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Salehi: New horizons opening up for nuclear co-op with Iran

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Salehi, the vice president and director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), says the landmark nuclear deal between Tehran and the 5+1 group (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany) has opened up new opportunities for cooperation with Iran in the nuclear industry.

Salehi made the remarks in an hour-long interview with the Tehran Times in his office.

The full text of the interview will be published in the third week of the Iranian month of Farvardin which falls between March 20 and April 19, after two-week long Noruz holidays.

The following is answer to two questions:

TEHRAN TIMES: Mr. Salehi, does Iran have any plan to sign nuclear contracts with other countries, particularly with Japan.

2.9

Our missiles not intended against any country: Rouhani

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Design: Bahman Vakhshour

Tehran Times wishes happy New Year for all

Machiavellianism is dominant in Middle East: analyst

'Europe has become an appendage of U.S. foreign policy'

INTERVIEW

By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — South Alabama University Professor Nader Entessar believes that Machiavellianism is a proper term to describe the highly volatile and unstable situation in the Middle East.

"Also, theories of imperialism will also help us better understand the current conditions in the Middle East," Entessar tells the Tehran Times.

Following is the full text of the interview:

■ **Has the system in the Middle East during the recent years been Hobbesian, Kantian, or Lockean?**

A: I think Machiavellianism is a more apt term to use in this regard. Also, theories of imperialism will also help us better understand the current conditions in the Middle East. →9

Islamic world had extraordinary effect on medieval philosophers: Charles Taliaferro

SOCIETY TEHRAN — "Muslim world had made such extraordinary headway in mathematics, algebra, medicine, and the sciences in general, it was inevitable that its philosophical contribution needed to be taken seriously by medieval philosophers," Charles Taliaferro tells the Tehran Times.

Taliaferro, who teaches philosophy at St. Olaf College, says, "It was the translation of so many philosophical texts from Greco-Roman antiquity into Syriac, Persian and Arabic that was pivotal in the continuation of philosophical work after the fall of the Roman Empire."

Following is the text of the interview:

■ **What was the impact of Islamic philosophy on western philosophy in the medieval age?**

A: Islamic philosophy was highly significant in terms of offering positive, constructive views of time and space, the

philosophy of causation with a developed theory of natural and divine causation, the understanding of God as necessarily existing, different accounts of the human soul, the active intellect, accounts of reason, virtue, happiness, and more. Arabic and Persian Muslim philosophers also

"It was through multiple sites, Sicily, Toledo in Spain, Antioch, and more, that the classical texts gradually reached western sites in which Islamic work entered the western intellectual world through Latin translations."



provided an important challenge to Christian and Jewish philosophers in the medieval era as it provided the western world with a sophisticated, rich alternative to Christian and Jewish theism. As it became clear that

the Muslim world had made such extraordinary headway in mathematics, algebra, medicine, and the sciences in general, it was inevitable that its philosophical contribution needed to be taken seriously by medieval philosophers.

■ **What was the impact of translation movement in the Islamic world on transforming the classical texts in the modern world?**

A: It was the translation of so many philosophical texts from Greco-Roman antiquity into Syriac, Persian and Arabic that was pivotal in the continuation of philosophical work after the fall of the Roman Empire. It was through multiple sites, Sicily, Toledo in Spain, Antioch, and more, that the classical texts gradually reached western sites in which Islamic work entered the western intellectual world through Latin translations.

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EDITORIAL

By Hassan Lasjerdi
Tehran Times editor-in-chief

We'll come back in the spring

In the Iranian culture, the spring is the season for growth, freshness, and change in nature and man's temper. Iranians believe that with the spinning of the natural phases, man too does change as affected by them.

The beauty of spring brings the green of nature, revival of trees, and blossoming of flowers, things that can not only give one a good feeling, but also act as a propelling source for a new era of human activity.

Although many believe life is a linear path, in many cases man's life has been changed through creativity, collective morale, and endeavor, leaving great achievements behind.

In the past year, the Tehran Times tried to show that it is going through a phase of change as a result of which it would be able to put a new horizon ahead and offer more diversity to the readers in order to create a more pleasing time with them.

Novelties in form and content of some pages as well as offering precise news, accompanied by active attendance to the current issues of the country as well as interviews with Iranian and foreign personalities are examples of this new outlook. Adding to that are an increase in the number of some special pages, emphasis on expert knowledge, and launching a new website for the online version, changes which were brought to full richness thanks to the suggestions of some readers.

Quality programs can help move toward more satisfactory outcome for the readers. We consider and will continue this outlook as a new phase.

To do so, we will have interesting and beautiful things to say as the spring unravels. So be it!

PICTURE OF THE DAY Tehran Times/Hossein Khanjani



Tehran Times marks the New Year

SOCIETY TEHRAN — As the spring is approaching the Tehran Times staff marked the New Year by an end of the year celebration.

An hour before the ceremony all Haft-Seen items were obtained and set on the table which was beautifully designed by blue and golden table cloths.

At about 3 o'clock the staff came one by one and started to chat in small groups and at 3:10 the ceremony started officially.

With the colleagues sitting and standing around the room one of the funniest staff members in charge of graphic designs of the newspaper started the ceremony by reciting a humorous spring themed poem. He then continued by performing some stand-up comedies. Some of the colleges also told memories and funny stories they remembered about each other.

Two of the newly-wed staff and one of the beloved colleagues who had retired recently were given presents.

More importantly the newly developed website of the Tehran Times was launched and as a fitting culmination we all had a cake which was cut by the oldest and youngest colleagues attending the ceremony. We all took pictures and selfies and kissed goodbye, wishing a happy year for each other and our families.

The next paper will be issued on April 2, 2016.

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MEDIA MONITOR



Tehran urges practical measuresto resume Iran-Canada ties

TEHRAN – The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman has welcomed Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s interest in resuming ties with Tehran, but said it is necessary that Ottawa take practical steps to this end, the YJC reported.

“The Canadian government should show in practice that it intends to establish equal relations with Iran that is based on non-interference and mutual respect,” Hossein Jaber Ansari said on Wednesday.

He said if Canada’s new policy is accompanied by a more realistic outlook towards bilateral ties and regional developments it will be possible to take steps towards detente.



Larijani congratulates 10 counterparts on Noruz

TEHRAN - In letters to 10 counterparts the Iranian Majlis speaker has congratulated them on the occasion of the Persian New Year, Nowruz.

Ali Larijani hoped that in the new Iranian year, especially after Iran’s economic opening up to the world, Tehran will engage in more friendly ties, Mehr reported on Wednesday.

Addressing a number of lawmakers, he said the next Majlis should prioritize economic growth.



Principlist to-be MPs to launch coalition

TEHRAN - Principlist lawmaker-elects appeared in a meeting on Wednesday to coordinate their efforts in the next Majlis.

The 140 to-be MPs decided that they will establish a coalition, ISNA reported.

They also chose Hossein Naqavi Hosseini as their spokesman and Ahmad Amirabadi as secretary.



Evidence shows arms delivered to Daesh, Iran says

TEHRAN - A senior army commander said on Wednesday that Iran has evidence that shows 75 vehicles loaded with military equipment have been delivered to Daesh by those who claim to be fighting the militants.

“Right at a time when some are chanting slogans that Daesh should be eradicated, they themselves deliver 37 cars and 38 trucks of (military) equipment to Daesh,” said Ali Arasteh, the coordinating deputy director for the Iranian Army Ground Forces.

“We have all the images and documents on the delivery, and will release them in due time,” Tasnim quoted him as saying.



Ahmed Shaheed report on human rights is imaginary: Iran

TEHRAN - The Iranian Foreign Ministry has lashed out at Ahmed Shaheed, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Iran, saying his allegations of human rights violations in Iran are “imaginary,” “unwarranted,” and “unbalanced”.

“The report on the Islamic Republic of Iran is politically-motivated, discriminatory and biased. It is also methodically unbalanced and imaginary. It has been written on unwarranted information and not the existing realities,” ministry spokesman Hossein Jaber Ansari said on Wednesday, Mizan reported.

Stressing Iran’s commitment to improve the basic rights of its people, he said, “In the Islamic Republic’s view, improving human rights is an important task for all governments. However it could only materialize through cooperation, dialogue, fairness and of course non-selective attitude.”



Army’s Quick Reaction Force gets new anti-materiel rifle

TEHRAN - Iranian Army’s Quick Reaction Force has received home-made anti-materiel rifles (AMR) AM50.

The rifles were delivered to the army during a ceremony in a commando training center in Tehran, Fars reported on Wednesday.

Produced by the Iranian state-controlled Defense Industries Organization, the AM50 is a single-shot, bolt action anti-materiel rifle, with an effective shot range of 1200 meters.



Zarif toiled 7 months for word that has Iran go on missile testing

Border change to trigger Armageddon battle, Iran FM says

The Iranian foreign minister has revealed how he worked on the wording of a UN resolution to buy Iran what he wanted: missile tests.

Speaking at the Australian National University on Tuesday, Mohammad Javad Zarif underlined that the Security Council Resolution 2231, which was adopted after the Iranian nuclear deal was signed last year, did not bar Iran from testing the type of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles that it launched last week.

“It doesn’t call upon Iran not to test ballistic missiles, or ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear warheads ... it calls upon Iran not to test ballistic missiles that were ‘designed’ to be capable,” The

Australian quoted him as saying.

“That word took me about seven months to negotiate, so everybody knew what it meant,” he said, referring to “designed”

Zarif added that under the international nuclear agreement that resulted in the lifting of UN sanctions, which he had also negotiated, Iran would never develop nuclear weapons.

Again in a post on his Twitter account on Tuesday, Zarif dismissed the latest allegations against Iran’s ballistic missiles, which he said, are not designed to carry nuclear warheads.

“Neither JCPOA nor SC Res prohibits Iran from missiles not designed for nuke

warheads,” Zarif wrote.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he warned against changing borders in the Middle East region, saying it will trigger the battle of Armageddon.

Answering a question about border change in the Middle East, he said, “That will set off a 30-year war in our region. Therefore, do not even enter that topic!”

■ Zarif criticizes Australia’s treatment of asylum seekers

Mohammad Javad Zarif told Lateline that the 9,000 Iranians who had sought asylum in Australia were lured by people smugglers and propaganda from “government sources”.

“We don’t like some aspects of the way Australia treats Iranians who have been basically lied to by human smugglers who come to Australia, the fact that they live in unconscionable situations,” he said.

“Neither JCPOA nor SC Res prohibits Iran from missiles not designed for nuke warheads,” Zarif writes.

Our missiles not intended against any country: Rouhani

We have prepared ourselves for better relations with the world

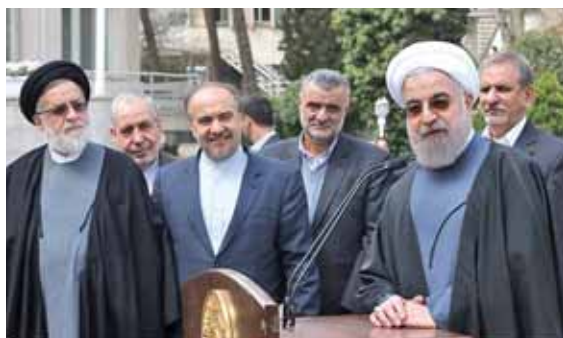
POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday Iran has never had nor will have the intention to attack any country by its missiles.

“With our missiles we have never had nor will have the intention of invading any country, especially our neighbors,” Rouhani told reporters after a cabinet meeting.

On March 9, the IRGC test-fired two more ballistic missiles. Iran announced that the tests were aimed at boosting the country’s nuclear capability.

