in to your cravings. Don't do it. Quitting will be the best thing you ever do for yourself, but you have stick with your plan.

**The first few days of quitting are the toughest. You'll probably feel irritable, depressed, slow, and tired, especially if you're quitting cold turkey.**

Follow these steps to stay on track to a smoke-free life:

- Know your triggers and avoid them early on. Write down your triggers and how you can manage each situation. And avoid situations that normally make you want to smoke, especially during the first 3 months. This is when you're most likely to start smoking again.

- Know that the first few days are the toughest. You'll probably feel irritable, depressed, slow, and tired, especially if you're quitting cold turkey. Have a quit-smoking support group available. It can be a good friend or a quit line you can call. Once you get past those first days, you'll begin to feel more normal (though you'll still have cigarette cravings).

- Don't give in to your cravings. Every time you don't smoke when you have a craving, your chances of quitting go up. Change your habits; replace the oral fixation with something else like eating carrot sticks or sunflower seeds.

- Try a new hobby with friends who don't smoke. Do something that keeps your hands active and reduces stress, like walking your dog. It will make your success more likely.

- Reward yourself. What you're doing isn't easy. When you hit milestones, treat yourself with something you want or enjoy.

When smoking is no longer something you do, it can change how you see yourself. As much as you want to quit smoking, you may be surprised to feel sad or miss it. That's normal. Just don't let that feeling make you want to smoke.

(Source: helpguide.org)

## 3 benefits of the Bosu

By Marie Mulrooney

Ninety-six percent of trainers offer balance training as a session option, according to a 2008 survey by the IDEA Health and Fitness Association. In other words, these fitness professionals are putting balance aids like the Bosu trainer to work, helping their clients coordinate muscles and nerves to balance on the type of unstable surface you can easily encounter in real life, but that's not the only benefit Bosu trainers offer.

## About the Bosu

The Bosu trainer looks like half an exercise ball mounted on a rigid plastic base. You can use the Bosu ball with the dome side facing up, so it sits flat on the plastic base, or as a wobble board with the dome side facing down. Bosu trainers are versatile enough to use as stretching aids, balance-training equipment, rehabilitation equipment and even strength-training and plyometric training tools.

The Bosu takes up less space than a stability ball, and because it's flat on one side, you don't have to worry about a Bosu trainer rolling away from you the way that stability balls frequently do.

## Balance training and workout intensity

Most gym weight-training machines position you to push and pull on handles that move through set tracks, building muscular strength and endurance, but not the sort of coordination you need to stabilize free weights as they move unrestricted through space. Using free weights like dumbbells and barbells forces your muscles to stabilize and guide the weights, and doing your workout on the Bosu trainer takes it a step further, forcing your core to work constantly throughout the entire motion.

This is also an excellent way to make easy exercises more challenging; if you can do a full set of pushups, lunges or squats with good form, try doing them



on the Bosu trainer and you'll find yourself working harder.

## Flexibility training

Like a stability ball, the Bosu trainer's rounded top -- when you place it dome-side up -- offers good support for back and abdominal stretches. Just drape yourself over the trainer's soft dome, facing down or up, and relax to feel the stretch.

You can also place the Bosu trainer dome-side down and use it as a "slant board" to stretch your calves; place the ball of one foot on the edge of the rigid plastic, and rest the heel of that foot on the floor. The Bosu trainer will tilt beneath you, supporting your foot as you stretch your calf muscles.

## Workout variety and entertainment

Switching up your workout every few weeks is one of the best ways to keep from hitting a plateau. The changes in your routine force your body to continue adapting to new stimuli, but, perhaps more importantly, they also keep you entertained. You can easily plan and carry out workouts without the Bosu trainer, but if incorporating it keeps you entertained enough to keep working out, or just makes exercising fun again, it's a worthwhile investment.

## Effects of Bosu on the core

While exercising with a Bosu ball, you

constantly make slight adjustments to balance and counterbalance your body. This means that at all times, at least some part of your body is working to stabilize itself. The benefit of this to you is that your core is directly affected by every other part of your body. When you move to stabilize your arm or your leg, your core tightens up. While you work out on the Bosu, you are getting a core workout in.

## Safety is paramount

Before getting on the Bosu, there are a few things everyone should consider. Ease in to any new workout when incorporating stability. A shift of weight could easily turn to a sprained ankle. Be practical when getting on and off the Bosu, it is designed to offer an unstable platform to increase your workout and it provides this instability well. Consider limiting your range of motion when you feel excessive shaking. Breaking through barriers safely is far better than getting the full range and an injury.

## Bosu squats

One of the best exercises to do on a Bosu is the squat. First, make sure that you are close enough to a wall that you will be able to reach out and stabilize yourself if necessary. Place the Bosu with the platform facing up. With one hand on the wall for stability, place one foot in the center of the platform, bring the other behind it and work your way to a hip-width stance with your weight evenly distributed so you are balanced. Next bend your ankles, knees and hips almost simultaneously, like you were going to sit back in to a chair. Only go as far down as you can control. Stand all the way back up and repeat. Challenge yourself each time by pushing the depth of your squat. Add resistance with weight as you feel this becoming easier. This is an easy exercise for your thighs, calves, glutes and core.

(Source: livestrong.com)

## What your eyes say about your health

## Sudden blurry vision

An abrupt and dramatic loss of vision may be a sign of a problem with the blood flow to your eye or your brain. Immediate medical attention can prevent serious damage and may even save your life. Even if your vision gets better quickly, it might still be a warning of a stroke or the beginning of a migraine headache.

## Bulging eyes

Graves' disease causes your thyroid gland to release too many hormones, which can lead to this problem. It also may cause diarrhea, weight loss, and hand tremors. Medication or surgery can help control the amount of hormones your thyroid makes, but they won't cure the underlying disease -- and may not help your eyes.

## Blurred vision

This can be a sign of diabetes, which causes too much sugar in your blood. If it isn't well managed, you may get diabetic retinopathy (when tiny blood vessels in your eyes leak blood and other fluids). You may have blurred vision and find it hard to see at night. Doctors can use a laser to seal the leaks and get rid of unwanted new blood vessels. This may



affect your side vision, but it can save your central vision.

## Ring around your cornea

This condition, called corneal arcus, causes a gray-white line of fat deposits to grow on the outside edge of your cornea (a clear, curved surface at the front of your eye that helps it focus). Sometimes, the deposits make a complete ring. If you're older, it's probably not anything to worry about. But if you're under 40, it could be a sign of dangerously high cholesterol.

## Drooping eyelids

This can be a symptom of myasthenia gravis, which makes your immune system attack and weaken your muscles. It affects

your eye, face, and throat muscles more than others and can make it difficult to chew, swallow, or even speak. Your doctor may filter your blood to help ease your symptoms, but that doesn't work for long. There's also medication for it. But in some cases, surgery is needed to remove the thymus gland.

## Yellow whites of your eyes

When your skin and eyes look yellow, that's called jaundice. It often means you have liver problems and is caused by high levels of bilirubin, something your liver makes more of when it's inflamed or damaged. Bad diet, cancer, infection, and chronic alcohol abuse can

all damage your liver. Treatment ranges from lifestyle changes to medication to liver transplants.

## Eye twitches

These are extremely common and almost always harmless -- they usually go away on their own. They can be associated with alcohol, fatigue, caffeine, or smoking. In extremely rare cases, they can be a sign of a problem with your nervous system, like multiple sclerosis. But if the twitches are linked to MS or another problem with your nervous system, you would have other symptoms, too, like difficulty walking, talking, and going to the bathroom.

## Night blindness

If it's hard for you to see in low light, you might need glasses or you could have cataracts -- a natural part of aging. But night blindness is not common among younger people in the U.S. In unusual circumstances, you may not be getting enough vitamin A. This is fairly common in poorer countries. It's treated with supplements or a diet with foods high in vitamin A, like sweet pot, beef liver, spinach, carrots, and pumpkins.

(Source: webmd.com)

## 20 brilliant ways to use Vicks VapoRub you've probably never thought of



Vicks VapoRub is one of the most underrated and versatile cure-alls that you probably have in your medicine cabinet and never knew.

And no, we're not just talking about VapoRub's ability to help you clear up congestion or get rid of a headache. Everybody knows Vicks VapoRub can do that!

## Vicks Vaporub uses

So what are the other uses for vicks vapor rub? Well, in this article you'll discover twenty problems you never knew Vicks VapoRub could help you with.

## 1.) Get rid of pesky mosquitoes

If you are ever out camping, you should always bring some Vicks VapoRub with you. Just a small dab on your clothes will keep the mosquitoes away.

## 2.) Get rid of chest congestion

All you need to do is apply a bit of Vicks VapoRub to your neck and chest to get rid of chest congestion.

## 3.) Stop cats from scratching

Vicks VapoRub can prevent your cat from scratching walls, windows, or doors if you apply a small amount to these areas.

## 4.) Keep your horse in line

A little VapoRub under your horse's nose will block out the scents of female ponies, so your horse will not be distracted during the big race.

## 5.) Eliminates earache pain

Dab a little of Vicks VapoRub on a cotton ball and place it in your ear for several hours, several times a day. This will help eliminate the pain but it will not clear up an infection.

## 6.) Eliminate nail fungus

If you suffer from nail fungus, just apply Vicks VapoRub to the area two times a day until the fungus goes away.

## 7.) Reduce stretch marks

Stretch marks vanish within two-weeks of applying Vicks VapoRub.

## 8.) Relieve tennis elbow

The menthol and camphor in Vicks VapoRub can reduce the pain associated with tennis elbow. Just apply to the affected areas on your elbows till the pain is gone.

## 9.) Help cracked heels

You can put a thick glob of Vicks VapoRub on your heels every night. Be sure to wear cotton socks while you sleep. When you wake up, just rinse off the VapoRub and pumice your heels.

## 10.) Heal athlete's foot

Put a bit of Vicks VapoRub on your foot two times a day to combat athlete's foot.

## 11.) Heal sore muscles

If you have sore muscles from overuse, just take a little VapoRub and apply it to your problem muscle. After that, apply a warm dry towel to the area. Then lie down and gently lift your troubled muscle till you can feel the soreness decrease.

## 12.) Cry on command

If you are cast in a role where you have to cry, just place a little VapoRub under your eyes before the scene.

## 13.) Sinus headache

If you suffer from these nasty headaches, it is best to deeply breathe VapoRub in straight from the can.

## 14.) Potty train pets

Just put a bottle of Vicks VapoRub any place you want to deter your pet from peeing on.

## 15.) Reduce eczema

A little VapoRub is great for getting rid of itchiness and inflammation associated with eczema.

## 16.) Clears up acne

Forget about Proactiv. A bit of Vicks VapoRub will dry out your pimples in no time.

## 17.) Repels insects

Vicks VapoRub is great for repelling outdoor insects. You can rub some VapoRub on your neck, knees, elbows, and behind the ears if you are hiking. If you are sitting down, just open up a can of Vicks VapoRub and place it by your side.

## 18.) Heal dry skin

VapoRub works great as a skin moisturizer. If you have dry skin, just apply some VapoRub and feel the results.

## 19.) Heal bruises

If you have a fresh bruise, no worries. Just mix some Vicks VapoRub with a pinch of salt and apply it to your bruise.

## 20.) Heal cuts

A dab Vicks VapoRub speeds up recovery time for cuts and splinters.

From helping you with a number of health related issues to repelling insects as you can see there are many cost effective and beneficial uses for vicks vapor rub.

(Source: edrugsearch.com)



## 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** Companies will use AI to stamp out electricity theft.

A team from the University of Luxembourg has developed an algorithm that sifts through electricity meter data to detect abnormal usage. They put the system to work on info compiled from 3.6 million Brazilian households over the course of five years.

**2** 'Platoons' of autonomous Freightliner trucks will drive across Oregon.

German automotive titan Daimler announced its trucks will engage in 'platooning' tests on highways in Oregon and Nevada.

**3** Lyft announced a few new features for its driver support app that are meant to make the process of getting help simpler and easier to navigate. First, the Lyft Driver app will now include a button that will allow drivers to quickly connect with the company's new 24/7 over-the-phone support service. And Lyft is also rolling out phone and email support for Spanish-speaking drivers and adding Spanish-speaking team members to its on-call support team.

**4** In-flight Netflix will be available on more airlines in 2018.

Mobile streaming technology makes it possible. Netflix's in-flight streaming is available through a few carriers around the world, but it's far from a staple of air travel.

**5** Apple has ditched Bing in favor of Google for results when searching the internet with Siri on iOS or Spotlight on macOS.

Google will provide general internet links and videos, but Bing will still give image search results for now.

**6** Snapchat is rolling out some new filters that go beyond your face. Now, any time the app detects a sky in your picture, "Sky Filters" will show up in the filter carousel. They'll allow you to switch the real sky out for something entirely different including a starry night, a sunset, one with a brewing storm or a sky with rainbows. The filter options will rotate daily.

**7** Tough times for devoted WhatsApp users in China -- the popular messaging app has been just blocked locally, following several days of spotty functionality on a local scale. It's joining the fold of multiple other ultra-popular apps, services, and websites like Wikipedia, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, most of Google's services, and many others.

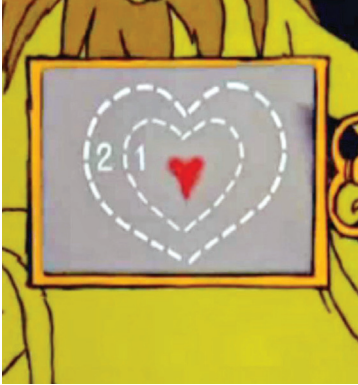
**8** Two Fitbit products will be available for purchase at the beginning of the next month: Ionic and Flyer. The smartwatch and wireless headphones Fitbit introduced a while ago will be launched on the market on the first day of October.

**9** Several Apple iPhone 8 and Apple iPhone 8 Plus users are complaining about hearing static through the pair's earpiece during cellular phone calls. The static is not showing up when the call is heard over a headset, or if the speaker phone feature is in use.

**10** Following in Huawei's footsteps, Samsung is reportedly working on dedicated AI processing chips. According to industry sources cited by The Korea Herald, Samsung is currently working on "several types" of dedicated AI processing chips.

## Researchers can use the size of your heart to unlock a PC

Most biometric security has one inconvenience: you have to take an active step to sign in, whether it's putting your finger on a pad or staring at sensors. Wouldn't it be nice if simply being near your device was enough? It might happen. Researchers have created a computer authentication system that uses your heart's shape and size to sign in. It uses low-level Doppler radar to continuously scan your heart's dimensions, granting access so long as you're in the right place. In other words, Cindy-Lou Who couldn't hijack the Grinch's PC when he steps away for a coffee break.



As your heart doesn't change throughout your adult life outside of extreme situations (such as heart disease), it's as surefire as any other biometric sign-in method but works passively. It could even work at long distances, too. The team envisions airports using this to authenticate people up to 98 feet away, which is slightly creepy but undoubtedly convenient when you're rushing to your gate. And before you ask: the radar's strength is "much less" than that of WiFi, so you won't be torturing your heart simply to avoid typing in a password.

The team hopes to shrink its system to the point where it could sit inside the corner of a computer keyboard, and believes it could be useful for smartphones.

(Source: engadget)

# Dubai begins testing drone taxi service

Dubai has announced the first test flight for its taxi drone, which saw the driverless flying transport service hover around 200 metres above the ground during a five-minute flight.

The taxi drone was designed by German company Volocopter, and resembles a two-seater helicopter topped by a hoop equipped with 18 propellers, designed for 30-minute flights at maximum.

The drone also comes with back-up batteries, rotors, and two parachutes in case of flight failures, and would involve building "volocopters" from where passengers would embark and disembark the service.

The test flight took place as part of a ceremony for Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed. Following the trial, Volocopter CEO Florian Reuter said the company plans to launch the flying taxi service within five years.

"Implementation would see you using your smartphone, having an app, and ordering a volocopter to the next voloport near you. The volocopter would come and autonomously pick you up and take you to your destination," Reuter said.

"It already is capable of flying based on GPS tracks today, and we will implement full sense capability, also dealing with unknown obstacles on the way."

Dubai officials had in February announced plans to launch an autonomous drone passenger craft by July 2017.

Head of Dubai's Roads and Transportation Agency Mattar Al Tayar at the time said the EHang 184 drone -- introduced at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) 2016 -- was undergoing test flights over the Burj al-Arab in Dubai.

The EHang 184 has a four-rotor design, and is capable of carrying up to 100kg, or one individual passenger with



baggage. It is able to fly at a maximum of 100 miles an hour for 23 minutes at sea level, or 10 minutes at 62 miles an hour at a higher altitude.

Able to operate in an area of up to 50km, EHang originally announced plans to use the autonomous drone to transport organs with Lung Biotechnology last year.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum said last April that he envisions a quarter of all journeys to be driverless by 2030 in Dubai, with the UAE already using a driverless rail service transporting millions of passengers each year. Middle Eastern company Careem will also begin testing its driverless electric pod vehicles in Dubai, it announced last month, as part of a collaboration with California-based NEXT Future Transportation.

Aircraft manufacturer Airbus is also working on its own flying taxi drone named Vahana, in May saying it should be commercially viable by 2020 depending on whether next-generation computing power has the ability to examine 4,000x3,000-pixel images from radar, lidar, and cameras and stitch them together to detect objects.

Vahana, which Airbus is hoping to test during 2017, is designed to travel at around 230km/h, Airbus A3 head of autonomous systems Arne Stoschek said, and will have to skirt airborne obstacles without the ability to apply brakes.

"If we have an obstacle 500 metres away ... that's 10 seconds to impact. If we have something that is [approaching] with our own speed, closing speed of 100 metres per second, then we have five seconds to impact, which is not a lot of time," Stoschek said at the time.

"So we need to be both very accurate, and very fast."

Airbus will need an order of magnitude increase in CPU performance, memory, power usage, software, and hardware to handle the sheer amount of data involved, Stoschek said, and there will also have to be an overhaul in drone regulations, he added.

"We have a set of rules for cars that allows cars to be operated basically bumper-to-bumper, so you can pack a ton of cars [in]," he said.

"Currently in aerospace it is very, very

different ... you need to have what is called a separation distance, [such that] you could operate one aircraft over the entire city of San Francisco.

"So obviously in aerospace, we need a new system of rules that allows us to pack a lot of aircraft into the sky."

Telstra CTO Håkan Eriksson had last week suggested that regulatory difficulties could be solved by treating drones as flying mobile phones and allowing network operators to offer a "drone-control-as-a-service" offering.

"What if we say every drone is like a flying mobile phone? Put a SIM card in them so they have identity, put the radio in so they can always talk to them, and then if a drone wants to take off it has to talk to a database where we put all the rules," Eriksson said.

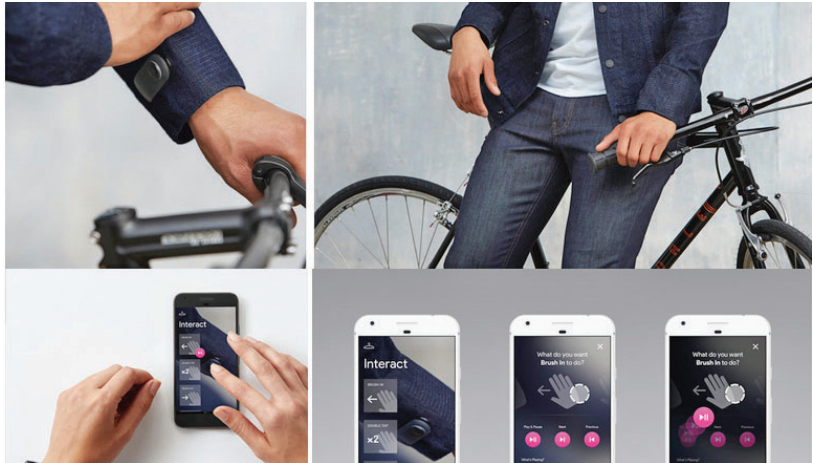
Requirements such as how many drones are allowed to fly in a given area, what height they are allowed to travel at, what hours they are permitted to fly during, and how close they are allowed to be within certain buildings or people could be programmed into this database, Eriksson said.

Concerns about drones getting in the way of aircraft would also be addressed via the use of mobile networks, Eriksson told ZDNet, because coverage only extends to around 150m above ground level.

"The most useful use of drones is up to say maybe 100 metres. There's no point -- if it cannot deliver something, search for somebody, there's no point flying much higher, because that's where you see things. So up to that height, we have pretty good coverage with the mobile network ... and there are no planes there," he explained.

(Source: Zdnet )

## Google and Levi's unveil internet-connected jacket



American clothing company Levi's is addressing some serious first world problems with its \$350 smart jacket, powered by Google's connected apparel platform Jacquard.

The inability to answer calls or do other smartphone-specific activities while riding a bike, standing on a crowded train, or carrying groceries can certainly be worrying, despite humans having survived for millennia without that capability.

Regardless, the denim jacket, called the Levi's Commuter Trucker Jacket, has been designed to address this problem, or perhaps just introduce a different way for users to interface with their smartphones.

It is the result of a long-term partnership between Levi's and Google to integrate capacitive threads with a copper core into the manufacturing process of a denim jacket.

The smart jacket is equipped with a removable snap tag on the left sleeve cuff that allows wearers to interact with their smartphone more safely using gestures, LEDs, and haptic feedback. It's somewhat similar to wearing a smartwatch.

But unlike a lot of smart garments, which target athletes, Levi's jacket is designed for urban commuters. Previously, technology was mostly embedded in compression shirts for athletes, which have sensors woven into their fabric and a transmitter module that relays the data to a smartphone connected via Bluetooth.

But a lot of the previous smart garments weren't smart enough to understand gestures.

"With Jacquard technology, you can perform common digital tasks -- like starting or stopping music, getting directions, or reading incoming text messages -- by simply swiping or tapping the jacket sleeve," Google stated in a blog post.

The Jacquard app, available for iOS and Android, can be used to customise gestures to "invoke different digital 'abilities'."

The tag charges via USB and the battery lasts for roughly two weeks. The jacket can be washed, as long as the tag is removed.

The smart jacket is compatible with phones running Android 6.0.1 or newer and iOS 10 or newer, although Google said features vary between Android and iOS.

The Levi's Commuter Trucker Jacket will become available in select stores on Wednesday and can be purchased online in the US next week.

Almost three years ago, analyst firm Gartner predicted that smart garments would take off significantly, outstripping all other types of wearable fitness-tracking gadgets in terms of growth and becoming the single largest category in 2016.

However, in 2017, bluetooth headsets, fitness bands, and smartwatches are the top-selling wearable devices worldwide.

(Source: The Verge)

## Intel's 8th-gen desktop CPUs boost gaming and streaming speeds



Intel has launched its 8th-generation mainstream desktop chips, calling the flagship \$359 Core i7-8700K its "best gaming desktop processor ever." The six-core, 12-thread 3.7GHz chip boosts Gears of War 4 frame rates up to 25 percent compared to 7th-gen desktop chips. It can also do 4K video editing up to 32 percent faster. The best gains are with multitasking, and Intel says gaming, streaming and recording with Player Unknown: Battlegrounds will be 45 percent faster than before.

What's more, it can be overclocked to 4.7 GHz using Intel's Turbo Boost 2.0, and 5GHz and higher speeds are easily achieved with air or basic liquid cooling. The speed gains are even more impressive if your system is over three years old, but probably won't push many folks with 7th-gen Intel chips into upgrading.

For multimedia, it's worth noting that Intel has implemented some new 4K tech, which will make for smoother streaming of 10-bit, HDR Ultra HD video now on services like Netflix and many new 4K TVs.

The 8th-gen Core i5 and Core i3 chips in the lineup might be more interesting for consumers. The Core i3 chips start at \$117 and have quad-cores and base clock speeds up to 4 GHz, while the Core i5 models, starting at \$182, are six-core units. Neither are multi-threaded, but four physical cores and four threads is a

lot better than two cores and four threads, which is what the i3 lineup had before.

If you have Intel's 7th-gen Core i7 chip and want to upgrade to get every ounce of gaming or graphics speed, it's not as simple as a chip swap. The new CPUs will require Intel's Z370 chipset-based motherboards, so they're not at all compatible with whatever model you have right now.

That chipset has a few advantages over the last gen, like improved power delivery for 6-core chips and better support for DDR4-2666 memory, but nothing dramatic. Some pundits have noted that Intel could have made them compatible with older motherboards, but elected not to. Intel is also touting its Optane storage for gamers, but as we've mentioned, this won't help you much if you already have an SSD, and not at all if you have M.2 PCIe-based storage.

The mainstream 8th-gen desktop chips are a bit less interesting than the 8th-gen laptop CPUs, which offered more performance than expected. Meanwhile, Intel recently unveiled the 7th-gen X-series i9 chips, which rock up to 18 cores, a seemingly dramatic boost over the top-spec 10-core i7-6950X previous-gen models. The new eighth-gen desktop chips will arrive starting on October 5th, and as mentioned, the flagship Intel Core i7-8700K will cost you \$359.