The new missile firings were the latest in a series of tests in recent days, aimed at demonstrating that Iran will push ahead with its ballistic program after scaling back its nuclear program under the deal reached last year with the U.S. and other world powers.

Rouhani said warmongers and extremists who had created a commotion over Iran’s missile tests were disappointed after the UN Security Council did not say the



tests were a violation of the Resolution 2231 which was approved after the nuclear deal.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday called on world powers to punish Iran for the missile tests. Netanyahu said he instructed Israel’s Foreign Min-

istry to direct the demand to the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany — the countries that signed the nuclear deal with Tehran.

“We are happy that extremists and warmongers and those who unjustly took the issue of missile test to the United Nations Security Council were disappointed,” Rouhani noted. “The world told them that Iran’s activities are merely defensive.”

The president also said that Iran is preparing itself for a better relationship with the world in the coming Persian calendar year.

“We have prepared ourselves for better relations with the world.”

The next Iranian year, called Noruz, starts in spring. “Spring has the message of moderation for all of us. Spring carries the message of peace and friendship and brotherhood,” noted Rouhani whose government’s credential is associated with moderation.

Salehi: New horizons opening up for nuclear co-op with Iran

I → SALEHI: At the outset, I would like to thank the prestigious Tehran Times newspaper which is issued in English to give this opportunity to have an interview about this nuclear deal. Coming back to your question, after the nuclear deal there has been many proposals coming from many different countries including Japan as you just alluded to. Many countries, including European and Eastern Asian ones, have expressed their readiness to

cooperate with us in the nuclear domain, and we have sort of been put in somewhat difficult situation.

In other words, before we had only one choice which was Russia, which was assisting us in the development of nuclear technology in my country specifically in the domain of nuclear power plants, but now as you just said we have Japan, South Korea, China, France, Spain and others.

They have all expressed their readiness to cooper-

ate with us in the field of peaceful nuclear activities. About a year ago, we signed a contract with Russia to construct two other major power plants, each one with one thousand fifty megawatts output. Hopefully, we will be launching the construction of the new power plants soon. Concerning other power plants, we are negotiating with other countries to see what their conditions are.

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Russian pullout from Syria not unexpected: Iran

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – A senior Iranian security official said on Wednesday that the withdrawal of Russian troops from Syria was not out of blue.

“The Russian withdrawal from Syria was predetermined and it was never unexpected,” said Ali Shamkhani, the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council.

On Monday, President Vladimir Putin announced that “the main part” of Russian armed forces in Syria would start to withdraw. Putin also told his diplomats to step up the push for peace as UN-mediated talks resumed on ending the five-year-old war.

According to Reuters, Damascus also said President Bashar al-Assad had agreed on the “reduction” of Russian forces in a telephone call with Putin.

Shamkhani said the pullout of Russian forces does not mean that the war on terrorism has stopped.

“The advance of the Syrian army in the regions which terrorists still threaten the security of people will continue with the support of Iranian Russian military advisors,” he added.

Since the beginning of the war in Syria Iran has been insisting that it is the Syrian people who should decide about the future of their country.

“The future and destiny of Syria will be

decided only by the Syrian people and any plan which ignores this issue will end in failure,” Shamkhani noted.

Shamkhani who served as defense minister from 1997 to 2005 said undermining the pro-resistance government of Syria was an Israeli-American plot which was supported by some regional countries, refuting claims that support for militants was intended to establish “democracy” in the country.

“Now that terrorism has spread to Europe and outside the region unfortunately we are still noticing the continuation of the wrong policies of the past toward Syria,” Shamkhani regretted.

The top security official said the

strategy of the opponents of security in the region have adopted a double-standard approach toward terrorism. Those who seek to give “political legitimacy” to certain terrorist groups will in fact strengthen terrorism in the region and the repercussions of this will engulf Europe and other neighboring countries.

The Iranian official also said the rising popularity of Hezbollah in the Islamic world and Arab countries had angered the Zionist regime and certain Arab rulers and this was the motive behind branding the resistance group as a terrorist organization by the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League.

Seoul revs up efforts to restore ties with Tehran

South Korea is revving up efforts to “restore” economic ties with Iran as the resource-abundant Middle East state is generating fresh business opportunities after the lifting of international sanctions earlier this year, its top envoy to Tehran said Wednesday.

During a meeting with reporters here, Kim Seung-ho said that South Korean government officials and businesses are striving to regain some of the lost ground in the increasingly competitive Iranian market with a population of 80 million.

“International attention is focused on Iran as it boasts rich resources and a large population. Thus, many countries are scrambling to gain the upper hand in the market after the sanctions were scrapped,” the envoy told reporters.

“The Korean government and businesses are also striving to restore ties with Iran with a sense of crisis and anxiety as competition heats up to capitalize on the business opportunities in Iran.”

The lobbies of major hotels in Tehran are crowded with foreign tourists, with exhibition centers brimming

with businessmen scurrying to court their Iranian partners, Kim added, noting the country’s transition into a highly lucrative business destination from a once isolated nuclear-ambitious state.

As China, Japan, Russia, Germany and other countries have beefed up diplomacy with Iran to advance their economic interests, South Korea has also made a flurry of diplomatic efforts to enhance bilateral cooperation.

South Korea’s top diplomat Yun Byung-se visited the country in November - for the first time in 14 years as a foreign minister. Less than three months later, Trade Minister Joo Hyung-hwan also visited Tehran with a large business delegation.

“The two countries are also in talks over President Park Geun-hye’s trip to Iran,” Kim said. He did not elaborate on when Park will travel to the country.

As Seoul had participated in the international anti-Tehran sanctions for the country’s nuclear program, the trade volume between Korea and Iran dipped to \$8.6 billion in 2014, less than half the trade volume re-



South Korea's Ambassador to Iran Kim Seung-ho speaks during a meeting with reporters at the Foreign Ministry's building in Seoul on March 16, 2016, in this photo provided by the ministry. (Yonhap)

corded in 2011.

Touching on Iran’s deep historical and cultural background, the ambassador highlighted the importance of developing a “multi-faceted” bilateral relationship -- rather than focusing wholly on the economic dimension.

“Rather than pursuing a unitary business-centric partnership, I think developing the various facets of our partnership is important given that Iran has great potential in terms of human resources, and its cultural and historical assets,” he said.

(Source: Yonhap News Agency)

Clinton sweeps Ohio, Florida; Trump, Kasich split; Rubio out

Hillary Clinton triumphed on Tuesday in the Florida, Ohio, North Carolina and Illinois presidential primaries, putting her in a commanding position to become the first woman in the United States history to win a major-party nomination. Donald Trump strengthened his hand in the Republican race with a big win in Florida but fell in Ohio to that state's governor, John Kasich.

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio ended his once-promising campaign after his devastating home-state loss, so the GOP primary is now down to three candidates: Trump, Kasich and Texas Sen. Ted Cruz.

Trump also picked up wins in North Carolina and Illinois, and was locked in a close race with Cruz in Missouri.

The billionaire businessman told a victory rally, "This was an amazing night."

Trump is the only Republican candidate with a realistic path to the 1,237 delegates needed to clinch the nomination before the July convention. But his loss in Ohio kept hope alive for mainstream Republicans dismayed by his candidacy and suggesting the real estate mogul can still be stopped in a convention fight.

"The campaign goes on," Kasich declared at a victory rally. Now thrust into the center of a campaign that has been biting personal, Kasich vowed to "not take the low road to the highest office in the land."

A confident Clinton pivoted quickly to November during her victory rally, assailing Trump's hardline immigration positions and support for torture. "Our commander-in-chief has to be able to defend our country, not embarrass it," she declared.

Underscoring Republican concerns about Trump, Rubio focused heavily on an implicit critique of Trump in a speech announcing he was dropping out of the race. The senator urged Americans to



"not give in to the fear, do not give in to the frustration."

A favorite of Republican leaders, Rubio is the latest candidate to fall victim to an unpredictable election cycle and Trump's unmatched ability to tap into the public's anger with Washington and frustration with sweeping economic changes.

Clinton's victories in Ohio, Florida and Illinois were blows to rival Bernie Sanders and bolstered her argument that she's the best Democratic candidate to take on the eventual Republican nominee in the general election. Her win in Ohio was a particular relief for her campaign, which grew anxious after Sanders pulled off a surprising win last week in Michigan, another important Midwestern state.

Clinton kept up her large margins with black voters, a crucial group for Democrats in the general election. Democratic voters were more likely to describe Sanders as honest, but more likely to describe Clinton's policies as realistic, according to exit polls.

Campaigning on Tuesday in North

Carolina, Clinton said "the numbers are adding up in my favor." She signaled an eagerness to move on to a possible general election showdown with Trump, saying he's laid out a "really dangerous path" for the country.

Votes were also being counted on Tuesday in Missouri, though races in both parties were too close to call.

Trump entered Tuesday's primaries embroiled in one of the biggest controversies of his contentious campaign. The GOP front-runner has encouraged supporters to confront protesters at his events and is now facing accusations of encouraging violence after skirmishes at a rally last week in Chicago.

The atmosphere at his events has deepened the concern over his candidacy in some Republican circles. Rubio and Kasich have suggested they might not be able to support Trump if he's the nominee, an extraordinary stance for intraparty rivals.

His closest competition so far has come from Cruz, who has kept relatively close to the businessman in the delegate

count and has been urging other candidates to drop out so he can take Trump on one-on-one.

After another good night for Trump, some Republicans were struggling to come to grips with the prospect of him becoming the nominee and desperate to find long-shot ways to stop him.

A group of conservatives planned to meet on Thursday to discuss options including a contested convention or by rallying around a third-party candidate. While such no candidate has been identified, meeting participants planned to discuss ballot access issues, including using an existing third party as a vehicle or securing signatures for an independent bid.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., did not rule out the idea of being drafted by the party at the convention.

"People say, 'What about the contested convention?'" Ryan said in an interview with CNBC. "I say, well, there are a lot of people running for president. We'll see. Who knows?"

Despite concerns from party leaders, Republican voters continue to back Trump's most controversial proposals, with two-thirds of those who participated in GOP primaries on Tuesday saying they support temporarily banning Muslims from the United States.

The exit polls were conducted by Edison Research for The Associated Press and television networks. Trump's Florida victory brought his delegate total to 619. Cruz has 394 and Kasich 136. Rubio left the race with 167 delegates.

Clinton has at least 1,488 delegates, including the super delegates who are elected officials and party leaders free to support the candidate of their choice. Sanders has at least 704. It takes 2,383 to win the Democratic nomination.

(Source: AP)

Israel seizes 234 hectares of land in West Bank

Israel has grabbed one of the largest Palestinian land plots in the occupied West Bank, an Israeli watchdog has said in a statement following the revelation by the Israeli Army Radio.

The anti-settlement NGO Peace Now said on Tuesday that the Israeli government has seized 234 hectares of land in an area south of Jericho on March 10.

The group added that plans for expanding nearby Jewish settlements and building tourism and other commercial facilities in the area were already on Israel's drawing board.

"Instead of trying to clam the situation, the government is adding fuel to the fire and sending a clear message to Palestinians, as well as to Israelis, that it has no intention to work towards peace and two states," the Israeli organization said.

The notice listed 2,342 dunams (234 hectares) and carried the signature of an official identified on the map as Israel's "supervisor of government property and abandoned property in Judea and Samaria", Hebrew terms for the West Bank.

Such an appropriation would be the largest since August 2014, and larger than the 154 hectares area that Israel first said in January it planned to designate as government property near the Dead Sea.

News of those plans drew international condemnation at the time.



"The declaration, which is in fact a confiscation, was meant for the expansion of nearby settlements as well as for trade and tourism projects operated by the settlers," Peace Now said in the statement.

In October, Israel retroactively legalized about 800 homes in four settlements in the occupied West Bank, according to the interior ministry.

They included 377 homes in the Yakir settlement, 187 in Itamar and 94 in Shilo in the northern West Bank, as well as 97 more in Sansana in the south of the occupied Palestinian territory.

The international community regards all Jewish settlements in the West Bank as illegal. But the Israeli government makes a distinction between those it has authorized and those it has not.

Settlements and outposts are seen as major stumbling blocks to peace efforts as they are built on land that Palestinians see as part of a future state.

(Source: agencies)

All-female pilot crew lands plane in Saudi Arabia, where women are not allowed to drive

The first ever all-female flight deck crew for Royal Brunei Airlines has operated a plane from Brunei to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia.

But while it was a milestone for the airline, the pilot crew touched down in the country where women are still not allowed to drive a car.

To mark Brunei's National Day on 23 February, which celebrates the country's independence, Captain Sharifah Czarena Surainy, Senior First Officer Dk Nadiyah Pg Khashiem and Senior First Officer Sariana Nordin landed flight BI081 in the Middle Eastern country.

The occasion came just over three years after Captain Sharifa Czarena Surainy became the first female captain of a flag carrier in Southeast Asia. She told The Brunei Times in 2012: "Being a pilot, people normally see it as being a male dominant occupation."

"As a woman, a Bruneian woman, it is such a great achievement. It's really showing the younger generation or the girls especially that whatever they dream of, they can achieve it," said the captain, who completed her initial pilot training at the Cabair Flying School in Cranfield.

And Royal Brunei Airlines is committed to getting more women into the industry as it currently offers an Engineering Apprentice program to both males and females.



■ Restrictions women face in Saudi Arabia

But the airline's landmark voyage also highlighted the restrictions women still face in Saudi Arabia. In recent years, they have used social media to protest against being forbidden from driving.

The Women2Drive campaign has nearly 18,000 "likes" on Facebook and asks women to post images of them driving.

But authorities are still quick to crack down on female drivers, such as in 2014 when two women were detained.

Sarah Leah Whitson, the Middle East and North Africa director for Human Rights Watch said at the time: "After years of false promises to end its absurd restrictions on women, Saudi authorities are still arresting them for getting behind the wheel. The Saudi government's degrading restrictions on women are what bring shame to the country, not the brave activists standing up for their rights."

(Source: The Independent)

New corruption scandal rocks Brazil government

Critics in Brazil denounced reports that beleaguered President Dilma Rousseff will name her popular predecessor to the cabinet amid a barrage of new accusations in a growing corruption scandal threatening her government.

Unnamed presidential aides told Reuters news agency on Tuesday that charismatic Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva - Brazil's first working-class president - decided to accept a ministerial position in Rousseff's cabinet, a move that would offer him protection in the short-term from prosecutors who have charged him with money laundering and fraud.

"The appointment of Lula as minister shows Brazilians that the government's only concern today is to survive at any cost," Opposition Leader Aécio Neves said in a Twitter post.

One of the presidential aides, who asked not to be identified so he could speak freely, said Lula, a talented negotiator, would take charge of legislative affairs, where he could leverage his close ties to congressmen from the ruling Workers Party to rally votes for the government.

The possible return to public office of Lula, who stepped down in 2010 after eight years in power as one of the

world's most popular leaders, was slammed by critics as a desperate attempt to shore up support for Rousseff as she faces impeachment proceedings in Congress.

Rousseff's popularity has been pummeled by Brazil's worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, and the spreading corruption investigation focused on state-run oil company Petrobras.

More than a million people marched in demonstrations across Brazil on Sunday, calling for her ouster and voicing support for the investigations into kickbacks by contractors to political leaders in exchange for work with Petrobras.

Plans to announce Lula's appointment were overtaken by the publication of damaging new allegations from a Workers' Party senator in plea bargain testimony made public by the Supreme Court on Tuesday.

The testimony by Senator Delcídio do Amaral, a close ally of the president until he was arrested last year, accused both Rousseff and Lula of being aware of corruption at Petroleo Brasileiro SA, and said the president had tried to hamper the investigation.

In the most damaging allegations, Amaral said Aloisio Mercadante, a Workers' Party veteran who has



served as Rousseff's chief-of-staff and is now education minister, offered to pay him to keep quiet last year.

Mercadante called a news conference to deny the accusation that was based on a recording of two meetings between the minister and Amaral's personal secretary.

Presidential aides said the accusations had overshadowed any announcement of Lula joining the cabinet. "We were hoping to change the mood with Lula's appointment, but this recording is another huge blow," one aide told Reuters.

(Source: Reuters)

NEWS

'Momentum' in Syria talks as Russia withdraws forces Syria to U.S.: Tell Turkey, Saudi Arabia to stop funding terrorists

By staff & agencies

The United Nations special envoy for Syria has declared as a "significant development" Russia's withdrawal of forces from the war-torn country, saying it adds to the "momentum" of the ongoing talks in Geneva.

Staffan de Mistura said on Tuesday that the ongoing refugee crisis facing Europe and the battle against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Daesh) terrorist group, also add some "sense of urgency" for government and rebel negotiators to support the peace process.

"I do feel that there is a difference" in this talks, he said when asked why he thinks the negotiations in Geneva would succeed.

He said the engagement of several countries, including the United States and Russia, and the "unified Security Council" also led him to believe that while there will be "rocky times" ahead, the talks will "produce a momentum".

Still, de Mistura said there are several major issues that could pose roadblocks to the process, including the release of opposition detainees in Syrian prisons, and the delivery of humanitarian help to residents of Daraya outside of Damascus.

At the beginning of the meeting, negotiators observed a minute of silence for the victims of the foreign sponsored conflict, which marked its fifth year on Tuesday.

Bassma Kodmani, opposition negotiator and member of the High Negotiations Committee, also called the day's session as "constructive".

"There was some joy and pride for what people believe as the beginning of the freedom of the Syrian people," Kodmani said.

But she also acknowledged that there is still no result on the issue of release of detainees, which she said "is not up for negotiation".

She said "daily executions" of at least 50 detainees continue in different prisons in Syria.

As talks enter its second day in the Swiss city of Geneva, a Syrian opposition monitoring group is reporting intense air strikes in and around the historic town of Palmyra amid fighting between pro-government forces and ISIL terrorists.

The Britain-based so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says there were casualties on both sides in Tuesday's battles, without providing a precise figure.

Al Manar TV, run by Lebanon's Hezbollah group, says Syrian troops and their allies captured "Hill 900," which is the highest in the area and overlooks Palmyra.

Lebanese resistance movement of Hezbollah is fighting alongside forces loyal to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Palmyra, home to famed Roman ruins, has been under the firm control of ISIL since the terrorist group captured it in May last year.

ISIL and the al-Qaeda's branch in Syria, known as the al-Nusra Front (Jabhat al-Nusra), are not part of a cease-fire that was brokered by Russia and the U.S. and went into effect on February 27.

Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. According to a February report by the Syrian Center for Policy Research, the conflict has claimed the lives of over 470,000 people, injured 1.9 million others, and displaced nearly half of the country's pre-war population of about 23 million within or beyond its borders.

The war has also led to a wave of refugees in Europe.

■ Syria to U.S.: Tell Turkey, Saudi Arabia to stop funding terrorists

Meantime, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's political and media adviser says it is now time for the U.S. to pressure Turkey and the House of Saud regime to stop supporting Takfiri militants wreaking havoc in the country.

Bouthaina Shaaban made the remarks during an interview with the Lebanon-based al-Mayadeen television channel on Tuesday, a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that "the main part" of the Russian forces would start to withdraw from Syria.

"The ball is now in the United States' court and the next step will be American pressure on Turkey and Saudi Arabia to stop funding terrorists and stop the flow of weapons," Shaaban said.

"It is very possible to close the borders and keep out mercenaries," she added.

Saudi Arabia and Turkey, along with other allies including Qatar, have time and again been implicated in providing financial and logistical support for the Takfiris in an effort to bring down the Syrian government.

Referring to Russia as any "ally and friend" that has based its relations with Syria on respect and "consultation", she noted that the partial Russian troops withdrawal does not mean they "cannot return."

■ Another group of Russian jets leave Syria: Moscow

Elsewhere, Russia's Defense Ministry says another group of Russian jets have left Syria and flown back to their home bases in line with Moscow's partial withdrawal from the war-hit country.

The ministry said in a statement on Wednesday that Su-25 jets and an Il-76 transport plane took off from Hmeimim airbase near Syria's southeastern city of Latakia.

On Tuesday, the first group of Russian aircraft, military equipment as well as soldiers left the country. The planes included Ilyushin-76 transport aircraft and Su-34 fighter jets.

The planes were welcomed at a base near the Russian city of Voronezh.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday ordered the bulk of Syria-based Russian military forces to withdraw from the country.

Putin hailed Russia's almost six-month-aerial campaign in Syria as a positive step, saying the withdrawal could serve as a stimulus for the ongoing peace talks aimed at resolving the five-year deadly crisis gripping Syria.

The Russian president, however, said Hmeimim base and the Russian naval facility in the western Syrian port of Tartus will remain operational.

Damascus says the withdrawal of Russian forces came in complete coordination with Syria and was "carefully and accurately studied."

Iran's non-oil trade hits \$81.3b

TEHRAN

— Iran's non-oil trade topped \$81.38 billion from the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2015) until March 10, 2016, the Iran Customs Administration reported.

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Iran's stock market and investment opportunities

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Iran sees highest oil, gas condensate exports in next calendar year

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ports by one million bpd this year.

Zanganeh has vowed to reclaim the country's share of global crude oil exports as sanctions are being lifted.

April oil freeze meeting likely to go ahead without Iran

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Call for prequalification of contractors to finance, design, build, equip, install, and commission water treatment collection network and plant in Sarbisheh town in B.O.T method

No. 19102/GH



South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company

South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company intends to transfer financing, designing, building, equipping, installing, and commissioning of water treatment collection network and plant in Sarbisheh town in B.O.T method through holding a public tender observing related laws and regulations to eligible contractors with the following terms and conditions:

- A- A brief description of the project:

- Nominal capacity of wastewater treatment plant: 1.387.000 cubic meters per year

- Duration period: 24 months (2 full solar years)

- Land transferrable: 3453 sq.m.

- Commercial operation period since completion of the project: 25 full solar years

- Client: South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company

- Estimated initial cost: 148.000.000.000 rials

- Population undercoverage: 14040 families

- Termination year: 2041

B – Investee: South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company (on behalf of the Ministry of Energy as per the paragraph A of the Article 142 of the Fifth Development Plan transfers the project through a public bid observing related laws and regulations to eligible contractors.

Investment conditions:

- 1- Financial and technical capability for investing or participating with banks to recieve facilities

2- Being reputable in previous investments

3- Having capability to provide finance, having good managerial, executive, and technical record, and similar projects related to the advertisement's subject

4- Copies of the articles of association, the foundation, the latest changes, and the official newspaper certified for legal persons

5- Documents related to investments made over the past 10 years

6- Documents related to financial capability or participating with banks to recieve facilities proportional to the shares of partners

7- Bylaws or method of participation and investment in similar projects

8- Documents indicating investor's capability to participate in the projects

9- In addition to the presentation of participation contract, the presentation of documents is necessary for all partners.

C – Deadline for sending documents: Eligible investors holding their letters of introduction should refer to South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company's contracts department to receive prequalification documents within 10 days after the publishing date of this advertisement. Bidders should fill up the related forms and submit them in sealed pockets to South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company's contracts department maximum 25 days after the publishing date of this advertisement.

Date and venue for opening the pockets will be on April 9, 2016 in the conference room of South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company.