(Source: Intel)

## Microsoft and Facebook's massive undersea data cable is complete

Last year, Microsoft and Facebook were teaming up to build a massive undersea cable that would cross the Atlantic, connecting Virginia Beach to the northern city of Bilbao in Spain. Last week, Microsoft announced that the cable, called Marea, is complete.

Marea, which means "tide" in Spanish, lies over 17,000 feet below the Atlantic Ocean's surface and is around 4,000 miles long. It weighs 10.25 million pounds. The data rates (which let's face it, that's what

we're all really interested in) are equally staggering: Marea can transmit at a rate of 160 terabits/second. And it was finished in less than two years.

What's really interesting about Marea, though, is that it has an open design. This means that Microsoft and Facebook are trying to make the cable as future proof as possible. It can evolve as technology changes and demands increase for more data and higher speeds. Its flexibility means that upgrading the cable and its

equipment to be compatible with newer technology will be easier.

If you're interested in learning more about Marea, you can watch the recorded livestream of a celebration of the cable that happened last Friday. It's nice to see tech companies working together, and on big projects that will help them meet future demands for Internet usage.

(Source: Microsoft)



# NASA's Iranian scientist, colleagues create first 3D-printed rocket part

NASA has taken another step forward in 3D printed rocket engines by manufacturing and testing an igniter prototype using two distinct metal alloys. Using an advanced laser printing method, engineers led by senior engineer Robin Osborne of ERC Inc. produced the component in a way that could one day reduce the costs by a third and speed up the process by half.

3D-printed rocket engine components have been around for a while, but until now they've been made out of a single metal using relatively conventional printing methods.

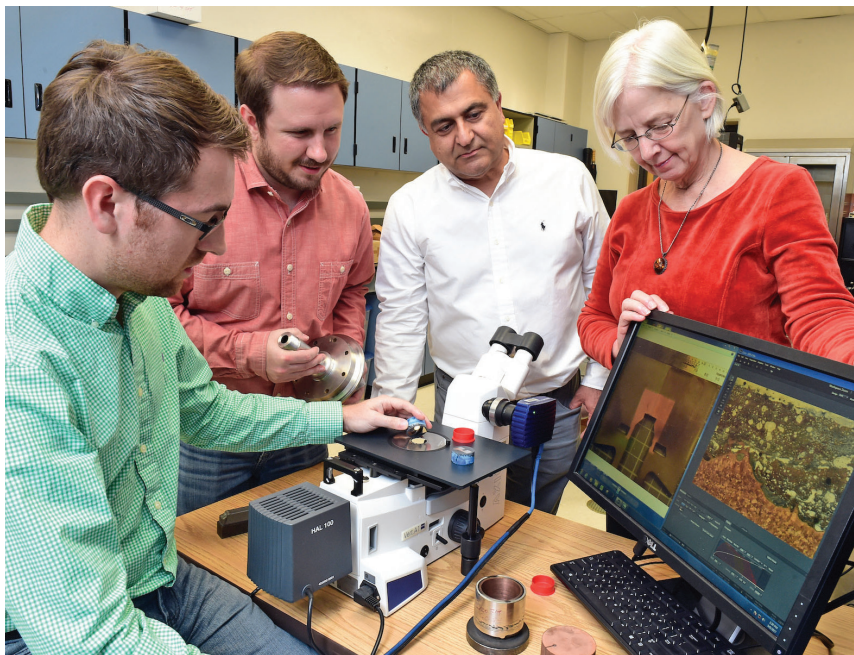
In the latest NASA project, engineers at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, worked with a commercial vendor to produce a rocket engine igniter – a key part used at the moment of ignition.

## Different metal alloys

Igniters tend to be very complex and involve bonding together different metal alloys. The usual way of bonding such alloys has been to braze them. That is, to heat the two pieces of metal with a filler metal between them, causing them to weld strongly together and form a bimetallic component.

The trouble is, this is a highly skilled, labor intensive process that takes significant time.

The NASA approach eliminates the brazing step by using a hybrid 3D printing process called automated



Iranian Professor Majid Babai (2nd R)

blown powder laser deposition.

This process sees a stream of me-

tallic powder blown into the focus of a laser, which sinters the particles in

**In the latest NASA project, engineers at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, worked with a commercial vendor to produce a rocket engine igniter – a key part used at the moment of ignition.**

midair and fuses them to the object being made. Here, it was the prototype igniter made of copper alloy and Inconel – a nickel-chromium-based superalloy.

## Hybrid machine

By using this method in a hybrid machine made by DMG MORI that combines 3-D printing and computer numerical-control machining capabilities, it was possible to make the igniter in one piece instead of the previous four, and also create the complex interior shape of the 10-in (25-cm) tall, 7-in (18-cm) wide igniter. In addition, the two alloys intermixed and fused directly to form a strong bond that stood up to 30 low-pressure hot-fire tests last July.

"Eliminating the brazing process and having bimetallic parts built in a single machine not only decreases cost and manufacturing time, but it also decreases risk by increasing reliability," says Majid Babai, project lead at Marshall's Materials and Processes Laboratory.

"By diffusing the two materials together through this process, a bond is generated internally with the two materials and any hard transition is eliminated that could cause the component to crack under the enormous forces and temperature gradient of space travel."

(Source: newatlas.com)

## Scientists closing in on the dawn of plate tectonics

Geologists think early Earth may have looked much like Iceland — where jet-black lava fields extend as far as the eye can see, inky mountainsides rise steeply above the clouds and stark black-sand beaches outline the land.

But over time the world gradually became less bleak. Today Earth also harbors light-colored rocks, like the granite that composes Half Dome in Yosemite National Park. But scientists remain uncertain as to when the world started to transition from the one that looked like Iceland to that which we know today.

A new study published Thursday in Science suggests the shift transpired more than 3.5 billion years ago. Not only does the finding tell scientists the color of the world's early beaches, it might help them understand when tectonic plates — the interlocking slabs of crust that fit together like puzzle pieces far beneath our feet — started to wake up and shuffle around. That is because the lighter-colored rocks, known as felsic rocks, are actually dark, or mafic, rocks "reincarnated."

## Felsic rocks

In short, felsic rocks form when mafic ones are pushed deep inside Earth — possibly when one tectonic plate slips under another in a process called subduction. Given that light-colored felsic rocks were abundant billions of years ago, plate tectonics had likely already kicked into action.

In order to reach that conclusion, Nicolas Greber, a geologist at the

University of Chicago, and his colleagues analyzed 78 different layers of sediment to pin down the ratio of felsic to mafic rocks. This was not as simple as counting light versus dark stones (both had long ago eroded into tiny particles). Instead, Greber's team looked at titanium.

Although the metallic element is present in both types of rock, the proportion of its isotopes (chemically identical atoms with the same number of protons but a different number of neutrons) shifts as the rock changes from mafic to felsic. Suppose you mix something that turns out both salty and sweet, Greber says.

## Earliest sediments

An analysis like this gives you an "idea of how much salt you added and how much sugar you added." He had expected the earliest sediments in his sample, which date back 3.5 billion years, would be composed mostly of mafic particles. But to his surprise, roughly half of the particles locked within were felsic.

Assuming those rocks formed within subduction zones, that means tectonic plates were already on the go by that time — a conclusion that just might help solve an age-old mystery: the birth date of plate tectonics.

Scientists have long argued over the precise date these crustal plates started to rouse from their slumber, with estimates ranging from one billion to 4.2 billion years ago. That range is far too large if scientists want to understand the evolution of early Earth.

(Source: Scientific American)

## More surface ice on Mercury than previously thought, says new study

Back in 2012, scientists were delighted to discover that within the polar regions of Mercury, vast amounts of water ice were detected. While the existence of water ice in this permanently-shaded region had been the subject of speculation for about 20 years, it was only after the Mercury Surface, Space Environment, Geochemistry, and Ranging (MESSENGER) spacecraft studied the polar region that this was confirmed.

Based on the MESSENGER data, it was estimated that Mercury could have between 100 billion to 1 trillion tons of water ice at both poles, and that the ice could be up to 20 meters (65.5 ft) deep in places.

However, a new study by a team of researchers from Brown University indicates that there could be three additional large craters and many more smaller ones in the northern polar region that also contain ice.

## Three Large Craters

The study, titled "New Evidence for Surface Water Ice in Small-Scale Cold Traps and in Three Large Craters at the North Polar Region of Mercury from the Mercury Laser Altimeter", was recently published in the Geophysical Research Letters. Led by Ariel Deutsch, a NASA AS-TAR Fellow and a Ph.D. candidate at Brown University, the team considered how small-scale deposits could dramatically increase the overall amount of ice on Mercury.

Despite being the closest planet to the Sun, and experiencing scorching surface temperatures on its Sun-facing side, Mercury's low axial

tilt means that its polar regions are permanently shaded and experience average temperatures of about 200 K (-73 °C; -100 °F). The idea that ice might exist in these regions dates back to the 1990s, when Earth-based radar telescopes detected highly reflective spots within the polar craters.

This was confirmed when the MESSENGER spacecraft detected neutron signals from the planet's north pole that were consistent with water ice. Since that time, it has been the general consensus that Mercury's surface ice was confined to seven large craters. But as Ariel Deutsch explained in a Brown University press statement, she and her team sought to look beyond them:

## Small-scale deposits

The "assumption has been that surface ice on Mercury exists predominantly in large craters, but we show evidence for these smaller-scale deposits as well. Adding these small-scale deposits to the large deposits within craters adds significantly to the surface ice inventory on Mercury."

For the sake of this new study, Deutsch was joined by Gregory A. Neumann, a research scientist from NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, and James W. Head.

In addition to being a professor the Department of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences at Brown, Head was also a co-investigator for the MESSENGER and the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter missions.

(Source: Universe Today)

## Antarctic sea ice levels hit record low, but experts are not sure why

Sea ice levels in Antarctica dropped to a record low this year, but experts say there is not a clear link to climate change.

More than 60 meteorologists and scientists from around the world are holding a week-long meeting in Hobart, Tasmania, to better understand sea ice changes on the frozen continent.

Dr. Jan Lieser from the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre said sea ice levels had experienced a "massive increase" in variability over the past few years.

Sea ice coverage fell to 2.075m sq km in March, the lowest since satellite observations began in 1979. But just three years earlier it hit a record high of more than 20m sq km.

Lieser said increasing ocean surface temperatures melt the ice but may also be helping it refreeze.

## More warmth

"More warmth into the system reduces the sea ice cover but there's also other mechanisms," he said. "Increased warmth increases the melt underneath shelves — that increases the fresh water balance of



the ocean.

Better mapping and predicting these changes to aid polar shipping is the goal of the International Ice Charting Working Group Tasmanian meeting.

Unpredictable sea ice levels are creating headaches for an increasing number of tourist and research boats visiting the Antarctic.

The working group estimates about 50 cruise vessels took almost 35,000 tourists to the Antarctic last year.

In late 2013 Russian ship Akademik Shokalskiy got stuck in thick ice for a fortnight. The Aurora Australis icebreaker was one of several boats to help ferry crew and passengers to safety.

Australian Antarctic Division oper-

ations manager Robb Clifton said the amount and location of sea ice played a big role in planning this summer's trip.

"With less ice this year, we're certainly thinking about whether or not we'll be able to operate with vehicles, or whether we need to gear up for more aviation operations," he said.

## Working group

The co-chair of the working group and director of the Danish Meteorological Institute, Marianne Thyrring, said more data from the Antarctic needed to be gathered.

"We have to be more on our toes to make people operate safely in these polar areas," she said. "The seasons are being different and are developing differently each year."

So you can see why we need to ask for your help. The Guardian's independent, investigative journalism takes a lot of time, money and hard work to produce. But we do it because we believe our perspective matters — because it might well be your perspective, too.

(Source: The Guardian)

## Plastic waste now polluting Arctic Ocean, scientists find

Plastic waste in the ocean is now so widespread it is polluting remote ice floes in the Arctic, scientists have discovered.

A team from Exeter University discovered blocks of polystyrene in areas hundreds of miles from land which until recently were covered by ice all year round.

Large plastic pieces break down into 'microplastics' which are consumed by wildlife and are then passed up the food chain.

The expedition was able to go further into the Central Arctic Ocean than any other yacht in history, because of recent reductions in summer ice cover in the Arctic, which is thought to be the result of climate change.

Marine biologist Tim Gordon of Exeter University said: "Finding pieces of rubbish like this is a worrying sign that melting ice may be allowing high levels of pollution to drift into these areas.