As per the Article 16 of the tenders law, the company will not accept bids after the mentioned date. Publishing costs of this advertisement shall be borne by the winner of the tender.

South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company: Shohada-ye Ebadi Blvd., Opposite Power Substation 32438762-056
Prequalification documents are available on the Water and Wastewater Company's website and on the national tenders websites, as well.

www.abfa-khj.ir
<http://iets.mporg.ir>

South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company

Financial Resources and Non-Government Participations Department

Call for prequalification of contractors to finance, design, build, equip, install, and commission water treatment collection network and plant in Qayen town in B.O.T method

No. 19101/GH



South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company

South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company intends to transfer financing, designing, building, equipping, installing, and commissioning of water treatment collection network and plant in Qayen town in B.O.T method through holding a public tender observing related laws and regulations to eligible contractors with the following terms and conditions:

- A- A brief description of the project:

- Nominal capacity of wastewater treatment plant: 3189370 cubic meters per year

- Duration period: 24 months (2 full solar years)

- Land transferrable:730508 sq.m.

- Commercial operation period since completion of the project: 25 full solar years

- Client: South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company

- Estimated initial cost: 200.000.000.000 rials

- Population undercoverage: 51400 families

- Termination year: 2041

B – Investee: South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company (on behalf of the Ministry of Energy as per the paragraph A of the Article 142 of the Fifth Development Plan transfers the project through a public bid observing related laws and regulations to eligible contractors.

Investment conditions:

- 1- Financial and technical capability for investing or participating with banks to recieve facilities

2- Being reputable in previous investments

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South Khorasan Water and Wastewater Company

Financial Resources and Non-Government Participations Department

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Donald Trump attracting new voters, Democrats 'tired of corrupt politics'

Anita Genova had never cast a vote in the Republican primary, but she walked into a polling place here Tuesday and pulled the lever for Donald Trump.

The retired 67-year-old bookkeeper was not alone in this eastern flank of Ohio, a traditional stronghold for Democrats that had a striking surge in Republican registration ahead of the primary.

"I did not vote for any other Republicans on that ballot," Ms. Genova said after casting her vote for Mr. Trump. "I just like the fact that nobody is in his pocket. He doesn't owe anybody anything."

"I am tired of the corrupt politics," she said.

Ms. Genova said she doubted Hillary Clinton, the front-runner in the Democratic race, would shake things up in Washington, and she said Sen. Bernard Sanders, Mrs. Clinton's chal-

lenger, is too old to be president.

For Linda Flesch, who supported President Obama in the past two elections, the top issue was jobs, and she said she sees Mr. Trump, a billionaire businessman, as the country's best chance to spread prosperity to this hard-hit part of the country.

"I have five kids, and they've all gone to colleges and these schools where they learn skills, and there is nothing around here," Ms. Flesch said. "Me? I'm retired, but what are they going to do? They got kids, and their kids are growing up. What the heck is going to happen? Everyone is going to be on welfare."

■ Epic battle

Turnout has surged for Republicans this year, with nearly every primary or caucus setting a record. Democrats' turnout, meanwhile, has tanked com-

pared with 2008, when Mrs. Clinton faced off against Mr. Obama in an epic battle.

Mr. Trump claims credit for the surge, saying he has drawn millions of new voters into the process. He urged Republicans to begin unifying behind his campaign, saying he would lead the party to victory in states that haven't been competitive in a generation.

"We have taken in millions and millions and millions of people within the Republican Party," Mr. Trump said at a campaign rally in Vienna, Ohio, this week. "They came out from the Democrats. They came as the independents, and I tell you the thing I am most proud of and I see when I sign and shake hands with people — every 20th person says to me, 'You know, Mr. Trump, I never, ever voted before.'"



Trump claims credit for the surge, saying he has drawn millions of new voters into the process.

Mark Munroe, chairman of the Mahoning County Board of Elections, said Mr. Trump is indeed responsible for the intense interest in this year's campaign — though he said

that works both ways: Although he is drawing plenty of new supporters, others are voting in the Republican race to try to stop him.

Mr. Munroe, a Republican sup-

porting Gov. John Kasich, one of Mr. Trump's competitors, said the influx includes unaffiliated and new voters who have never participated in the primary process, as well as Democrats who have crossed over. This part of Ohio is perfectly tailored to Mr. Trump's economic pitch of curbing immigration, pushing worker-friendly trade deals and slapping stiff tariffs on companies that move jobs out of the United States and then try to ship goods back into the country.

Ms. Genova said the message resonates with her.

"I like the fact that he is going to make an attempt to get all the illegals out of our country," Ms. Genova said. "They are collecting our taxpayer benefits, and they have no right to do that. They are taking away jobs."

(Source: The Washington Times)

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Whole Bldg. in Shahrak-Qarb
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Apt. in Elahieh
150 sq.m, 3 bdrs, fully furn, **Diplomatic Bldg.**, **2000 USD**
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Apt. in Jordan
3rd Fl., 150 sq.m, 3 bdrs, fully furn, **Diplomatic**, **Good access to highway**, **1700 USD**
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Chinese Premier Li Keqiang says it is 'impossible' to miss economic targets

BEIJING — Chinese Premier Li Keqiang said it would be "impossible" for China to fall short in meeting its relatively high economic-growth targets even as it pushes ahead with structural reforms.

Speaking to reporters at the conclusion of China's annual legislative session, Mr. Li said China won't suffer a "hard landing," or sharp downturn, and can achieve growth and reform simultaneously.

"Reform and development aren't contradictory," he said. "We should be able to stimulate market vitality and support economic development via structural reforms."

At the opening of the National People's Congress earlier this month, China set growth targets of 6.5% to 7% for this year and an average benchmark of at least 6.5% from now until 2020.

Economists say this relatively high growth target at a time when the economy is losing momentum suggests China is favoring growth over structural reform, which could prevent massive job losses and social instability but set back the shift of China's economy from investment and manufacturing to consumption and services.

The real test will be in whether tough restructuring steps are implemented, Commerzbank economist Zhou Hao said in a report following Mr. Li's comments.



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang speaking at a news conference following the closing ceremony of the National People's Congress at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Wednesday.

"China needs to proceed with the deleveraging more decisively, and should prevent the leverage ratio from soaring again," he wrote. "At the end of the day, policy execution is crucial to restore the market confidence."

Mr. Li said capital-adequacy ratios at China's financial institutions are sound, bad loans are well covered by reserves and the nation is making progress in cutting corporate debt using debt-for-equity swaps.

Mr. Li signaled that China will do what

it takes to maintain its growth targets and that it has a "good reserve" of policy instruments in the event that growth falls outside an acceptable range. He said China will employ "innovative measures" to ensure steady economic progress.

Asked about volatility in the nation's stock and foreign-exchange markets over the past year, the premier acknowledged the fluctuations but said Beijing's steps to stabilize the markets "achieved the desired effect." He said the financial system is fundamentally sound and should be mar-

shaled to help the real economy, including entrepreneurs and small companies.

Government steps to prop up shares and punish speculators during last year's stock-market crash, along with weak communication surrounding changes to its foreign-exchange system, raised questions about China's commitment to markets and its ability to manage the world's second-largest economy.

Mr. Li said China will continue to pursue market-oriented reforms and improve its regulatory structure as it strives to "guard against moral hazard."

He said Beijing will work to launch a link connecting the Hong Kong and Shenzhen stock exchanges this year, saying a similar link between Shanghai and Hong Kong markets has brought strong benefits to both sides.

China has seen rising joblessness in the manufacturing sector and more labor protests over recent quarters. The economy grew by 6.9% last year, its slowest pace in a quarter century, and is widely forecast to lose further momentum this year.

Mr. Li said restructuring and a reduction in overcapacity will be achieved without a sharp increase in layoffs or unemployment, pointing to the 13 million urban jobs the nation created last year.

(Source: WSI)

Frankfurt and London seal \$30 billion trading tie-up to counter U.S. threat

Deutsche Boerse AG (DB1Gn.DE) and London Stock Exchange Group Plc (LSE) (LSE.L) agreed to combine in a \$30 billion deal to create a European trading powerhouse better able to compete with U.S. rivals encroaching on their turf.

But the deal, which marks a third attempt to link the Frankfurt and London exchanges, may prompt a takeover war after New York Stock Exchange owner Intercontinental Exchange (ICE.N) said it may bid for the British group.

Nearly 16 years after Deutsche Boerse first tried to take over LSE, the exchanges said last month they were discussing an all-share merger, which they confirmed on Wednesday would give Deutsche Boerse shareholders 54.4 percent and LSE investors 45.6 percent of a new company.

This offers a unique opportunity for Frankfurt which has always played second fiddle to London as a global financial center, something recognized by the German government which said it would wel-

come the deal if it strengthened Frankfurt.

If it goes ahead, the combination would create the world's biggest exchange by revenue, forecast at 4.7 billion euros this year from stock, bond and derivatives trading, indices, market data, and clearing and settlement.

The exchanges sought to sell the deal to investors with the lure of annual cost savings of 450 million euros (\$500 million).

They also promised users - the banks and fund managers who pay fees to trade

and companies who pay to be listed - "substantial benefits", but gave no figures.

And in a clear effort to win over Europe's politicians to the benefits of a dominant pan-European exchange, Deutsche Boerse Chief Executive Carsten Kengeter said it would enable Europe to enhance its capital markets.

This chimes with European Union plans for a "Capital Markets Union" to compete better with the United States and Asia.

(Source: Reuters)

NEWS

BMW CEO pushes electric cars, relies on luxury models for funds

BMW AG Chief Executive Officer Harald Krueger vowed to push the carmaker deeper into the market for electric cars and accelerate the introduction of self-driving features, while broadening the range of lucrative luxury models that will help fund his strategy.

Krueger laid out the plan in his first major review since becoming CEO last year. Novelties include the introduction of more sport utility vehicles, including the full-sized X7,



as well as more versions of high-end models like the new 7-Series flagship sedan, Krueger said Wednesday in Munich, where the company is based.

A decade after taking the top spot in the global luxury-car market, BMW is at a crossroads. Years of rolling out new models ranging from coupe-like SUVs to seven-seat wagons have left the company with few niches that could spur growth. Rival Daimler AG has a chance to reclaim the crown as early as this year after catching up to BMW with a slew of new models and upgrades of its bestsellers.

"It's going to be difficult for BMW to grow into new segments in future, after they were the leaders here for many years," said Sascha Gommel, a Frankfurt-based analyst at Commerzbank, who advises investors hold BMW stock.

The two-pronged approach built around advanced cars and a broadening out of the existing range aims to help BMW maintain pretax profit margins at a minimum of 10 percent through 2020. BMW predicted another year of record sales volumes, revenue and earnings, while group earnings will rise only slightly, compared with a forecast of solid growth last year. Revenue from the automaking segment will grow slightly, the company said, compared with a significant increase last year.

BMW rose as much as 3.34 euros, or 4.2 percent, to 82.90 euros, and traded at 82.53 euros at 10:14 a.m. in Frankfurt. The stock has lost 17 percent this year, compared with 13 percent decline at Daimler in the period.

→ 9



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NEWS IN BRIEF

Mosquitoes' rapid spread poses threat beyond Zika

As the world focuses on Zika's rapid advance in the Americas, experts warn the virus that originated in Africa is just one of a growing number of continent-jumping diseases carried by mosquitoes threatening swathes of humanity.

The battle against the insects on the streets of Brazil is the latest in an ancient war between humankind and the Culicidae, or mosquito, family which the pests frequently win.

Today, mosquito invaders are turning up with increasing regularity from Washington DC to Strasbourg, challenging the notion that the diseases they carry will remain confined to the tropics, scientists documenting the cases told Reuters.