"This is potentially very dangerous for the Arctic's wildlife.

"The Arctic Ocean's wildlife used to be protected by a layer of sea ice all year round. Now that is melting away, this environment will be exposed to commercial fishing, shipping and industry for the first time in history.

"We need to seriously consider how best to protect the Arctic's animals from these new threats. By doing so, we will give them a fighting chance of adapting and responding to their rapidly-changing habitat."

The Arctic Mission team also used nets with holes smaller than a millimeter to sieve for microplastics in the water.

They will now analyze the samples in the laboratory to evaluate current levels of pollution in the Arctic and its likely impacts on wildlife.

(Source: The Telegraph)

## The material that obscures supermassive black holes

Black holes appear to play a fundamental role in how galaxies evolve throughout their life during a phase in which they are active and consume material from the galaxy itself. During this phase, the galaxy hosts an active galactic nucleus (AGN), and the effect that this nuclear activity produces in the galaxy is known as AGN feedback.



This feedback can take place in different forms: the AGN can heat, disrupt, consume and remove the gas available to form new stars, preventing further galaxy growth. In fact, AGN feedback is now required by simulations of galaxy formation to explain the observations of massive galaxies at cosmological distances. "If AGN feedback is not accounted for in the simulations", explains Cristina Ramos, the "predicted number of massive galaxies when the universe was younger is much higher than those that are observed".

Directly studying the influence of nuclear activity on galaxy evolution is challenging because of the different spatial scales and timescales involved in the two processes.

It is estimated that the phases of nuclear activity last for a short period of time, between one and a hundred million years, whereas galaxy evolution processes, such as bulge growth or bar formation last much longer. Thus, in order to study the connection between the AGN and the host galaxy, "we need," explains Claudio Ricci, "to look at the nucleus of galaxies, where the material that links them is found."

In this review, Cristina Ramos Almeida, researcher at the Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias (IAC), and Claudio Ricci, astrophysicist at the Institute of Astronomy of the Universidad Católica de Chile, tried to give a comprehensive view of the current understanding, thanks to infrared and X-ray studies, of nuclear obscuration in AGN.

(Source: EurekAlert)

## Even Guppies have personalities, new research finds

How people respond to stressful situations can say a lot about their personalities — and it turns out the same is true of a little fish called the Trinidadian guppy. That's according to a study published this week in the journal Functional Ecology, for which a team of scientists stressed out a bunch of guppies and watched how they responded.

Trinidadian guppies don't have bills to pay, bosses to please or relationships to manage, but they do know they make a tasty snack for a range of animals, and they like being able to hang out in groups, called shoals.

The scientists caught each fish from the main tank and put it in a private suite, which was filmed throughout the experiment and included a small area where the fish could hide. That technique has a long history in behavioral studies, including of guppies, and is considered a reliable indicator of their behavior. The scientists gave the fish a fright: either dipping a model of a heron head into the tank or showing a large predator fish called a cichlid in the tank next door, to mimic two types of predators these guppies face in the wild.

The entire process took about five minutes, and each fish went through each of those ordeals once a week for a month, letting scientists get a handle on the consistency of their individual responses. For each recording, the scientists analyzed how much of the tank the fish swam through, how much time it spent in the sheltered area, how many times the fish stopped swimming and how much space the fish covered.

(Source: Newsweek)



## JICA pledges \$7m to address Tehran’s air pollution

**ENVIRONMENT d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has pledged \$7 million to tackle the everlasting air pollution in the metropolis of Tehran, IRIB reported on Monday.

As per a memorandum of understanding signed between the Japanese agency and Tehran Air Quality Control Company (affiliated with Tehran Municipality), JICA will join hands with Iran to mitigate air pollution in the capital.

Iran and Japan has negotiated the aforesaid scheme for two years and now Japanese experts along with Iranian experts will develop projects to study the causes of air pollution such as industrial units and vehicles in the next four years, Vahid Hosseini the CEO of Tehran Air Quality Control Company said.

Choking air pollution hitting metropolises of Iran especially during cold seasons is making living in cities harder than ever. The predicament is blamed on numerous factors namely clunkers, sand mines, sand and dust storms originating from dried up wetlands, pollutant industries, carburetor motorcycles, etc.

“We have always been asked about the main culprit of Tehran air pollution and we have answered it correctly but now with the assistant of Japan and their experience in reduction of air pollution we can implement air pollution abatement projects more effectively and find better answers to this question,” Hosseini added.

Hosseini went on to say that “within the framework of the newly signed memorandum of understanding JICA will provide us with technical and scientific support, equipment and training programs to minimize Tehran’s air pollution.”

He further expressed hope that Iran succeed in instituting and enacting macro policies on fighting air pollution within the next four years. “We will certainly implement our findings from this project in other cities as well.”

The air quality control company CEO further mentioned another pending agreement under which JICA will grant Iran air pollution monitoring and testing equipment worth of \$13 million in the near future.

Head of JICA’s office in Iran Yukihiro Kobayashi, for his part, explained that the project is focusing on finding the exact causes of air pollution and to implement the effective measures taken in other countries as well.

“I believe that Iranian government and the public are capable of overcoming the air pollution and this project is the starting point for working out more effective solution to air pollution,” Kobayashi noted.

In a three-year attempt to revive the Lake Urmia in northwest Iran through engaging local community and farmers by applying sustainable agriculture techniques, JICA has made \$3 million in contributions since 2014 to the lake restoration program.

Lake Urmia was once the largest lake in the Middle East and the sixth-largest saltwater lake on Earth, but is facing a dramatic decline for some years now.

## LEARN ENGLISH

### Mobile Phone Plan

B: Yeah, I’ve just moved here, and I’d like to **activate** my cell phone, and I’m not sure if I should go with a **prepaid plan**, or a **monthly rate plan**.

A: I see. Well, can I have a look at your phone? Unfortunately, this phone can’t be used in the U.S.; it’s not **compatible with** our 3G network.

B: What? Really? I don’t really want to have to buy a new phone.

A: Well, you’re **in luck!** You see, if you sign up for our three-year plan, we’ll **throw in** a **handset** for free.

B: Really? **What’s the catch?**

A: There’s no catch! You just choose a plan, sign a three-year contract and, that’s it! Actually, we’re running a special promotion right now, and we’re giving away a Blackberry Curve with our special Mega Value forty dollar plan.

B: So what does this plan include?

A: Well, you get nine hundred **anytime minutes**, and you can also enjoy free mobile to mobile calling to other Tel-Mobile clients, one thousand **text messages** per month, and **unlimited evening and weekend minutes**. Oh, and we also offer a **rollover** option.

B: Wow, all this for forty dollars per month?

A: That’s right, plus the activation **fee**, the emergency services fee, the monthly service fee, oh, and any **charges** for extra minutes, and...

#### ■ Key vocabulary

**activate:** cause something to start working

**prepaid rate plan:** a program where you pay for cell phone time in advance

**monthly rate plan:** a program that needs you to pay every month

**compatible with:** able to work well together

**in luck:** you are lucky right now; we have what you need

**throw in:** give something extra for free

**handset:** mobile phone

**what is the catch:** what is the hidden drawback

**any time minutes:** cell phone time you can use at any time

**text message:** short messages sent by mobile phone

**unlimited:** without limit; as much as you want

**evening and weekend minutes:** cell phone minutes you can use on evenings and weekends

**rollover:** allow unused minutes to be used the next month

**fee:** the amount of money you need to pay

**charge:** the amount of money you need to pay

#### ■ Supplementary vocabulary

**device:** an object or machine made for a specific purpose

**data package:** a part of a cell phone package that lets you go on the internet

**text:** write and send a text message

**landline:** a phone that attaches to the network by a wire

**SIM card:** a computer chip you put in your cell phone

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

# 130 schools inaugurated in deprived regions

**SOCIETY d e s k** **TEHRAN** — One hundred and thirty new schools were inaugurated in deprived regions across Iran on Tuesday.

The schools have been constructed by the Barekat Foundation, a non-governmental entity which was established in 2007 as per a decree issued by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Comprising a total of 700 classrooms, the schools will cover a population of around 17,000 students in Lorestan, Fars, Mazandaran, Hamedan, and West Azarbaijan provinces, Mehr reported.

The schools were inaugurated during a ceremony attended by the Leader’s

representative Ayatollah Mohammad Mohammadi Golpayegani in Tehran.

School building is one of the major activities of the Barekat Foundation for deprived people in different parts of Iran.

Since 2007, the foundation has built 930 schools in all 31 provinces of the country.

Providing suitable educational facilities, improving standards for schools and academic centers in villages and remote areas are the main aims of the foundation.

It has already signed agreements for building 1357 schools with over 8000 classrooms for 177 thousand students all over Iran.



## Everything has a temperament: flavors, climates



### ARTICLE

By Seyed Mahdi Mirghazanfari, MD, PhD

part 3

**TEHRAN** — Everything that exists in this world including animals, plants, colors, objects, climatic conditions, places, etc. has a temperament (Mizaj).

Knowing that in addition to human beings everything else has a temperament means that one must make sure to treat everything in accordance with their Mizaj to remain healthy. To put it another way maintaining one’s health and keeping a balanced temperament depends highly on recognizing and getting along with the temperament of every other things around.

In last two articles the temperament of body organs, colors, seasons and day and night were expounded. Below the temperament of flavors, climates and psychiatric conditions are listed.

#### ■ Flavors

Flavors have temperaments and accordingly would cause warmth, coldness, dryness and wetness in the body. One can simply decide the Mizaj of a food item or a drink by tasting them to a great extent.

Tasteless food items, also called watery, are cold and wet. Every insipid food item such as lettuce, dairy products such as yoghurt, or doogh (a yogurt-based beverage) and citrus fruits which are not too much sour or sweet are cold and wet.

Sour flavor is cold and dry and cause dryness and coldness in the body as well. Vinegar and pickled vegetables and fruits preserved in vinegar, sour fruits or sour juices, verjuice, Qarehqurut or black kashk (fabricated from the liquid yoghurt) are all cold and dry.

Salty, bitter and spicy flavors which are usually used to give foods a special taste are warm and dry. Although spicy foods are warmer and dryer than bitter and salty foods respectively.

Sweet flavor is warm and wet and most food items (including main dishes and high-calorie food) are classified in this group and that’s why many people like sweet food and drinks.

With that being said people with cold and dry Mizaj (melancholic temperament) who are normally thin and don’t gain much weight with dark complexion and rough and dry skin, particularly in autumn (a cold and dry season) and in mountainous areas should avoid consuming sour



foods or drinks or they are most likely to develop conditions such as dry skin, depression, and weakness.

Same goes for people with other temperament, for instance, people with warm and wet Mizaj (sanguine temperament) should cut back on sweet food stuff, people with warm and dry Mizaj (choleric temperament) should avoid using much spices and salt, and people with cold and wet Mizaj (phlegmatic temperament) must use dairy products, water and citrus fruits cautiously.

#### ■ Climates

Each climate has its own unique temperament. In general polar Regions, mountainous areas with rocky landscapes and sandy grounds and north winds are cold and dry. Salt marshes and deserts are warm and dry. Coastal areas are cold and wet and the tropics are warm and wet.

In Iran, southern, some eastern and mostly central areas which are getting the most sunlight and low humidity are

warm and dry. Coastal areas in southern Iran and northern Iran (only during hot seasons) are warm and wet. Western and northwestern areas which are dominantly mountainous are cold and dry and coastal areas in northern Iran (except for warm seasons) are cold and wet.


The house orientation, weather the house is south-facing or north-facing or built underground determines the house temperament. North-facing houses (in Iran) with less sun exposure, underground houses or houses built in damp and humid places are cold and wet or cold and dry. But south-facing houses which get enough sunlight and built in warm places are normally warm and dry.

Even winds can develop a distinguishing temperament in an area. Winds blowing from northern and north western areas in Iran are cool and can cause a cold temperament while winds blowing from southern areas are warm and develop a warm and wet temperament in a place. Western and eastern winds are moderate and won’t change the temperament much so it’s better for the windows to be on the west and east sides of the house in Iran to get the eastern and western winds.


The type of soil of an area also counts. Areas with loamy and clay soil which have great potential of retaining water are wet while areas with chalky or sandy soil composed of the large particles which prevent it from retaining water are warm and dry.

Seyed Mahdi Mirghazanfari, MD, holds a PhD degree in medical physiology and is an Iranian-Islamic traditional medicine researcher. He is also an assistant professor in AJA University of Medical Sciences, Tehran.

Second Announcement



N.I.O.C  
1396.2918



National Iranian  
Drilling Company

Public Calls For Quality Evaluating Of Tender(First Publish/Seconed Publish)					
One-Stage(compressed)					
TENDER GUARANTEE		ESTIMATED VALUE	Subject of Tender	Tenders Portal Reg. No.	TENDER NO. / INDENT NO
Euro	Rial	(Rial)			No
14,170	566,000,000	11,306,071,897	PARTS FOR NATIONAL SWIVEL MODEL P-500	1,501,530	Tender No.: FP/17-96/047 Indent No.: 48-22-9622030
8,240	329,000,000	6,565,914,981	Parts for weatherford kelly spinner model ks2400HB	1,501,531	Tender No.: FP/17-96/048 Indent No.: 48-22-9622035
57,580	2,300,000,000	46,171,901,934	PARTS FOR INGERSOLL RAND AIR HOST	1,501,533	Tender No.: FP/17-96/049 Indent No.: 48-22-9622036
56,350	2,251,000,000	46,542,154,440	PARTS FOR INGERSOLL RAND AIR HOIST	1,501,534	Tender No.: FP/17-96/050 Indent No.: 48-22-9622037
23,530	940,000,000	18,787,952,250	PARTS FOR VARCO KEYLLY SPINNER MODEL 6800	1,501,536	Tender No.: FP/17-96/051 Indent No.: 48-22-9622038
23,360	933,000,000	18,656,564,337	PARTS FOR NATIONAL HOOK MODEL HA-500	1,501,538	Tender No.: FP/17-96/052 Indent No.: 48-22-9622039

**Brief discription of subject:**  
National Iranian Drilling Company(NIDC) address pasdaran Blev., Airport Saqare, Ahvaz, Iran hereby intends to purchase its requirements from qualified and interested tenderers through one-stage public tender (compressed) upon following terms and conditions:

A) Qualitative evaluation of tenderer:  
The evaluation is based on article ( J ) implementing regulations of the law of tenders and also carried out base on worksheets qualitative evaluation inquiry in the tender doucments. Minimum acceptable point of quality is 60.

B) Preparation of tender documents:  
Purchasing of documents:  
In order to receive the tender documents, **510,000 Rials** should be paid to SIBA account number 2174652205004 of NIDC in Bank Meli Iran and providing the original deposit receipt.

Notice: According to N.I.D.C technical and commercial committee rule, the limitation for job referrals in procurement field is four active and in process contract.

Receiving of documents:  
Tenderers must be obtain the quality evaluation documents along with tender documents maximum ten days after the date of second publication in person at the following address: Hall No.:113, 1thfloor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN

Notice: Only the real or legal persons who apply to purchase and recieve tender ducments from foreign procurment department in due date and participates in tenderwill be known as tenderer from tender committee.

C) Delivery of envelopes of bids and call quality evaluating:  
Tenderers shall submit simultaneously envelopes of bids including bank guarantees(A), financial offer(C) and stamped and signed of tender ducuments(B) along with qualificaion worksheets in form of software in CD and documentary within 40 days from last day of document recived deadline to the following address: Hall No.:107, 1thfloor ,Tender Committee, Building operations, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN.

Notice: The deadline for the refusal of bidders participation in the the tender is the last day of determined for submission of bids.

D) Tender Guarantee:  
**Type of guarantee:**  
A)Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that have activities licensed by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran.  
B) The original cash deposit receipt paid to National Iranain Drilling Company.

Duration of credit guarantee & quotation:  
This duration should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum For one time in initial credit amount.  
More on this & other tenders is accessible by click on. [WWW.NIDC.IR](http://WWW.NIDC.IR)

تهران تایمز : نوبت اول ۹۶/۷/۴ نوبت دوم ۹۶/۷/۵



# Iraqi Kurdistan's independence push could spark ethnic war: Erdogan

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has warned Massoud Barzani, the president of Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region that the current push for the secession of the region could spark an "ethnic war" in northern Iraq.

"If Barzani and the Kurdish Regional Government do not go back on this mistake as soon as possible, they will go down in history with the shame of having dragged the region into an ethnic and sectarian war," Erdogan said in a speech addressing academics at his palace in the capital Ankara on Tuesday.

The Turkish president's comments came a day after Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region held a provocative separation plebiscite in the Iraqi Kurdish region despite fierce opposition from Baghdad and neighboring countries Iran and Turkey. Ankara has already warned that disintegration of Iraq has the potential to turn into a major conflict.

The contentious non-binding vote, which was announced by the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region earlier in the year, was also held in the region much to the consternation of the international community that warned it could most likely throw the already violence-weary Iraq into more trouble.

According to Iraqi Kurdish authorities, the turnout was 76 percent, with 3.3 million of the total 4.58 million registered voters having participated in the plebiscite. The results were expected to be announced within 24 hours following the referendum.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Erdogan described the Kurdish referendum as "treason to our country," since it had come at a time of warm relations between Ankara and Erbil, the capital of the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region. The Turkish president also strongly urged Barzani to "give up on an adventure, which can only have a dark end."

"Until the very last moment, we weren't expecting Barzani to make such a mistake as holding the referendum; apparently we were wrong. This referendum decision, which has been taken without any consultation, is treachery," the Turkish president said.



On Tuesday, Erdogan reiterated that Turkey, which fears the effects of the referendum on its large Kurdish population, would consider all options, including economic sanctions and military measures, regarding the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region, warning the Iraqi Kurds that they would go hungry if Ankara decided to stop the flow of trucks and oil across its border with northern Iraq.

## ■ Israeli flag will not save you

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Turkish president said only the Tel Aviv regime would recognize independence of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region.

"Who will recognize your independence? Israel. The world is not about Israel. You should know that the waving of Israeli flags there will not save you" from regional isolation, Erdogan said, referring to some Israeli flags waved by a number of people in the streets of Erbil during the celebrations last night.

## ■ Kurdish Independence may have regional destabilizing effects: UN

Meantime, the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has voiced his worries over the "potentially destabilizing effects" of a controversial referendum on the independence of the semi-autonomous Kurdistan region from

Iraq's central government.

"The Secretary-General respects the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Iraq and considers that all outstanding issues between the federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government should be resolved through structured dialogue and constructive compromise," said Guterres' spokesman, Stéphane Dujarric, on Monday.

## ■ Baghdad will not heed to secession vote

Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said that his government will not heed to the outcome of the independence referendum.

He went on to add that the vote was illegal and was held without national and international recognition.

Abadi went on to stress that the vote would not affect the army's resolve in their battle against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group, whose destruction will be coming about soon.

## ■ Syria against fragmentation of Iraq

Separately, Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallem has rejected the secession referendum by Iraq's Kurds as "unacceptable," stressing that Damascus only recognizes a unified Iraq.

"We reject any action that leads to the fragmentation of Iraq...This step is unacceptable and we do not recognize it," he added.

Another Syrian foreign ministerial official, Ayman Soussan, also slammed the vote noting that it was the result of the U.S.' regional policies.

"This is the result of American policies that seek to break apart the countries of the region and create conflicts between their parts," he said, adding that the referendum "harms Iraq and the Kurdish brothers."

## ■ Iraq, Turkey forces in joint drills after Kurdish vote

Iraq's army has paired with Turkish forces to conduct joint military drills on the two nations' shared border, military officials said.

Iraqi soldiers arrived in Turkey late on Monday in the face of exercises due to be carried out on Tuesday in Habur, near Turkey's southeastern border with Iraq, a Turkish military statement said.

The joint drills come after Iraqi Kurds held a referendum on separation in the semi-autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq on Monday, in defiance of the Turkish and Iraqi government.

Tuesday's drills will conclude Turkey's military exercises in its southeastern region, which began on September 18, a week before Monday's vote.

Masoud Barzani, president of the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region, said he would seek talks with Baghdad on how to implement the outcome of the poll.

"If we have a constructive dialogue, then we can give it even more time, in order to secure better relations between the Kurds and Baghdad," he said on September 24.

Iraq, however, opposes the non-binding vote on the grounds that it contravenes the country's constitution.

Haider al-Abadi, Iraq's prime minister, told reporters on Monday the government would not hold talks with the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region following the referendum.

(Source: agencies)

## U.S. airlifts ISIL terrorists to use them elsewhere: Syrian FM

Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem says American air-planes in Syria are transporting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) Takfiri terrorists to other places presumably to be later used in those areas.



"We have information and eyewitnesses on transporting ISIS (ISIL) terrorists on board American aircraft, and maybe the U.S. wants to use ISIS terrorists in other areas," Syrian foreign minister said in a Monday interview with Russia Today.

Muallem noted that the United States military presence in Syria was "illegitimate and it came without permission of the Syrian government," adding, "We knock all doors, and when diplomacy fails, we consider other solutions."

He pointed to the Russian military presence in Syria to assist Damascus in its fight against terrorism and said, "We must differentiate between the legitimate Russian presence in Syria and the U.S. presence, which is an aggression on the Syrian sovereignty" (Source: Press TV)

## UAE does not need to demonize Iran if it wants to buy 'beautiful' arms

➡ The other main reason is that the UAE has realized that its participation in the Saudi-led war on Yemen has ended in failure and wrongly, like Saudi Arabia, thinks that Iran is responsible for the fiasco.

The other motive for such highly unexpected remarks is that Iran has emerged as a key force against terrorism and turned into an influential player in the Syrian politics by succeeding, along with Russia and Turkey, to bring the Syrian warring sides to the negotiating table, which have so far produced tangible progresses.

The UAE and other accomplices in the Yemen war are better not to blame Iran for their failures. They should look at the facts and not deceive themselves. If they had been wise enough they would not have started war against Yemen. Even their master, the United States, has failed to defeat the Afghan Taliban after 16 years. Even years before the U.S. war on the Taliban, the Soviet Army was forced to leave Afghanistan without achieving its aims. So how could the UAE and Saudi Arabia which their powers are in no way comparable to the U.S. and the Soviet Union defeat Yemen.

To please the United States, Abdullah bin Zayed does not need to demonize Iran through unfounded and ignorant remarks. His country can just go and buy more beautiful arms.

## The Kurdish Referendum: What Comes Next?

➡ The question persists: What are the implication of this vote? Will we witness growing unity among the Kurds around the Middle East? Will we see an independent Kurdistan seceding from Iraq? Should we expect violence at the end of the road? Baghdad sees the vote as yet another tactical ploy by the Kurds who are determined to break away from the country, which raises legitimate concerns on the part of the Iraqi central government about the prospects of fragmentation and brewing irredentist tendencies. Turkey and Iran have strongly expressed their collective concern over the possible breakup, fearing that this move will trigger similar political trajectory in their countries. The world's great powers, including the United States, oppose changing the current borders in the Middle East (The New York Times, 9/24/2017).

The Kurdish referendum holds the possibility of affecting the balance of leverage between Irbil, Baghdad, and the surrounding regional powers, as well as sending internal Kurdish politics into a new round of uncertainty with emergent conflicting agendas. With control over disputed territories highlighted in the referendum results, the Kurds are making a move that could purportedly prepare the way to potential independence over the horizon. This does not represent a declaration of independence—but it sends a strong signal about where the focal point of Kurdish politics in the future lies.

While there is a broad agreement on the possibility of independence, the consensus on the viability of the State of Kurdistan breaks down. The risk factor here is the shape of the future Kurdistan state that the KRG hopes to establish. If this vision includes Kirkuk, then the next logical question is whether and to what extent Iraq's central government will be willing to relinquish its sovereignty over Kirkuk—an oil rich part of northern Iraq without which the newly established state cannot be sustained and also home to Arabs and Turks, who reportedly (The New York Times, 9/25/2017) feel threatened by possible inclusion in an independent Kurdistan. Will the results of this referendum spark ethnic violence, expedite the partition of Iraq, and/or undercut the coalition forged so painstakingly against the ISIS (Daesh)? There are some real reasons for being skeptical about such a move. What can we expect other than that violence will ineluctably occur?

Mahmood Monshipouri, PhD., teaches Middle Eastern Politics at San Francisco State University and the University of California, Berkeley.

## Nawaz Sharif appears before anti-corruption court

Overthrown Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has appeared before an anti-corruption court in the capital Islamabad, putting to rest the possibility of political unrest if he boycotted proceedings.

Sharif appeared before the court briefly on Tuesday morning, amid tight security and a number of supporters chanting slogans outside the court complex.

Speaking to the press following his appearance in court, a defiant Sharif said he would continue to face the anti-corruption trial, but that he considered the process biased against him.

"Is this justice? Is this what we call the rule of law? Is this a fair trial?" he said, providing a list of grievances against the Supreme Court verdict against him, highest of which is his perceived denial of a right to a full appeal.