Ironically, humans have rolled out the red carpet for the invaders by transporting them around the world and providing a trash-strewn urban landscape that suits them to perfection.

The *Aedes aegypti* species blamed for transmitting Zika breeds in car tires, tin cans, dog bowls and cemetery flower vases. And its females are great at spreading disease as they take multiple bites to satisfy their hunger for the protein in human blood they need to develop their eggs.

Around the world, disease-carrying mosquitoes are advancing at speed, taking viruses such as dengue and Zika, plus a host of lesser-known ills such as chikungunya and St. Louis encephalitis, into new territories from Europe to the Pacific.

(Source: Reuters)

How power became portable: An introduction to battery technology

The modern world, in all its grandeur and complexity, runs off a shockingly primal force, one that has been flowing through human bodies long before the first motor was built. Electricity, that same force that has kept human hearts beating for as long as there have been human hearts to beat, today flows through the veins of civilization, powering the skyscrapers we work in and the phones in our pockets.

Although the great producers of electricity, colossi like the Hoover Dam, may be the most viscerally impressive, human mastery of electrical currents is perhaps most impressive in the form of batteries. Some small enough to sit on the tip of a finger, batteries power many of the devices we use every day: phones, laptops, flashlights, watches. They have been an omnipresent part of life for decades now, but how many of us know how they work?

A typical alkaline battery will be familiar to many people, at least from the outside. Generally encased in a metal cylinder, the battery has two ends marked as + (positive) and - (negative). The two ends of a battery are terminals, connected to electrodes within the battery: the positive end connects to a cathode, while the negative end connects to an anode.

A separator inside the battery keeps the two from touching, while allowing electricity to flow between them. Between the two ends is an electrolyte paste, a substance that allows for the flow of electrical current.

(Source: Digital Trends)

Record surge in 2016 temperatures adds urgency to climate deal

A record surge in temperatures in 2016, linked to global warming and an El Nino weather event in the Pacific, is adding urgency to a deal by 195 governments in December to curb greenhouse gas emissions to slow climate change, scientists said on Monday.

Average global temperatures last month were 1.35 degree Celsius (2.4 Fahrenheit) above normal for February, the biggest temperature excess recorded for any month against a baseline of 1951-80, according to NASA data released at the weekend.

The previous record was set in January, stoked by factors including a build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and the strong El Nino event, which releases heat from the Pacific.

"I think even the hard-core climate people are looking at this and saying: 'What on Earth?'" David Carlson, director of the World Climate Research Program at the UN's World Meteorological Organization, said of the leap in temperatures.

"It's startling," he told Reuters. "It's definitely a changed planet ... it makes us nervous about the long-term impact." Scientists say global warming is causing more powerful downpours, droughts and rising sea levels.

Jean-Noel Thepaut, head of the Copernicus Climate Change Service at the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, said the long-term trend of warming "makes the implementation of the Paris agreement urgent."

In December 2015, 195 nations agreed in Paris to a climate deal with a goal of cutting greenhouse gas emissions to a net zero by 2100, shifting from fossil fuels in favor of greener energies such as solar and wind power.

(Source: Reuters)



Increases in access to safe water and sanitation have been key contributors to this trend, alongside better access to immunization, insecticide-treated mosquito nets and essential medicines.

■ **Total deaths**
NCDs, such as stroke, heart disease, cancers and chronic respiratory disease, now amount to nearly two-thirds of the total deaths caused by unhealthy environments.

At the same time, deaths from infectious diseases, such as diarrhea and ma-

UN estimates 12.6 million deaths each year attributable to unhealthy environments

An estimated 12.6 million people died as a result of living or working in an unhealthy environment in 2012 – nearly one in four of total global deaths, according to new estimates from the World Health Organization (WHO).

Environmental risk factors, such as air, water and soil pollution, chemical exposures, climate change, and ultraviolet radiation, reportedly contribute to more than 100 diseases and injuries.

A "healthy environment underpins a healthy population," said WHO's Director-General, Dr. Margaret Chan, in a press release. "If countries do not take actions to make environments where people live and work healthy, millions will continue to become ill and die too young," she warned.

The second edition of the report, preventing disease through healthy environments: a global assessment of the burden of disease from environmental risks, reveals that since it was first published a decade ago, deaths due to non-communicable diseases (NCDs), mostly attributable to air pollution – including exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke – amount to as much as 8.2 million of these deaths.

New ExoMars mission to find alien life on way to Red Planet

A new era of Mars exploration for Europe began on Monday as a new mission jointly developed by the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Russian Federal Space Agency (Roscosmos) blasted into the sky on a Russian Proton rocket to find if Red Planet has traces of alien life.

Named "ExoMars 2016", the first phase of the ESA-Roscosmos mission lifted off from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on a Russian Proton rocket at around 03:00 P.M., marking the start of a seven-month journey to the Red Planet.

"Maybe, maybe we can find out if there's life extant on the Red Planet," Mark McCaughrean, senior science adviser at the European Space Agency (ESA), was quoted as saying in a statement.

The mission will have the Trace Gas Orbiter (TGO) and Schiaparelli -- an entry, descent and landing demonstrator. TGO will make a detailed inventory of Mars' atmospheric gases, with particular interest in rare gases like methane, which implies that there is an active, current source.



"TGO aims to measure its geographical and seasonal dependence and help to determine whether it stems from a geological or biological source," the ESA said in a statement.

■ **A range of technologies**
Meanwhile, Schiaparelli lander will demonstrate a

Yoga helps heart patients with paroxysmal atrial fibrillation, lowers BP

Atrial fibrillation disturbs the rhythm of your heart, causing it to either beat too fast, too slow, or with an irregular, syn-copated rhythm. Chest pain, dizziness, and shortness of breath usually accompany episodes of fibrillation — the word for very fast and irregular contractions. Patients naturally feel stress and anxiety when these symptoms arise, especially when it comes to paroxysmal AFib, which can cause them to occur unexpectedly.

A new study of people diagnosed with paroxysmal AFib suggests yoga can help reduce not only the stress associated with the condition, but also patients' high blood pressure (BP) and heart rate. In fact, participants who practiced yoga for a 12-week period measured "significantly lower" on heart rate and blood pressure compared to participants who did not.

■ **Electrical disorder**

AFib is the result of an electrical disorder in the atria, the heart's two upper chambers. When a fibrillation happens, blood doesn't pump completely into the heart's two lower chambers, called the ventricles, and instead pools in the atria. The heart's strange rhythm is a result of the upper and lower chambers not working together as they should.

Doctors describe the condition as either paroxysmal, persistent, or permanent.

While the arrhythmia of paroxysmal



AFib stops on its own in less than a week's time, persistent AFib will continue for more than a week, and in some cases will require treatment. Over time, both paroxysmal and persistent AFib may develop into the most extreme version of the condition, known as permanent AF. Medicine cannot restore the normal heart rhythm in patients with permanent AFib.

For the study, the researchers examined 80 patients, all diagnosed with paroxysmal AFib, and measured their blood pressure and heart rate. Using survey questions, the team also evaluated each patient's quality of life and mental health. Next, they divided the patients into two groups: A control group received standard treatment for the 12-week period, while the other received standard treatment plus yoga. At the end of the study, the researchers examined the patients once again.

(Source: medicaldaily.com)

Spray-on coating could ice-proof airplanes, power lines, windshields

On your car windshield, ice is a nuisance. But on an airplane, a wind turbine, an oil rig or power line, it can be downright dangerous. And removing it with the methods that are available today -- usually chemical melting agents or labor-intensive scrapers and hammers -- is difficult and expensive work.

That could soon change thanks to a durable, inexpensive ice-repellent coating developed by University of Michigan researchers.

Thin, clear and slightly rubbery to the touch, the spray-on formula could make ice slide off equipment, airplanes and car windshields with only the force of gravity or a gentle breeze. This could have major implications in industries like energy, shipping and transportation, where ice is a constant problem in cold climates.

■ **New coating**

The new coating could also lead to big energy savings in freezers, which today rely on complex and energy-hungry defrosting systems to stay frost-free. An ice-repelling coating could do the same job with zero energy consumption, making household and industrial freezers up to 20 percent more efficient. The coating is detailed in a new paper published in the journal Science Advances.

Made of a blend of common synthetic rubbers, the formula marks a departure from earlier approaches that relied on making surfaces either very water-repellent or very slippery.

laria, often related to poor water, sanitation and waste management, have declined. Increases in access to safe water and sanitation have been key contributors to this trend, alongside better access to immunization, insecticide-treated mosquito nets and essential medicines.

"There's an urgent need for investment in strategies to reduce environmental risks in our cities, homes and workplaces," said Dr. Maria Neira, the Director of WHO's Department of Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health. "Such investments can significantly reduce the rising worldwide burden of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, injuries, and cancers, and lead to immediate savings in healthcare costs," she added.

Environmental risks take their greatest toll on young children and older people, the report finds, with children under five and adults aged 50 to 75 years most impacted. According to WHO, the deaths of 1.7 million children under five and 4.9 million adults aged 50 to 75 could be prevented every year through better environmental management.

(Source: UN News Center)

range of technologies to enable a controlled landing on Mars in preparation for future missions.

After a seven-month cruise, the lander will separate from the TGO on October 16 and land on Mars on October 19 for several days of activities.

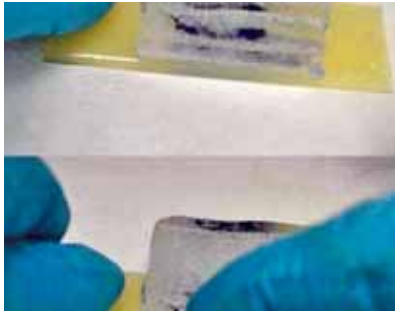
TGO will then enter orbit around the Red Planet ahead of its exciting multi-year science mission.

It will also serve as a data relay for the second ExoMars mission, comprising a rover and a surface science platform, planned for launch in 2018. It will also provide data relay for NASA rovers.

"It's a milestone that caps off several years of preparation for any complex mission - designing, building and testing the ground systems, preparing the flight operations procedures and then finally an intensive period of team training," said Paolo Ferri, head of mission operations.

Readying to conduct the ExoMars mission comes at a time when ESA's operations teams are seeing a historically high level of activity.

(Source: Business Standard)



"Researchers had been trying for years to dial down ice adhesion strength with chemistry, making more and more water-repellent surfaces," said Kevin Golovin, a doctoral student in materials science and engineering. "We've discovered a new knob to turn, using physics to change the mechanics of how ice breaks free from a surface."

Led by Anish Tuteja, associate professor of materials science and engineering, the team initially experimented with water-repelling surfaces as well, but found that they weren't effective at shedding ice. But during their experiments, they noticed something unexpected: rubbery coatings worked best for repelling ice, even when they weren't water-repellent.

Eventually, they discovered that the ability to shed water wasn't important at all. The rubbery coatings repelled ice because of a different phenomenon, called "interfacial cavitation."

(Source: eurekaalert.org)

Bermuda Triangle mystery might not have been solved after all

Bermuda Triangle mystery might not have been solved after all recent reports have suggested that scientists may have finally, after all those years, solved the mystery of the Bermuda Triangle. Yes, that part of the world where ships and planes can disappear, not to mention countless people who were never seen or heard of again.

Conspiracy theorists and fans of the unexplained have debated over this region for years, and all those articles from recent weeks fueled new rounds of debate. But no, that might not be the case after all.

Let's give you a bit of backstory to frame things, just in case you've been too caught up in election fever, NFL offseason trades, or the latest buzz with Kanye and/or the Kardashians. Recently, British publications had reported a discovery of

some large craters on the bottom of the Barents Sea.