"This is the first case in the country's 70-year history where the whole force of the law has been put behind the petitioner, and the defense has been denied all of its constitutional and human rights," he said.

"They [the Supreme Court] were determined to dismiss me, that is why they took up the issue of the [undisclosed asset]."

Sharif was dismissed from office on the grounds that a salary he says he never received still constituted an

asset, and he was legally required to declare it.

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) court said it would indict Sharif in three corruption cases on October 2. Sharif has consistently denied all allegations of wrongdoing.

The overthrown prime minister had failed to appear for an earlier hearing on September 19. He had travelled to London last month, saying he had to attend to his ailing wife Kulsoom, who is undergoing cancer treatment in the United Kingdom.

Sharif was dismissed from office by the Supreme Court in July for an omission in a parliamentary wealth declaration. The court had also ordered the national anti-corruption watchdog to open several cases against him, three of his children and several aides.

On September 15, the Supreme Court dismissed Sharif's petitions seeking a review of that judgment and a halt to any anti-corruption proceedings.

Following that verdict, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Nawaz's daughter, had suggested her father may not return to the country to face the corruption charges, which are linked to four posh London apartments, two steel mills in Saudi Arabia and several holding companies in Britain.

Sharif landed in the Pakistani capital on Monday, and

held a series of meetings with political aides through the day, including with his successor as Prime Minister, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi.

Abbasi, a staunch party loyalist, was elected on August 1, after an easy victory in parliament, which Sharif's PML-N party still controls.

The investigation into the Sharif family's wealth stems from revelations made in the 2016 leak of 11.5 million documents from the Panama-based law firm of Mossack Fonseca.

Several documents included in the leak showed three of Sharif's children - Hussain, Hasan and Maryam - owned at least three off-shore companies registered in the British Virgin Islands.

The documents showed that these companies had engaged in deals worth \$25m.

Crucially, one of the documents also revealed that the companies had been involved in a \$13.2m mortgage involving the London properties as collateral, the first time the Sharif family's ownership of the apartments was proven on paper.

Sharif's political opponents allege that his family gained this wealth during his previous two terms as prime minister in the 1990s.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

## 9 civilians killed in fresh U.S.-led strikes on Syria's Hasakah

### Russian aircraft fire cruise missiles at ISIL positions in Syria

➡ The sources added that two women and a six-member Iraqi family, who had escaped fighting in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, were among the victims of the attacks.

The U.S.-led military aircraft also struck the villages of Hadaj, Huneidis and Hassan Ali near the border, causing huge material damage to public infrastructure and private properties.

The so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported on Saturday that more than 2,800 civilians had been killed in the U.S.-led airstrikes over the past three years.

The Britain-based monitoring group reported that 427 people, including 137 minors and 113 women, were killed in the aerial attacks.

The U.S.-led air raids also resulted in the injury of hundreds of civilians, some of whom suffered permanent disabilities and had to have their limbs amputated.

The aerial raids caused massive destruction of residential buildings and civilian infrastructure as well.

The U.S.-led coalition has been conducting airstrikes against what are said to be ISIL targets inside Syria since Septem-

ber 2014 without any authorization from the Damascus government or a United Nations mandate.

The military alliance has repeatedly been accused of targeting and killing civilians. It has also been largely incapable of achieving its declared goal of destroying ISIL.

The Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, in two separate letters sent to UN Secretary General António Guterres and rotating President of the UN Security Council Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta on August 24, stated that the U.S.-led coalition was perpetrating war crimes and crimes against humanity through aerial bombardment of residential neighborhoods.

The Syrian Foreign Ministry also stressed that the military alliance was using internationally-banned white phosphorus munitions in flagrant violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

## ■ Russia rejects claim of targeting civilians in Syria

Meantime, Russia has rejected a recent allegation by a shadowy monitoring group that Moscow has conducted air raids on civilian-populated areas in Syria.

The Britain based SOHR recently claimed that it had documented "intense airstrikes" by Russian and Syrian government warplanes and helicopters in Syria's northwestern Idlib Province, which it said had killed civilians.

The Russian Defense Ministry rejected that allegation on Tuesday.

"The Russian Air Force does not strike populated areas in the Syrian Arab Republic," Defense Ministry spokesman Major General Igor Konashenkov said.

"The statements by the Observatory, sourced to anonymous 'eyewitnesses' or 'volunteers,' are traditionally unsubstantiated and serve as an 'informational cover' for the activity of al-Nusra [Front] militants and affiliated warring factions," Konashenkov said.

In the past 24 hours, he said, Russian jets had carried out 10 strikes on terrorist targets in Idlib following reconnaissance drone sorties and "other intelligence channels."

The Russian ministry also released footage of the airstrikes, and Konashenkov stressed that the targets had all been situated far away from residential areas.

The attacks targeted the terrorists' underground bases, ammunition depots,

armored vehicles, rocket launchers, and workshops for loading explosives on vehicles, he said.

The offensive, he said, had been orchestrated by the US security services in a bid to derail the counter-terrorism operation led by the Syrian army near the eastern city of Dayr al-Zawr.

Russia has been conducting air raids against ISIL and other terrorist outfits in Syria at Damascus's request since September 2015.

## ■ Russia blames U.S. policy for Gen. Asapov's death

Elsewhere, a senior Russian official has denounced what he called the "two-faced policy" of the U.S., saying it was to blame for the death of a Russian general, Valery Asapov, in Syria, according to an RIA news agency report.

The Russian defense ministry has said Asapov was killed in shelling by the ISIL terrorist outfit near Dayr al-Zawr.

"The death of the Russian commander is the price, the bloody price for the two-faced American policy in Syria," Sergei Ryabkov, Russia's deputy foreign minister, said on Monday, according to RIA.

(Source: agencies)



## Neymar fit to face Bayern, penalty row resurfaces

Neymar has been included in Paris St Germain's squad for Wednesday's Champions League game against Bayern Munich after recovering from a foot injury, coach Unai Emery said on Tuesday.

The Brazilian's return fueled speculation over whether the Brazilian forward or Edinson Cavani would take a penalty if the French club are awarded one during the Group B game at the Parc des Princes.

The two players argued in the 2-0 win over Olympique Lyonnais nine days ago when Neymar tried to take a penalty instead of Uruguayan Cavani, who eventually had his spot-kick parried away by the keeper.

"Neymar is in the squad to play the game tomorrow," Emery told a news conference.

Neymar, the world's most expensive footballer, missed PSG's 0-0 draw at Montpellier on Saturday as the team dropped their first points of the season in Ligue 1.

Argentine winger Angel Di Maria also returns to the PSG squad after nearly three weeks out injured.

Neymar and Cavani are likely to start alongside Kylian Mbappe in a 4-3-3 formation and Emery said he had discussed the penalty situation with the players.

"I spoke with each of them and they know how things will happen," the Spanish coach said.

(Source: Reuters)

## West Brom boss accuses Alexis Sanchez of cheating

West Brom manager Tony Pulis has accused Alexis Sanchez of "cheating" during Arsenal's 2-0 win over the Baggies in the Premier League.

Referee Bobby Madley also failed to give the Baggies what Pulis felt was a certain penalty for a foul on Jay Rodriguez when the game was goalless.

"In the game's first free-kick Sanchez dives and should be booked. That's cheating," Pulis told Sky Sports.

"Then the tackle in the box on Jay, it is a stonewall penalty."

Sanchez went down under a challenge from Baggies defender Craig Dawson in the early minutes of the match and Pulis was incensed on the touchline.

Then after seven minutes Rodriguez appeared to be fouled inside the box by Gunners defender Shkodran Mustafi, but Madley did not award a penalty.

The West Brom forward quickly got up and shot, but his effort was brilliantly pushed onto the post by Gunners keeper Petr Cech.

Summarising on BBC Radio 5 live, former Arsenal defender Martin Keown said: "That should have been a penalty. It was a massive let off for Arsenal. Rodriguez was too honest."

Speaking to the BBC afterwards, Pulis added: "We tell our players not to roll about, he still wanted to score but once he has missed, the referee should pull it back.

"It could be a penalty and they could have a player sent off so we not only score but are against a team down to 10 players."

Alexandre Lacazette scored twice as Arsenal moved up to seventh in the table, with the Gunners producing a dominant second-half performance.

Wenger admitted West Brom had a strong case for a penalty before Lacazette struck the opener.

(Source: BBC)

## Manchester United weighing up new bid for Antoine Griezmann

Diego Costa's return to Atletico Madrid from Chelsea has increased the likelihood of Manchester United making a €100 million move for Antoine Griezmann at the end of the season, sources have told ESPN FC, having abandoned an initial plan to sign the player this summer.

Griezmann, who will face Chelsea at the Wanda Metropolitano in a Champions League Group C tie on Wednesday, had been expected to move to Old Trafford at the end of last season following United's return to the Champions League by virtue of winning the Europa League.

United manager Jose Mourinho had identified the France international forward as a key target, with Griezmann also ready to embrace the challenge of a move to the Premier League.

But FIFA's confirmation in June of Atletico's worldwide transfer embargo, which prevents the club from registering new players until Jan 2018, prompted Griezmann to commit his immediate future to the Spanish club, claiming it would be a "dirty move to leave now."

Days earlier, senior figures at United made it clear that they would instead prioritise the capture of a centre-forward, rather than step up their efforts to sign Griezmann, who had earlier claimed there was a "six out of 10" chance he would sign for the English club.

It remains unclear whether United's withdrawal from the race to sign Griezmann was influenced by the player's reluctance to leave Atletico in the event of FIFA upholding the transfer ban.

But despite United's surprise U-turn on Griezmann in May, and the player's subsequent decision to sign a one-year contract extension at Atletico, sources have told ESPN FC that both parties remain admirers of one another.

Sources at United were careful to insist in the summer that their interest in Griezmann was shelved rather than ended, with the intention being to leave the door open for a renewed move without antagonising the player.

(Source: ESPN)

# South Korea banks federation boosts 2018 ticket sales

Amid dismal domestic ticket sales for February's Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, the Korea Federation of Banks said on Tuesday it will buy 1 billion won (\$1 = 1,136.2400 won) worth of briefs as part of its "social responsibility" efforts.

Response to the first phase of ticket sales in South Korea earlier this year was utterly underwhelming.

As of Thursday, 315,000 tickets for the Feb. 9-25 Games had been sold, just under 30 percent of the 1.07 million total target, with some 60 percent of those sales taking place abroad.

While organizers have earmarked 750,000 tickets for domestic sale, only 124,000 has been sold so far, though the launch of online ticketing is expected to give sales a shot in the arm.

The banking federation said on Tuesday it had decided to step in to help boost sales with less than five months to go before the opening ceremony.

"Buying tickets was considered one of the ways to support the Olympic Games considering the recent slow ticket sales," federation official Shon Kyung-ae told Reuters. "We have decided to buy 1 bil-



lion won worth of tickets."

Organizers aim to raise 174.6 billion won (\$153.66 million) from ticket sales.

The federation also announced it would donate 20 billion won to Pyeongchang organizers to help the Games run smoothly.

"As part of our social responsibility efforts, the federation has decided to support the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympic

## Morata must prepare for hostile reception at Atletico - Courtois



Alvaro Morata is unlikely to get a warm reception when Chelsea visit Atletico Madrid in the Champions League on Wednesday because of the striker's past association with Real Madrid, the Premier League club's goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois has said.

Chelsea's record signing Morata joined from Real in the close season and has made a flying start to life at Stamford Bridge. The striker hit his first hat-trick for the club as Chelsea beat Stoke 4-0 in the Premier League on Saturday.

Courtois, who spent three seasons on loan at Real's rivals Atletico, said his team mate at the other end of the pitch would have to prepare for a "big game" at the Estadio Metropolitano.

"He will get a different one from me. Alvaro played a lot of games against Atletico. I think he scored, I am not sure, so for him it will be a big game against his rivals," Courtois told the Chelsea website (www.chelseafc.com).

"For me it will be more friendly but

between the 90 minutes we are playing there will be rivalry for me as well because they want their team to win.

"We know he is a top striker. We know he has this ability and we're very happy for him that he scored his hat-trick... a striker lives on goals and he has already scored a few important ones this season."

Courtois was looking forward to meet striker Diego Costa, who recently left Chelsea to rejoin Atletico after falling out with coach Antonio Conte. Costa will be eligible to play for Atletico from Jan. 2 when the Spanish transfer window opens and the club's transfer ban ends. FIFA had banned the Madrid side for illegal transfer of minors.

"He is a very good friend and it will be nice to see him there. I am happy that until the New Year we don't have to face him and I hope we continue in the Champions League," the Belgian, 25, added.