■ **Arctic craters**

A team of Arctic University (Norway) scientists described these Arctic craters as extremely large ones, measuring up to 3,280 feet in diameter and 131 feet deep. They further theorized that the craters were caused by methane gas explosions from deep oil deposits, and accumulated in Triassic-era rocks.

Now that doesn't seem like much, but the Daily Mail was on this report right away, saying that the findings could explain why so many ships and planes were lost in the Bermuda Triangle. The publication cited a 2014 report from the Siberian Times, where a Russian scientist was quoted as saying the gas explosions may have heated up the ocean,

thereby sinking ships, and caused atmospheric events that had resulted in aircraft crashes.

Mystery solved? Myth busted may be more like it, now that we're back to the present.

The Arctic University of Norway itself had gone on record to say that the Daily Mail and other publications had gotten it all wrong. In a news release called "Craters in Barents Sea Not Connected to Bermuda Triangle," researchers clarified everything in no uncertain terms.

"We have discovered many large craters on the seabed in the central Barents Sea," wrote Arctic University professor Karin Andreassen. "Analyses suggest that blowout of methane gas once the ice retreated after the last Ice Age formed these craters."

(Source: Modern Readers)

A provisional EU-Turkey deal to stem the flow of migrants in return for concessions to Ankara is not offering Turkey "a free ride," European Commission First Vice President Frans Timmermans said Wednesday.

Timmermans told a news conference that Turkey would, for example, need to carry out required measures by the end of April to allow Turks visa-free travel into the European Union by the end of June, as Ankara has requested.

"We are certainly not giving Turkey a free ride," he said.

He also said that Turkish requests to open new "chapters" of its long stalled negotiation on accession to the EU would be considered and said that would need the agreement of EU member states. Cyprus is blocking opening some chapters until Turkey stops excluding it from some existing agreements with the EU.

Timmermans acknowledged widespread concerns about human rights in Turkey but said that the European Union had an interest in expanding the accession process in order to address those issues.

EU is not giving Turkey 'a free ride' with migrant deal: EU's Timmermans



There would be no "blanket returns" to Turkey and that both Greece and Turkey would need to change legislation in

order for the scheme to work in accordance with EU and international law. But the alternative to the deal was

to see more people arrive in Greece, where borders have been closed to prevent them moving to the rest of the EU, notably to Germany. He referred to poor conditions at Idomeni, on the Greek border with Macedonia, where thousands of migrants are stranded.

EU leaders will discuss the proposals at a summit in Brussels on Thursday and Friday and Timmermans said the Commission believed it was the right thing for the EU to seal a final deal.

He insisted refugees were not being turned away from Europe and that the EU would ensure they were given full international rights to protection in Turkey if there was conclusion of the accord by which Turkey takes back people reaching Greece.

Under the draft plan, the EU would take in one Syrian refugee direct from Turkey for every one returned to Turkey.

Timmermans said initially those resettled would benefit from an existing scheme by which member states offered 22,000 places last year. EU officials say about 18,000 places remain.

(Source: Reuters)

Salehi: New horizons opening up for nuclear co-op with Iran

➡ It will take some time because there are so many offers as I said and we need to go into details probably few months before we come up with a decision. But with the Russians, yes, the launching of the new nuclear power plants will be

taking place in a matter of months.

TEHRAN TIMES: Are Iranian students wishing to study in nuclear-related fields facing limitations abroad?

SALEHI: There is an annex to the JCPOA which makes the other side (the

5+1 countries) committed to cooperate with us in the domain of peaceful nuclear activities and that includes exchange of scientists, students and sending students abroad to study in such fields. So, we don't see any constraint in this regard.

So, I think even as yet many of our students can study abroad in these fields but now that we have this nuclear deal in place, certainly there will be more possibilities opening up to our students and our scientific community.

NATO chief predicts another tough year ahead for Afghanistan

The head of NATO on Wednesday predicted a difficult fight ahead for Afghanistan as the government continues battling the Taliban and other militant factions trying to assert their presence in the war-ravaged country.

Jens Stoltenberg, NATO's secretary general, said insurgents will press their fight against Kabul in what is likely to be another tough year for the Afghan government. He spoke to The Associated Press during a two-day visit to Kabul, his second since taking the top NATO role in late 2014.

The Taliban, al-Qaeda and the ISIL terrorist group will keep up their attacks across Afghanistan throughout 2016, he said. "We have seen different terrorist organizations trying to establish themselves in Afghanistan. We have seen the presence of al-Qaeda, ISIL, the Taliban and all the groups, and they are still in Afghanistan."

"There is going to be continued fighting and we have to expect that there are going to be new attacks on the

government forces," he added.

NATO has around 3,000 troops in Afghanistan, in the so-called Resolute Support non-combat mission along with about 9,800 U.S. soldiers. The mission was pared down in 2014, with the departure of most international combat troops, leaving Afghan forces to take on the insurgency largely alone.

For now, the United States will halve troop numbers at the end of this year. Stoltenberg said NATO's numbers for 2017 are not yet clear. The use of U.S. airstrikes to back Afghan forces has been critical in helping them hold ground and can push Taliban and other insurgent groups out of contested areas.

The Taliban were well-prepared for the end of the U.S.-NATO combat mission and swiftly intensified their insurgency, now in its 15th year. Officials have said that Afghan forces suffered almost 30 percent more deaths and casualties in 2015 than the estimated 5,000 of the year before.

(Source: AP)

Argentina sinks Chinese boat for 'illegal fishing'

Argentina's navy says that it used gunfire to sink a Chinese-flagged boat that was fishing illegally in national waters.

China's government said it expressed its serious concern to Argentina and called for an investigation.

The navy statement said on Tuesday the boat was intercepted a day earlier off the coast of Puerto Madryn, about 1,460km south of Buenos Aires.

The statement said the boat did not heed warning calls and instead tried to ram an Argentine naval vessel. Sailors then shot holes in different parts of the fishing boat, causing it to sink, the navy said.

Four people on board were rescued and arrested. They remained in custody and were to go before a federal judge in southern Chubut province, the statement said.

The navy said it had been 15 years since one of its vessels last sank a foreign vessel fishing illegally in Argentina's waters.

In Beijing, Lu Kang, a spokesman for

the Chinese Foreign Ministry, posted a statement on the ministry's website saying the boat had been fishing in Argentine waters and was chased for several hours before Argentine naval fire holed the vessel.

It said four Chinese citizens were picked up by the Argentines and 28 more were rescued by a nearby Chinese vessel.

The statement did not directly address the question of whether the boat was fishing illegally or tried to ram the Argentine navy vessel.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Chinese Embassy to Argentina have lodged urgent representations with Argentina, expressing serious concern, urging Argentina to carry out a full investigation immediately and to inform China of the details, to protect the safety and lawful rights of Chinese sailors, and to take effective measures to avoid similar incidents," the statement said.

(Source: AP)

Machiavellianism is dominant in Middle East: analyst

➡ Do you see the collapse of the bipolar hegemonic system as the reason behind the bitter developments in the Middle East?

A: Certainly the bipolar international system, notwithstanding all its shortcomings, had its own logic of stability. Today's international system is still searching for a workable replacement for the bipolarity of the Cold War era. To use a term used by the late Hedley Bull, the Australian theorist of international relations, today's international system is indeed an anarchic system in search of a stable order.

■ **The EU, particularly France as a key member, is not satisfied with the current level of its involvement in developments such as the ones going on in Syria. For example, President Hollande has called for an active role by France in Syria. Does this mean that the EU seeks stronger voice in international structure?**

A: Obviously the EU prefers Europe to play a strong role in shaping the post-

Cold War international system. However, today's Europe is not as dominating a player in world affairs as it had once been.

Europe's power is being overshadowed by other emerging forces outside the European continent. Furthermore, in foreign relations, Europe has generally become an appendage of U.S. foreign policy, and thus it cannot be viewed as a truly independent actor.

■ **Mr. Entessar, can the tension between Russia and Turkey in Syria lead to a war?**

A: At this time, the level of tension between Russia and Turkey is not high enough to lead to war. However, things on the ground are shifting fast, and President Erdogan's rhetoric and unpredict-

ability may create unforeseen circumstances.

■ **If this happens would NATO rush to the help of Turkey?**

A: NATO has been lukewarm in its public statements about its desire to get into a hot war with Russia. Even the U.S. has warned Turkey not to act recklessly. However, if a full-blown war occurs between Russia and Turkey, NATO will have to support its member Turkey in such a conflict.

■ **Why are the Syrian Kurds close to Russia and the U.S. as well?**

A: The Syrian Kurds see Daesh, al-Nusra, and other extremist groups as their main immediate enemy. That is why they have supported countries or elements that are enemies of Salaf-

ist groups in Syria. They have also worked in tandem with the U.S. when their own interests required it. The Syrian Kurds have a long-term objective, which is to establish an autonomous or even independent entity in Syria, and a short-term objective of defeating or containing Daesh and other like-minded threats.

■ **There are essential differences between U.S. and Turkish approaches toward the Syrian Kurds. According to this, what will be the fate of the Syrian Kurds in a future government in the country?**

A: Turkey pursues two inter-related objectives. One is to defeat the PKK inside Turkey, and the other is to defeat Kurdish aspirations in Syria and contain the Democratic Union Party (PYD) in Syria, which Ankara views as an extension of PKK. The U.S., on the other hand, does not want to get bogged down in Turkey's brewing civil war between the Turkish government and its Kurdish citizens.

North Korea sentences American to 15 years' hard labor

North Korea's highest court has sentenced an American tourist who allegedly attempted to steal a propaganda banner from a restricted area of his hotel to 15 years of hard labor in prison.

Otto Warmbier, a 21-year-old University of Virginia undergraduate student, was convicted and sentenced in a one-hour trial on Wednesday morning at the North's Supreme Court. He was charged with subversion.

Warmbier was arrested in early January as he tried to leave the country after visiting as a tourist with a New Year's tour group.

In a statement made before his trial, he told a gathering of reporters in Pyongyang he wanted the banner "as a trophy" for the mother of a friend.

North Korea regularly accuses Washington and Seoul of sending spies to overthrow its government to enable the U.S.-backed South Korean government to control the Korean peninsula. Warmbier was arrested while visiting the country with Young Pioneer Tours, an agency specializing in travel to the North, which is strongly discouraged by the United States State Department. (Source: Al Jazeera)

Iran's Largest Aquarium Tunnel and Reptile Garden Inaugurated in Isfahan

I**T****ECONOMY** Iran's largest desk aquarium tunnel and reptile garden was inaugurated in Isfahan in a ceremony attended by Iranian Vice President and Director of Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicraft Organization Masoud Soltanifar, as well as the governor general of Isfahan Province, mayor of Isfahan city and the chairman and members of Isfahan Islamic City Council in addition to a number of Isfahan's directors and citizens.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony,

Soltanifar said Isfahan Province enjoys many cultural, religious, historical and natural attractions; adding that inauguration of the aquarium tunnel and reptile garden can promote tourism in Isfahan.

Isfahan Mayor Mehdi Jamalinejad, for his part, said the municipality of Isfahan intends to create new and modern tourism attractions in the city.

In this due, we built this aquarium through making joint investment with a Turkish investor, the official added.

NEWS

Italy, Hungary say no automatic renewal of Russia sanctions

Italy and Hungary, two of the Kremlin's closest allies in Europe, said there could be no automatic extension of the European Union's sanctions against Russia, the most public sign yet of fraying unity on how to deal with Moscow.

Two years after the West imposed economic sanctions over Russia's annexation of Crimea and its support for separatists in eastern Ukraine, the EU's resolve is at risk of ebbing because of the stalled Minsk peace process, diplomats say.