Chelsea beat Qarabag 6-0 in their Champions League Group C opener while Atletico were held 0-0 at Roma.

(Source: Mirror)

## Conte, Ancelotti reportedly considered as next manager by AC Milan



AC Milan are reportedly considering Chelsea boss Antonio Conte and Bayern Munich manager Carlo Ancelotti as potential replacements for Vincenzo Montella.

According to Gazzetta dello Sport (h/t Football Italia), the Rossoneri could put an end to Montella's reign at the San Siro next summer, and if he goes, the club are eyeing his compatriots to replace him.

Ancelotti is expected to leave Bayern at the end of the season, and despite turning down an offer from his former club two years ago, he may be more open to returning next year.

Meanwhile, Conte told Radio Anchio lo sport (h/t Calciomercato.com) on Monday: «I miss Italy, and I am sure I won't stay abroad for too long.»

Montella spent more than £200 million in the summer, as he brought in the likes of Leonardo Bonucci, Hakan Calhanoglu, Andre Silva and Ricardo Rodriguez, among others, but the team are already six points behind Napoli and Juventus after defeats to Lazio and Sampdoria.

Ancelotti has had a great deal of success at Milan as both a player and a manager.

the global community, organizers have also had to contend with diplomatic, security and political setbacks at home and abroad.

With Pyeongchang perched just 80km south of the heavily fortified border with North Korea, rising tensions over the North's nuclear programme and the increasingly inflammatory rhetoric being exchanged by the United States and Pyongyang has painted a picture of a Korean peninsula on the brink of war.

In addition, the South Korean tourism industry remains in the doldrums without the usual influx of Chinese visitors following Beijing's ban on group tours to the South over the deployment of a U.S. anti-missile system.

A domestic political scandal that brought down former president Park Geun-hye earlier this year has also diverted Koreans' attention from the Games.

"The political issues are having an impact on ticket sales," Eom Chan-wang, director general of marketing bureau at POCOG, told Reuters in a recent interview.

(Source: Reuters )

## Champions League glory this season could offer momentum to the Barcelona and Catalan independence movement



legally unsustainable referendum on Catalan independence, due to take place on Sunday, has ignited into something altogether more volatile.

The poll is technically illegal due to that Spanish constitution of 1978 and there was no guarantee that separatists would win.

Polls consistently suggest Catalonia is divided around 50-50 on the question of independence.

Yet now Catalonia feels like a nation in uprising following the intervention of the Spanish state following the arrest of those politicians on the grounds that they were aiding and abetting an illegal referendum.

On Monday, it was announced the Spanish state was taking control of Catalan police powers until Sunday.

Polling stations, town halls are being searching to collect evidence of illegal preparations for the poll. It feels like the kind of powers invoked in the time of national emergency.

On the streets, however divided Catalonia was before,

the Spanish government has now succeeded in uniting the people. 'We will vote' is the incessant cry. Most of those who opposed independence seems also to oppose the Spanish state's intervention.

By coincidence, the new Catalan derby between Barcelona and promoted Girona, Manchester City's feeder club part owned by Pere Guardiola, Pep's brother, took place on Saturday night.

The chants of 'Independencia' ran clear throughout the game. Catalan president and Girona fan Carles Puigdemont, now threatened with prison, received a hero's welcome when he took his seat for the game on Saturday.

Whether any of this relates to Barcelona Football Club and their Champions League campaign depends on how you view the club.

But even given their conservatism, the club has made it clear where it stands in the current debate. Following the arrest of Catalan politicians, a statement said that 'FC Barcelona ... in remaining faithful to its historic commitment to the defense of the nation, to democracy, freedom of speech and to self-determination condemns any act which may impede the free exercise of these rights'.

Laporta's view was that the club, as an important global and cultural symbol that should play an active role in Catalonia's fight for independence.

And while Leo Messi may not have pronounced on independence, he does have a certain view of the Spanish state, which prosecuted him for tax evasion.

Only now, when those same authorities are chasing Cristiano Ronaldo, might some in Barcelona be prepared to accept there was any justice in that decision.

(Source: Daily Mail)



# Iran, Togo match to be played in Tehran

**S P O R T S** Iran national football team will face African nation Togo in a friendly match in Tehran on October 5.

The match was originally scheduled for Sept. 29 in Russia but the Togo players cannot travel to the country because of the visa problems.

Team Melii will also play Russia five days later in St. Petersburg.

Iran football team, which hold 25th place in the most recently published FIFA World Rankings list, have already passed the qualifying round for the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

Head of Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) Mehdi Taj has confirmed the two friendly matches.

"Team Melli will play Togo in Tehran and Russia in St. Petersburg. We've chosen Togo since we will likely face an African team in the 2018 World Cup group stage," Taj said.

"We are going to arrange eight warm-up matches ahead of the World Cup. Iran will probably play Sweden in a friendly match," he added.

Russia, headed by Stanislav Cherchesov, ranked 64th in FIFA World Rankings, played a friendly match against Iran in Abu Dhabi, the UAE in February 2011, losing the game 0-1.

The team of the former Soviet Union played against Iran on three occasions winning all of them – in 1976 (Olympic Games 2-1), in 1978 (1-0) and in 1985 (2-0).



## Esteghlal beat Sepidrood Rasht in Iran Professional League



**S P O R T S** Esteghlal earned their second victory in eight matches in the Iran Professional League (IPL) on Tuesday.

The Iranian popular football team defeated Sepidrood 2-1 in Rasht's Shahid Azodi Stadium.

Jaber Ansari gave the visiting team a lead in the 52nd minute. Dariush Shojaeian extended Esteghlal's lead in the 68th minute.

With four minutes remaining, Hossein Ebrahimi pulled a goal back for Sepidrood.

It was Esteghlal second victory in this season and first victory under tutelage of Mick McDermott, who took charge of Esteghlal as interim coach after Mansourian's dismissal.

Moreover, Zob Ahan drew with Saipa 1-1, Foolad were held by Esteghlal Khuzestan 1-1 and Naft Tehran played out a goalless draw with Sepahan.

## Iran men's futsal team win AIMAG title



**S P O R T S** Iran overpowered Uzbekistan in the Ashgabat 2017 Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games (AIMAG) men's futsal final on Tuesday.

The defending champion defeated Uzbekistan 7-2 to win the title for the fifth consecutive time.

Iran started the campaign with a 16-1 victory over Tahiti and defeated Jordan 7-3 and Kyrgyzstan 10-0 re-

spectively.

Iran defeated Thailand 10-4 in quarterfinals and Afghanistan 8-2 in semis.

Earlier on the day, Japan defeated Afghanistan 3-1 in the bronze medal match.

The 2017 Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games kicked off in Turkmenistan's capital last Saturday.

More than 6,000 athletes and team officials are representing 65 countries in the games.

## Mkhitaryan: Man United focused on winning Champions League

Henrikh Mkhitaryan says Manchester United are among the contenders to win this season's Champions League.

United returned to the competition after a season in the Europa League with a 3-0 win over Basel in their opening game in Group A earlier this month, and take on CSKA Moscow in Russia on Wednesday.

United have not reached the knockout rounds of the Champions League since making it to the quarterfinals under David Moyes in 2014, but Mkhitaryan says they should still be looking at May's final in Kiev as a realistic target.

"This year we have the Champions League and we are all concentrating on winning it," he told a news conference in Moscow on Tuesday. "We are a massive club and we will do everything we can to get to the final."

"If CSKA won against Benfica [this month] that means they deserve it. I watch a lot of their games in the Russian Premier League. They have a lot of experienced



players but there's a big difference from the Champions League and the Russian league so they will be playing differently."

After initially struggling to get a game following his £30 million move to Old Trafford from Borussia Dortmund last year, Mkhitaryan has started the season as a

regular in Mourinho's team.

The Armenia international has started eight of United's nine games this season -- only being rested for the Carabao Cup victory over Burton Albion -- and has already racked up five assists and a goal in the Premier League.

He added: "Last season I had lots of injuries and couldn't feel good in games. This season is good and the connection between me and other players is very good and we understand each other very well and hopefully we can score lots more."

"I have worked very hard and will continue to make sure there is no limit. I have worked hard to get a place and I know that to get picked every game you have to work hard in training so the manager can trust you to play. I have started very well and will do my best to carry on."

(Source: ESPN)

## Cristiano Ronaldo thanked by Mexico quake victim

The father of a 7-year-old boy who died in the Mexico City earthquake last week has sent a second letter to Cristiano Ronaldo, thanking the Real Madrid star for reaching out to the grieving family and telling the Portuguese striker: "Your gesture has helped to lessen the pain."

After the 7.1 magnitude earthquake, in which at least 319 people died, the father wrote to Ronaldo. In his first message, he said that his son, Santiago

Flores, was a big fan the Real Madrid forward. Flores was one of 19 children to perish in the rubble of the Enrique Rebsamen school.

Ronaldo replied with a message on his social media and a photograph of himself holding a Real Madrid jersey with the message "to my No 1 fan, Santiago."

Ronaldo added: "At this time of pain, I send a huge embrace to Santiago's family and to all the families who have lost

loved ones."

On Tuesday, Santiago's father sent a letter to ESPN thanking the Portugal captain for "lessening the pain."

It read: "This is the worst time of our lives, you lessen this pain and I have no words, only I reiterate the message of my first letter: Thanks for being a source of inspiration for my son, thanks for existing and God bless you."

The letter includes a photograph of

the young Santiago wearing a Real Madrid jersey.

"You were able to achieve the dream of these parents who have been left frustrated due to an irreparable loss. Those who are parents know that one lives for their children and one works to try to give more than one can and when they go, frustration overtakes everything," the letter said.

(Source: Soccernet)

## U.S. charges four college basketball coaches in bribery scheme

U.S. prosecutors on Tuesday charged 10 people, including four college basketball coaches and financial advisers, with bribery and fraud in connection with college recruiting.

Those charged include Chuck Person, associate head coach at Auburn University; Anthony Bland, associate head coach at the University of Southern California; Lamont Evans, assistant coach at Oklahoma State University; and Emanuel Richardson, assistant coach at the University of Arizona, according to documents filed in federal court in Manhattan.

Others charged include James Gatto, director for global sports marketing for basketball at Adidas and Rashan Michel, founder and operator of a clothing company in Atlanta.

Adidas said in an emailed statement that one of its employees had been arrested by U.S. authorities. "We're unaware of any misconduct and will fully cooperate with authorities to understand more," it said.

Representatives of the universities and the National Collegiate Athletic Association, which regulates college basketball, could not immediately be reached

for comment.

The schemes included bribes paid to high school athletes to secure their commitment to play for a particular university, prosecutors said. The charges include bribery, wire fraud and conspiracy.

Person is the best-known defendant, having been a two-time All-American at Auburn and its all-time scoring leader. He later played 13 years in the National Basketball Association, mostly with the Indiana Pacers.

(Source: Reuters)

## Iran claim title in 2017 Asian-Pacific University Futsal

**Press TV** — The Iranian students' national futsal team have lifted the trophy at the conclusion of the 2017 Asian-Pacific University Futsal & Cheerleading Championship in China.

Iranian futsal players defeated the Omani squad 4-2 in the title match played at Lingwu Sports Stadium in the northwestern Chinese city of Lingwu.

The Kazakh students' national futsal team overcame the Chinese side with the same result in the third-place play-off.

The 2017 Asian-Pacific University Futsal & Cheerleading Championship started on September 18, and wrapped up on September 25.

Nine futsal teams from Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Caledonia, Oman, Chinese Taipei and China took part in the 8-day tournament.

## Iranian mountaineers ascend Manaslu, Himalayas

**IRNA**— Iranian mountaineers Arman Shahpari and Milad Keshavarzi ascended 8,163-meter Manaslu Mountains.

This is for the first time that Fars Province mountaineers have reached the Manaslu peak, Shahpari said.

He went on to say that climbing started on September 1 and they reached the peak on September 26.

Manaslu is the eighth highest mountain in the world at 8,163 metres (26,781 ft) above sea level. It is located in the Mansiri Himal, part of the Nepalese Himalayas, in the west-central part of Nepal.

Its name, which means 'mountain of the spirit', comes from the Sanskrit word manasa, meaning 'intellect' or 'soul'. Manaslu was first climbed on May 9, 1956 by Toshio Imanishi and Gyalzen Norbu, members of a Japanese expedition.

It is said that 'just as the British consider Everest their mountain, Manaslu has always been a Japanese mountain.'

## Suarez calls for 'no more violence in football' after trouble in Uruguay

Uruguay international Luis Suarez has appealed for peace in the wake of football violence in his country.