While EU governments last week extended asset freezes and travel bans on Russians and Russian companies, there is less consensus on whether to prolong more far-reaching sanctions on Russia's banking, defense and energy sectors from July.

"We cannot take for granted any decision at this stage," Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni told reporters after a meeting with his EU peers in Brussels, where Russia's EU policy was discussed for the first time in more than a year.

However, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini told a news conference such decisions were never taken without political debate, while EU officials said Monday's debate among ministers was measured.

Some EU member states, such as Britain, the Baltic republics and Poland, argue that sanctions remain a necessary response to what they see as an expansionist Russia. Hungary, Italy and Greece stress its importance as a trade partner, a supplier of energy and a major player in attempts to end war in Syria.

"You cannot decide on sanctions by sweeping the issues under the carpet," Hungary's foreign minister, Peter Szijjarto, said. "We believe that the question of sanctions should be decided at the highest level. It cannot be automatic," he said.

But Lithuania's foreign minister, Linas Linkevicius, whose country was part of the Soviet Union until 1990, told Reuters that, following the debate among ministers on Monday, "there is no revision of policy".

Echoing that, Poland's Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski said that "the view is negative as regards the internal situation in Russia and its foreign policy".

■ Don't mention the 'S' word

Tellingly, after a long discussion, sanctions were not discussed by foreign ministers, partly because the debate was chaired by Mogherini to avoid exacerbating the divisions. Instead, EU officials - who help marshal the bloc's foreign policy - sought to gauge the mood.

One of the biggest points of contention was whether Mogherini, an Italian, should visit Russia at a time when the EU is demanding that Russia release Ukrainian pilot Nadezhda Savchenko, who is on a hunger strike, on humanitarian grounds.

Waszczykowski said he suggested to ministers that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov first come to Brussels.

Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Hungary are among the EU states most skeptical about the sanctions, while European farmers, who once exported heavily to Russia, want to see markets reopen and protested in Brussels on Monday. Moscow has imposed its own tit-for-tat sanctions against many EU food imports. Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi briefly held up a decision to extend the sanctions late last year, saying they could not be rushed through.

However, the United States says lifting Western sanctions are conditional on Russia complying with the terms of the Minsk peace process. Moscow denies any military involvement.

"Today Russia faces a choice between the continuation of economically damaging sanctions and fully meeting its obligations under Minsk," U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said on Sunday in Paris.

In comments that some EU diplomats took as Moscow pressing for sanctions relief, Lavrov said on Sunday he hoped the United States would be willing to compromise on the Minsk process.

(Source: Reuters)

BMW CEO pushes electric cars, relies on luxury models for funds

➡ The carmaker's last major strategic shift was in 2007, when then-CEO Norbert Reithofer pushed the sporty brand to invest billions to reduce fuel consumption, produce its first electric vehicle and pioneer the mass production of carbon fiber. Krueger said Thursday that he'll add open-top versions of the i8 plug-in, while also broadening the range of cars that come with the optional M-high-performance packages.

"We need to manage our current business to perfection, while continuing to grow in a targeted fashion, in order to secure the necessary investment," Krueger said.

Unlike rivals Mercedes-Benz and Audi, the owner of the BMW, Rolls-Royce and Mini brands isn't part of a broader group, meaning it has to absorb the costs of developing these new technologies on the strength of its current offering. Growth though is slowing as Daimler AG's Mercedes and Volkswagen AG's Audi push for the No. 1 spot, and brands including Maserati, Jaguar and Alfa Romeo expand to give luxury-car buyers more options. "There's not much they can do in terms of adding more products," Dominic O'Brien, a London-based analyst with Exane BNP Paribas, said before BMW released the strategy report. "The three key themes of emissions reduction, connected cars and autonomous driving will keep spending on research and development at an elevated level." BMW's focus on conserving its resources was evident in its decision to refrain from an expected special payout for investors this year, as the company celebrates its 100th anniversary.

In addition to battling its traditional rivals, BMW also faces the emergence of new competitors like Tesla Motors Inc. and potentially Apple Inc. The German carmaker outlined its view of future luxury autos last week when it presented a concept vehicle where the steering wheel and center console retract, enabling the driver to turn to face the front passenger.

"We need to act swiftly in the digital world and be prepared to take risks," said Krueger.

(Source: Bloomberg)



Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.
George Bernard Shaw

LEARN ENGLISH

Passing Through Airport Security

Roland: Why are you so nervous about flying?
Natalie: I'm not nervous about being in the air. It's going through security. I hear it's a **hassle** and I don't want to end up being **strip-searched**.
Roland: You won't be strip-searched. All you need to do is to follow a few simple rules. When you get to security **screening**, put your carry-on bag and all metal objects in a bin so that it can go through the scanner.
Natalie: But I heard I couldn't bring any liquids with me.
Roland: You're only allowed three ounces of liquids, **aero-sols**, or gels. Those should go inside a **zip-top bag** and be placed in a bin.
Natalie: Do I have to take off my shoes and get one of those body scans?
Roland: You don't have to take off your shoes, but you do have to get a body scan.
Natalie: I knew it! They're going to **bombard** me with harmful **rays**. And you wonder why I'm nervous about flying!
Roland: You won't be bombarded with any harmful rays. You walk through the **metal detector** and stand in front of the scanner. It's not dangerous.
Natalie: Oh, why do they have to treat every passenger like a potential **hijacker** or terrorist? Do I look like a terrorist? I feel like walking through security with my hands up saying, "I am not a terrorist. I am not a terrorist."
Roland: I wouldn't do that if I were you. That's a sure way to get the **TSA's** attention. Just stay calm and follow the instructions.
Natalie: Just **like a lamb to the slaughter**?

(Source: espod.com)

Words & phrases

hassle: something that is annoying, because it causes problems or is difficult to do
strip-search: a process in which you have to remove your clothes so that your body can be checked, usually for hidden drugs
screening: tests or checks that are done to make sure that people or things are acceptable or suitable for a particular purpose
aerosol: a small metal container with liquid inside, you press a button on the container to make the liquid come out in very small drops.
zip-top bag: clear plastic bag that has a little what looks like a zipper on top of it
bombard: to do something too often or too much, for example criticizing or questioning someone, or giving too much information
ray: a beam of heat, electricity, or other form of energy
metal detector: a special frame that you walk through at an airport, used to check for weapons made of metal
hijacker: someone who uses violence or threats to take control of a plane, vehicle, or ship
TSA: Transportation Security Administration is an agency of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that has authority over the security of the traveling public in the United States
like a lamb to the slaughter: used when someone is going to do something dangerous, but they do not realize it or have no choice

QUIZ OF THE DAY

132) We still have _____ eggs.
a) a little
b) many
c) lots of
(Quiz No. 131 answer: b)

PHRASAL VERB

Put (yourself) out

■ **Meaning**: go to a lot of trouble, be inconvenienced
■ **For example**: Please do not put yourself out for us.

ENGLISH PROVERB

Be swift to hear, slow to speak

■ **Explanation**: listen carefully before speaking

Mehrabad airport subway line inaugurated on Tuesday

Tehran's subway stations reached 100

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Tehran's Mehrabad d e s k subway line, which stretched over two kilometers and connects Mehrabad International Airport to subway line 3, came on stream on Tuesday.
First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri, Tehran Mayor Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, Tehran's Governor Hossein Hashemi, and the managing director of Tehran Urban and Suburban Railway Operation Company Habil Darvishi attended the inaugural ceremony.
The wagons are uniquely designed for the use of the passengers and their luggage and the trains operate with Automatic Train Operation (ATO) system where there is no driver on board.
The newly inaugurated line is able to transport some 70,000 passengers on a daily basis and has 4 stations which bring the total number of Tehran's subways stations to 100.
Tehran subway system consists of five operational lines and lines 6 and 7 are under construction. The lines link south to north, east to west and are gradually covering more neighborhoods.



Florida woman fights to keep pet alligator 'Rambo' at home

LAKELAND, Fla. (AP) — A Florida woman is fighting to keep her 6-foot-long pet alligator in her home.
The 125-pound reptile named Rambo wears clothes, rides on the back of a motorcycle and has a bedroom in Mary Thorn's home in Lakeland.
Thorn has had a license for the alligator for 11 years, but it recently grew to 6 feet. Wildlife officials say that size alligator must have 2.5 acres of land.

Thorn tells the Orlando Sentinel that even if she had land available, Rambo can't be left outdoors because of sensitivity to sunlight.
Thorn takes Rambo to schools and charity events to teach people about reptiles. She says she has trained him not to bite.
Florida wildlife commission spokesman Gary Morse says Thorn's case is under investigation.

Cops warn residents of men challenging others to rap battles

Police in a Massachusetts town are warning residents to be on the lookout for men challenging passers-by to rap battles.
Charlton police told WCVB-TV that a black SUV containing a group of men in their late teens or early 20s pulled up next to three teenage boys Saturday afternoon.
One of the men got out of the vehicle and started rapping. The other men then

asked the teens if they wanted to "spit some bars" with them. When the boys declined, the men drove off.
Police say it doesn't appear to be an attempted abduction, but the boys were frightened.
Anyone with information is asked to contact police.
Charlton's website says it's one of the 50 safest cities in Massachusetts
(Source: The Boston Globe)

Islamic world had extraordinary effect on medieval philosophers: Charles Taliaferro

➔
Some textbooks today report that it was the conquest of Constantinople that was an important catalyst in bringing about the infusion of ancient Greek texts from Islamic sources into Europe and it was that event that fueled the Renaissance, but the texts, translations, and scholarship reached the west earlier and through non-violent exchanges. The impact of the translation movement of Arabic to Latin was major and was almost as powerful as the massive translation of Greek to Latin texts in the medieval era.
■ **In which branches of humanities was the impact of Islamic thought more impressive on western thought?**

A: I would say philosophy, because work in metaphysics or theories of being, epistemology or theories of knowledge, and ethics all bear the marks of influence by Islamic philosophy, though this is rarely acknowledged.
For example, most philosophy majors in the west are probably not aware that some of the arguments that they find in Aquinas, Descartes, Malebranche, David Hume, and others, all are represented in earlier Islamic sources, even if not each of these thinkers was directly aware of such precedence. But if you will allow me to go back to your first question about the impact of Islamic philosophy on the west, I would like to say not enough. An Islamic, Persian or Iranian philosopher-scientist-historian whom I believe to be someone who deserves to

be taught throughout the world as one of the greatest and most admirable scholars is Al-Biruni, who flourished in the 11th century.
He was an early explorer of the many philosophical and religious cultures in India who displayed the most extraordinary fairness in his research. I know of no other single historical figure who remained deeply faithful to his own religious tradition and practice and yet who was more fair, open-minded, and sympathetic, if that is the right word, to those non-Islamic sources he engaged. It is my hope that his extraordinary example might inspire all of us, in all branches of the humanities and sciences, to model his combination of acumen, careful argumentation, and intellectual generosity.

IN FOCUS IRNA/ Mehdi Ja'fari



Chaharshanbeh-Suri, a traditional firework display, was observed in Iran on Tuesday night. The fire festival fell on March 15 in the current year. The festival marks the last Wednesday of each Persian year.

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

Guardian Council to announce election authenticity soon

The Guardian Council will publish the result of its investigations into the authenticity of the Feb. 26 elections in a few days.
Spokesman Siamak Rahpeik also said pleas are being checked, Mehr reported on Sunday.
He added a few existing issues are not so big as to change the election results.