Uruguayan football was suspended on Sunday after two officials, including a woman, were attacked by players and spectators during an under-19 game between hosts Platense and Basanez on Saturday in Montevideo.

The incident led to the Uruguay Football Referees' Association (AUDAF) halting football until further notice.

Barcelona star Suarez condemned the attack and posted a photograph on his Twitter account of the Uruguay flag with the message: "No more violence in football."

He added: "Let's live a football in peace and without violence, enjoying this beautiful sport in our country. Let's respect everyone." It is the second time in the space of 10 months that the sport has come to a halt in Uruguay. In November 2016, the Uruguayan Football Association (AUF) suspended all games as a sign of mourning after a Penarol fan was shot and killed by supporters of rival club Nacional while celebrating his team's 125th anniversary.

(Source: Soccernet)

## Real Madrid Coach: La Liga the best in the world

Zinedine Zidane has tried to explain away Real Madrid's patchy form, saying that La Liga "is the best in the world".

The Merengues languish in sixth place following a disappointing start, in which they have drawn with both Levante and Valencia, and allowed Real Betis to come away from the Santiago Bernabeu with three points, courtesy of a last-gasp winner from Tonny Sanabria. Asked about whether this worried him ahead of a crucial Champions League tie with Borussia Dortmund, the French World Champions appeared unfazed.

"La Liga is the most difficult league to play in -- I watch a lot of European football not none are as difficult as Spain is, so we have to maintain our high level."

"I don't think we've lost confidence and we trust in what we're doing," Zidane told a press conference on Monday.

"Other people from outside the club might have doubts but that has no impact on us and we don't listen to that, we know that sometimes we are not brilliant and inevitably people will say things because we are Real Madrid."

The two-time Champions League winner may also have dropped a hint about the fact that other teams had defended against Real, saying that "we focus on playing good football and creating chances, for games like this (Borussia Dortmund) we must also deal with their attacks."

(Source: Calciomercato)

## Gasly replaces Kvyat at Toro Rosso for next races

**LONDON (Reuters)** — French driver Pierre Gasly will make his Formula One debut at the Malaysian Grand Prix this weekend after being drafted in by the Toro Rosso team in place of under-performing Russian Daniil Kvyat. The Red Bull-owned team said the switch, for an unspecified number of races, "gives us an opportunity to make a more informed decision regarding our 2018 driver choices."

"This is not a case of goodbye for our Daniil, as he still remains part of the Red Bull Family," the team added in a statement, although the future does not look bright for the Russian.

Gasly, the 2016 GP2 champion who is currently racing in Japan's Super Formula series, is the leading contender to replace Carlos Sainz when the Spaniard leaves Toro Rosso on loan to Renault next season.



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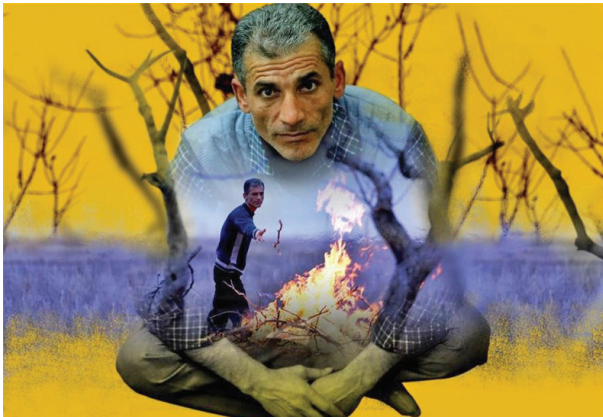
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## Docs from Iran to compete in Cambridge festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Two Iranian documentaries, d e s k produced by Tehran's Art Bureau, will go on screen at the 37th Cambridge Film Festival, the bureau announced on Tuesday.



A view from Ariana Gallery in Tehran

"Pruning Season" by Loqman Khaleli and "A157" by Behruz Nuranipur have been selected for the official competition of the festival, which will be held in the English city from October 19 to 26.

"Pruning Season" is about an Iranian man who tries to prove his claim of having produced a drug against cancer.

"A157" narrates the tragedy of three Kurdish girls who became pregnant after being raped by members of ISIS.

## Box office top 10: "Kingsman" crowned No. 1

**NEW YORK (AP)** — "Kingsman: The Golden Circle" came in a little shy of expectations but still managed to move New Line's horror hit "It" off the top spot at the North American box office.

Fox's spy comedy sequel to 2015's "Kingsman" debuted with \$39 million, according to final figures Monday. The film cost \$104 million to make, but improved little on the original's \$36 million opening two years ago.

After two weeks atop the box office, New Line's "It" slid to second with \$29.8 million in its third weekend of release.

Ticket sales were disappointing for Warner Bros.' "The Lego



This file image released by Twentieth Century Fox shows, from left, Taron Egerton, Colin Firth, and Pedro Pascal in "Kingsman: The Golden Circle." (Giles Keyte/Twentieth Century Fox via AP/File)

Ninjabo Movie," which opened with \$20.4 million. The release was the second "Lego Movie" spinoff of the year, following "The Lego Batman Movie," possibly hurting the performance of "Ninjabo."

The top 10 movies at U.S. and Canadian theaters Friday through Sunday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and number of weeks in release, as compiled Monday by com-Score.

1. "Kingsman: The Golden Circle," 20th Century Fox, \$39,023,010, 4,003 locations, \$9,748 average, \$39,023,010, 1 Week.
2. "It," Warner Bros., \$29,757,494, 4,007 locations, \$7,426 average, \$266,096,375, 3 Weeks.
3. "The Lego Ninjabo Movie," Warner Bros., \$20,433,071, 4,047 locations, \$5,049 average, \$20,433,071, 1 Week.
4. "American Assassin," Lionsgate, \$6,255,617, 3,154 locations, \$1,983 average, \$26,185,076, 2 Weeks.
5. "Mother!" Paramount, \$3,290,780, 2,368 locations, \$1,390 average, \$13,459,798, 2 Weeks.
6. "Home Again," Open Road, \$3,232,156, 2,685 locations, \$1,204 average, \$22,267,987, 3 Weeks.
7. "Friend Request," Entertainment Studios Motion Pictures, \$2,002,863, 2,573 locations, \$778 average, \$2,002,863, 1 Week.
8. "Stronger," Lionsgate/Roadside Attractions, \$1,611,899, 574 locations, \$2,808 average, \$1,611,899, 1 Week.
9. "The Hitman's Bodyguard," Lionsgate, \$1,608,722, 2,037 locations, \$790 average, \$73,356,701, 6 Weeks.
10. "Wind River," The Weinstein Company, \$1,257,881, 1,431 locations, \$879 average, \$31,645,630, 8 Weeks.

# Young, veteran vocalists work together on religious album

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — A number of young and d e s k veteran singers teamed up for an album featuring religious songs about Imam Hussein (AS) and the Ashura event.

Mohsen Jalili is the composer of "The Honored", which has been released by the Art Bureau in Tehran.

Speaking at an unveiling ceremony for the album at the bureau on Monday evening, Jalili said that false elegies being recited every year in Muharram during the mourning ceremonies for Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions introduce the Imam as a warmonger.

"The Honored" has been produced to provide a proper form of elegies about the Imam and the event, he noted.

Jalili and his colleagues assessed over one thousand poems to select nine pieces for the album.

The songs have been performed by Ali-Asghar Shahzeidi, Mozaffar Shafiei, Hossein Alishahpur, Mohammad Motamedi, Bamdad Falahati, Ashkan Kamangari, Qasem Rafati, Soroush Bakhshesh and Amir-Hossein Modarres.

The conductor of the National Symphony, Fereidun Shahbazian, also praised the musicians for their new genuine attitudes to ritual music in his brief speech.

"Composing new melodies for ritual songs is a valuable contribution to this genre of music," he said and added, "More new melodies in this fields should be ordered if we want our religious luminaries to be respected and our rituals not to mislead."

Music House director Hamidreza Nurbakhsh, who was also in attendance at the ceremony, said that there is an acute shortage of works such as "The Honored".

He said that Iranian TV is promoting some kinds of ritual ceremonies, which are insulting to the Islamic



Vocalist Ali-Asghar Shahzeidi signs a poster for "The Honored" after the unveiling of the album at the Art Bureau in Tehran on September 25, 2017. (Mehr/Mohammad Moheimani)

saints.

He notes that the eulogists of those kinds of ritual ceremonies act like showmen and said, "We should help more works like 'The Honored' to be produced in order to accustom people to ritual musical works of a high

quality."

"The Honored" features works by the Persian classical poets Hafez and Rumi. It also contains pieces from Fazel Nazari, Omran Salah, Qader Tahmasbi, Saeid Biabanaki and several other contemporary Persian poets.

## Art Hub set up at Ariana Gallery to focus on promising young artists

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Ariana d e s k Gallery, a major exhibition center for art in Tehran, has established a new section named "Art Hub" to help promising young artists showcase their works.

"Young artists can hold their first solo exhibits at the new space, which is located in the basement of the building," Nazanin Bahadori, the new manager of the gallery, told the Persian service of Honaronline on Tuesday.

"The emerging artists will have a chance to display their works in an area covering 200 square meters for two weeks," she said and added, "The gallery covers all the expenses and the artists will only pay to the gallery a small percentage of their sold items."

There are new plans for the Art Hub, which will be announced in the near future, she stated.

The gallery is located at 9



A view from Ariana Gallery in Tehran

Fereshteh St., off East Maryam St., in the Elahieh neighborhood.

## Leili Anvar to preside over Persian Speakers in Europe Art Festival



The France-based Iranian scholar Leili Anvar in an undated photo

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — The d e s k France-based Iranian scholar Leili Anvar, has been selected as the director of the 1st Persian Speakers in Europe Art Festival, the organizers announced on Tuesday.

Anvar is the translator of a French version of the Masnavi-ye Manavi and Attar's "The conference of the Birds".

Organized by the Persiana Art and

Culture Association, the festival that intends to introduce Persian art and culture to the world will be held in Paris during January 2018.

The festival will be held in categories of visual arts, stand-up comedy, photo and dubbing.

The organizers also plan to arrange different exhibitions and concerts on the sidelines of the festival.

## Reza Mirkarimi on Tokyo festival jury



Filmmaker Reza Mirkarimi in an undated photo

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian d e s k Filmmaker Reza Mirkarimi has been selected for the jury of the Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF).

American actor and director Tommy Lee Jones will preside over the jury, the organizers have announced.

French director Martin Provost, Chinese actress and director Zhao Wei, and Japanese actor Masatoshi Nagase are other members of the panel.

Two films by Iranian directors will be screened in the various categories of the festival, which will be held from October 25 to November 3.

"Life without Life" by Kaveh Moeinfar will compete in the Asian

## Agreement reached to end strike by video-game voice actors

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Video-game voice actors have agreed to end a nearly yearlong strike against several major gaming publishers.

The actors union SAG-AFTRA and a representative for the publishers said Monday they reached a tentative agreement on Saturday to end the strike.

It calls for actors who work multiple sessions on games to receive additional payments and contains a requirement that companies disclose to actors what game they will be working on.

The actors began a strike against several video game companies, including Activision Productions Inc., Electronic Arts Productions Inc., Take 2 Productions Inc. and WB Games.

The work stoppage focused on payments to the actors, as well as complaints that actors were not being told which projects they were being considered for until after they were



In this photo taken Nov. 3, 2016, video game voice actors picket outside Warner Bros. Studios in Burbank, Calif. (AP Photo/Anthony McCartney)

hired.

The companies are responsible for several major gaming properties, including the Call of Duty franchise, games based on Batman and other DC Comics properties, and games in the Star Wars and Need for Speed franchises.

## Warner Bros sets "It" sequel for 2019

**LOS ANGELES (Screen Daily)** —New Line and Warner Bros have announced that the sequel to "It" will be released on September 6, 2019, and will screen on IMAX.

Andy Muschietti will return to direct the follow-up to this year's smash. Since "It" debuted earlier this month, the horror adaptation of Stephen King's novel has broken several box office records and stands as the highest R-rated horror release of all time across any sub-genre in North America.

Muschietti's horror film also scored the biggest horror opening of all time in the UK. At time of writing, it has grossed more than \$266.1m in North America and \$478.1m worldwide.

King's novel centers on a group of children who unite to battle the demonic entity Pennywise, and who must reunite as adults upon his return for a final confrontation. While the



novel goes back and forth between timelines, Muschietti's adaptation focused on the children in the first film, while the second film will center on the same characters as adults and will be set in present day.

In addition, Warner Bros also announced that Untitled WB Animation Film originally set for June 1, 2018, has been moved to July 27, 2018, and is now called "Teen Titans Go!"