صحت آرای انتخابات به زودی توسط شورای نگهبان اعلام خواهد شد

شورای نگهبان نتایج بررسی صحت آرای انتخابات هفتم اسفند را در روزهای آتی اعلام خواهد کرد.
به گزارش مهر در روز یکشنبه سخنگوی هیئت مرکزی نظارت بر انتخابات، سیامک رهپیک همچنین گفت: تمامی دادخواست ها در حال رسیدگی هستند.
وی افزود: شکایات موجود در حدی نبوده است که خللی در نتیجه انتخابات وارد کند.

Iranian, Saudi Arabian clubs to play at neutral venues in ACL

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Champions League 2016 matches involving clubs from Saudi Arabia and Iran will be played at neutral venues.

The AFC Competitions Committee decided in Doha in late January that the matches would be moved to neutral grounds if there had not been a return to normal relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran by March 15, 2016.

In a letter to both the Saudi Arabia Football Federation (SAFF) and the IR Iran Football Federation (IRIFF), the AFC said, "It is most unfortunate for the AFC to learn that at the time of writing, the Saudi Arabian government has yet to lift the travel restrictions on their nationals, which prohibit travel to IR Iran. This travel ban offers no special dispensation for football teams."

"Furthermore, there has been no significant development in the relationship between the two countries concerned, which was considered the main factor according to the AFC Competitions Committee decision dated January 25, 2016."

In January, the AFC Competitions Committee agreed to switch the matches between clubs from Saudi Arabia and IR Iran to the later stages of AFC Champions League to allow the AFC to obtain independent evaluations on the political, safety and security situation in both countries by the deadline of March 15, 2016.

Both the SAFF and the IRIFF have now been given until March 25, 2016 to provide comprehensive details of the proposed neutral venues for the remaining games.

(Source: the-afc)



AFC Champions League: Bunyodkor 0-0 Zobahan

Iran's Zobahan played out a goalless draw with Uzbekistan's Bunyodkor in Group B of the AFC Champions League on Wednesday.

The host had the better of the first half at Bunyodkor Stadium, but forwards Victor Karpenko and Bakhodir Nasimov were off target when presented with goalscoring opportunities.

Substitute Eldor Shomurodov then had four chances to win it for Bunyodkor in the second half, but was denied by goalkeeper Mazaheri on three occasions and off target with another as the sides shared the spoils.

Bunyodkor had the first chance on eight minutes, but Karpenko's looping header was comfortably gathered by Mazaheri before midfielder Dilshod Akhmedaliyev fired high and wide from 30 yards midway through the half.

Karpenko then should have done better on 35 minutes, but he slashed his effort wide at the back post after Akramjon Komilov's cross from the left had gone just be-



hind Chaker Zouaghi on the edge of the six yard area. Zobahan captain Mahdi Rajabzadeh then broke down the left before his low cross was palmed out by goalkeeper

Murotjon Zuhurov and Kaveh Rezaei's follow-up shot was blocked by the scrambling Bunoyodkor defence.

But two minutes before the interval the home side came closest to opening the scoring when the ball broke to Nasimov, but the frontman toe-poked narrowly wide after turning superbly on the edge of the area.

Mazaheri then pulled off an excellent double save to deny Shomurodov shortly after the restart before again saving from the striker when he headed straight at him from six yards.

The visitors had their best chance of the game on 55 minutes when Rezaei was off target from 15 yards with only Zuhurov to beat after a mistake by midfielder Otabek Shukurov.

But Shomurodov then had yet another chance to open the scoring 15 minutes from time only to curl wide from just inside the penalty area.

(Source: the-afc)

Iran weightlifting coach Hossein Tavakkoli sacked

SPORTS TEHRAN — Hossein Tavakkoli has been sacked by the Iranian Weightlifting Federation (IWF) on Wednesday.

Sajjad Anoushiravani has been appointed as the manager of the national teams by the federation.

Anoushirvani, who won a silver medal in the men's +105kg during the London 2012 Olympic Games, is currently coach of Iran youth team.

It seems Tavakkoli was reluctant to work with IWF's Bulgarian consultant Ivan Garchev.

Tavakkoli, Iran's gold medalist at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, replaced Bahman Zare in 2015 April.

Under guidance of the Tavakkoli, Iran just won a silver medal at the 2015 IWF World Weightlifting Championships in Houston, Texas.



Branko Ivankovic: Winning the title with Persepolis is the best achievement of my career

SPORTS Persepolis Croatian head coach Branko Ivankovic believes that winning this season Iran Professional League title is one the most valuable achievements of his whole career.

"We have not lost in the last 17 games but unfortunately we have lost a lot of points. There are seven games left until the end of the season and we could gain up to 21 points. I expect my players to fight until the last day," Branko said.

"I think winning the title with Persepolis in this season is arguably one of the most valuable achievements of my whole career," he added.

"Persepolis has the best fans; they supported us even in the very tough days. I remember after the loss against Zob Ahan in the first couple of week nearly 400 fans came to support us at the training ground," the 62-year old coach added.

The Reds is currently in 3rd place with 39 points behind Esteghlal and Esteghlal Khuzestan.



Manchester United in Liverpool crosshairs in Europa League last 16

PARIS (AFP) — Five-time European champions Liverpool will aim to finish off eternal rivals Manchester United when England's two most successful sides clash in the Europa League last 16, second leg at Old Trafford on Thursday.

Leading 2-0 from the first leg at Anfield, Liverpool are well placed to reach the quarter-finals of a competition that realistically represents the best chance for either club to qualify for next season's Champions League.

Daniel Sturridge and Roberto Firmino scored as Jurgen Klopp's side dominated the first European meeting between the two Premier League giants, and Sturridge says Liverpool's mindset won't change despite their healthy advantage.

"We'll approach the second leg exactly the same as we did the first leg. That's the only way we know," Sturridge told the Liverpool Echo.

"The Liverpool way is to win games so we will go into the second leg and be positive.

"The confidence is there within the

camp and we are just looking forward to every game. We are mentally prepared for every job we have ahead of us."

United face a tough task to turn things around as Liverpool have kept four straight clean sheets in Europe and are unbeaten in nine games in this season's competition.

However, Juan Mata insists there is still hope for United as they bid to keep alive their quest to become just the fifth club to land all three major European trophies.

"We need to have a good start on Thursday, with intensity. It's like a final for us. We need a comeback and I'm sure that the atmosphere in Old Trafford will take us closer to that goal. I'm sure it's possible," said the Spaniard, who missed Sunday's 1-1 draw against West Ham in the FA Cup through suspension.

Borussia Dortmund will seek to protect a 3-0 lead as they head to Tottenham Hotspur on the back of their biggest win against an English side.

Spurs paid the price for resting Harry Kane and leaving Moussa Dembele and Erik Lamela on the bench as they were out-



classed by Thomas Tuchel's German title challengers.

However, Mauricio Pochettino's men are undefeated in nine European home games, winning their last two at White Hart Lane by three-goal margins, although the Bundesliga giants represent a step up in class from previous opponents.

- Angry Neville -

Gary Neville's Valencia must overcome a 1-0 deficit at home to fellow Spanish outfit Athletic Bilbao.

The former Manchester United and England defender was furious after his side

crashed to a 1-0 defeat against local rivals and La Liga's bottom side Levante over the weekend.

"We have to pick ourselves up immediately. Our attitude has to change, simple as that. We're not playing like that on Thursday night," Neville told reporters.

"The very least you will get on Thursday will be a Valencia team running around like crazy and fighting for every single ball."

Holders Sevilla return to Spain following a goalless draw against Swiss champions Basel, whose St-Jakob Park will stage this year's final, as they continue their quest for a fifth title in the past decade.

Villarreal go to Bayer Leverkusen with a 2-0 advantage from the first leg, while 2009 champions Shakhtar Donetsk head to Anderlecht following a 3-1 victory in Ukraine.

Fenerbahce take a narrow 1-0 lead to Portuguese side Braga, while Lazio, who were charged by UEFA for racist chanting after last week's 1-1 draw in the Czech Republic, return home for their second leg against Sparta Prague.

FOOTBALL

Claudio Ranieri: I want to retire at Leicester

Claudio Ranieri has no plans to leave Leicester for the Italy national job, claiming he would like to retire at the club where he has rebuilt his reputation.

Ranieri, 64, has been touted as Antonio Conte's successor as Italy coach with Conte set to become Chelsea's new manager after Euro 2016, according to various media reports.

Having led unfashionable Leicester to a five-point lead at the top of the Premier League with only eight matches remaining, Ranieri is on the verge of one of the greatest achievements in the history of the sport.

It has been reported this morning that Ranieri will be offered a wage increase on a £1.5m per year contract while the terms of an extension will surely be renegotiated in what is his first coaching job in the Premier League in 11 years.

"I'm fine at Leicester and I'm not thinking about moving," Ranieri told Marca.

"I think this will be my last club. My hope is that they'll give me a long contract, five or six years and I can retire here."

Ranieri admits his main aim when succeeding Nigel Pearson as manager last summer was merely to keep the club in the Premier League.

"What's our secret? There isn't one," said the former Chelsea and Juventus coach Ranieri. "Our success is based on a combination of circumstances.

"The Premier League's big boys aren't having the season they should be and we're having a year that no-one had expected.

"When I joined Leicester last summer, the chairman told me that my job was to keep us up for the first two seasons of my contract.

"The chairman is an ambitious, but down-to-earth guy; he knows that you can only reach for big things if you put the foundations in place first

"After those two years to establish ourselves, then the idea would have been to think about Europe. But everything has changed this season. I have a tight-knit, wonderful dressing room and a team that works.

"However, we know we haven't done anything yet. Everyone is rooting for us to win the Premier League. It's incredible that a small club are punching above their weight like this in the big-money era."

"If we were Chelsea, Arsenal, City or United we'd be thinking about the title. We're not, though.

"Leicester are a small club and we have to take things slow. We've achieved our most important target: we've already won because next season we'll be in the Premier League.

"Now we're going to fight to qualify for Europe. And if we stay up there, we'll try to get into the Champions League and then go for the title. But we have to take it one step at a time."

We've changed the system," said Ranieri. "I'd watched several games before I came in, I knew how they played and I've made some tweaks. I felt that certain players could play better in different positions and it's paying off. There are many different ways to play in football.

Ranieri believes Leicester are at their most dangerous when the other team have possession, allowing them to break at speed and in numbers.

He feels that has been the key in catapulting Leicester towards a first English title in their 133-year history.

"We've changed the system," said Ranieri.

"I'd watched several games before I came in, I knew how they played and I've made some tweaks. I felt that certain players could play better in different positions and it's paying off. There are many different ways to play in football. Every coach has his own ideas. At Valencia we played quickly in the transitions because we had the players to do it."

"At my other clubs we didn't always play on the counter-attack. The main thing is knowing the characteristics of your players and trying to make the most of them.

"In England the football is very dynamic, there's a lot of

battling and tackles. We can't always have possession because we don't have the quality to open up teams.

"So we always want to play quickly. We're one of the teams with the most misplaced passes, but in one, two or three touches we can get a goal

"Would it be possible in Spain? I don't think so, because there's a different style of football. Territory and possession count more.

"When a big team has 60 per cent of the ball they'll win, the smaller team can't withstand it.

"There are other ways though. (Diego) Simone's Atletico didn't always have the ball, but they won La Liga."

CLAUDIO RANIERI STATS

- * Has managed 15 clubs since 1986 and Greece in 2014
- * Has coach Fiorentina, Napoli, Valencia, Atletico Madrid, Chelsea, Juventus, Inter, Parma, and Monaco
- * Has never won an elite national title in his career
- * Won the Coppa Italia with Fiorentina
- * Won the Copa del Rey and UEFA Super Cup with Valencia
- * Won Ligue 2 with Monaco

(Source: Eurosport)

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei gave him and his crew special kudos for making the TV series during a ceremony in November 2009.