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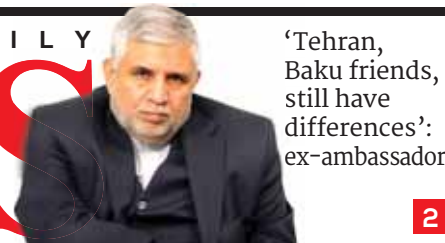
5 S.Korea's Oil imports from Iran more than double through Sept.

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16 "The Sea Suspended" to display Iranian, Arab modern art at Tehran museum

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Economic, political experts review impacts of JCPOA at Press Exhibition

INTERVIEW
By Haniyeh Sadat Jafariyeh

On Saturday - the second day of the 22nd Press Exhibition - the Tehran Times sat with three national and international experts reviewing impacts of the implementation of the nuclear deal - known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) - on both the Iranian and the global economy.

■ 'JCPOA beneficial to all Islamic, Arab countries'

The Tunisian academic and journalist, regional reporter and analyst, and the editor-in-chief of "Assabah" daily, Kamal Ben Younes, admitted that all the Arab and Islamic countries can benefit from JCPOA as the Islamic Republic of Iran did.

Iran's nuclear deal proved these countries that they can also open gateways to reach economic development, he said.

Arab and Islamic countries have now the chance to revive their economic relations with Iran, those that had been stopped due to the western-led international financial embargo on the Islamic Republic, he added.

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Bombing in Samarra kills several Iranians

POLITICS TEHRAN — Iran's Foreign Ministry on Sunday strongly condemned terrorist attacks in the Iraqi cities of Tikrit and Samarra that killed several people, including some Iranian pilgrims in Samarra.

Expressing condolences to the families of victims of the deadly attacks, the ministry reminded the international community of its "responsibility" to battle terrorism and fight off Takfiri groups.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran will stand beside the Iraqi government and nation until the complete defeat... of terrorism," ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said.

→2

Lebanese president vows to build a strong nation

Lebanese President Michel Aoun said on Sunday that it had never been his intention to be Lebanon's president. His intention was to build a strong nation of united citizens.

Aoun made his remarks from the steps of Baabda Palace, his first address to the country from the president's official residence.

"A strong nation needs a strong state to run it and a strong state is built according to a Constitution that is respected equally by all politicians," Aoun said to a crowd of thousands.

Lebanon "would no longer be linked to any other foreign country," he continued. "We will manage our own affairs and deal with others in a friendly manner. Our independence and sovereignty don't mean to target anyone."

Aoun's supporters began their rally early on Sunday morning. Men, women and children of all ages took to the streets en route to the Palace. A large banner reading "People's Palace" had been erected on the palace grounds.

The ecstatic crowd interrupted Aoun several times while he spoke.

Aoun vowed to root out state corruption "whatever the cost."

He would seek to improve the livelihoods of the people, and ensure that law enforcement and security agencies are just and impartial.

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Iran to showcase works of young Iranian composers at Vienna book fair



ART TEHRAN — Works of a number of young Iranian composers will be showcased in an exhibition during the Vienna International Book Fair - Buch Wien.

The exhibition will be held at Iran's stand, which will be set up at the book fair, which will be organized in the Austrian capital from November 10 to 13, Vahid Zardi, the coordinator of the exhibition, said in a press release on Sunday.

The works were selected by a group of musicians, singers and owners of some record labels.

Zardi gave no further details about the albums chosen for the exhibition, which has been organized in collaboration with the Iranian Culture House in Vienna.

"Over the past few years, there has been a serious attempt made by the countries in the East to enter the world music market, but our country's name is not seen among the nations," he lamented.



Dear readers,
We are looking forward to seeing you at the Tehran Times pavilion in the 22nd Press Exhibition, which runs from November 5 to 11.

Farmers start getting in Saffron

With more than 8,000 hectares of farming lands, Torbat-e Heydarieh, Khorasan Razavi province, is one of the biggest producers of saffron worldwide. The fields yield some 44 tons of saffron annually and create some 70,000 job opportunities. The saffron produced in Torbat-e Heydarieh is being exported to 45 countries.



©Tehran Times/ Saeid Goli

I doubt if Trump has thought about Iran for more than 10 minutes: Columbia University professor

INTERVIEW
By Jalal Heirannia

TEHRAN — Robert Jervis, the Adlai E. Stevenson professor of international politics at Columbia University, believes Republican presidential candidate Donald

Trump's hawkish remarks about Iran is not worthy of attention.

"I doubt if Trump has thought about Iran for more than 10 minutes," Jervis tells the Tehran Times.

Trump had said if he was elected president he would immediately renege on the nuclear deal with Iran.

However later his aides and he himself tried to soften his stance. For example, Walid Phares, senior Trump adviser, said in an interview with the conservative website The Daily Caller in July that that despite past promises to "rip up" the deal Trump is interested in is

a renegotiation, not completely abandoning the agreement.

Following is the full text of the interview:

Q: What is your prediction of the result of the U.S. presidential election in view of his lewd remarks about women?

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Thousands of artists appeal to president for tackling air pollution

SOCIETY TEHRAN — More than 5,700 Iranian artists issued an appeal to President Hassan Rouhani urging him to take serious measures to address air pollution in the country.

The supreme council of the Iranian Artists Forum, comprising photographers, graphic designers, painters, sculptors, calligraphers, potters, and actors signed a letter to the president asking for immediate measures to minimize air pollution, Hamshahri online reported.

The text of the letter reads "due to the concentration of the facilities in metropolises, the big cities are being affected by the persistent air pollution for years now; however, there are developed megacities worldwide



that succeeded in overcoming air pollution and guarantee citizens' health owing to the governments' effort."

"According to the chief of department of environment some 35 million Iranians are affected by the air pollution and based on the

figures released by the World Bank air pollution has incurred loss of \$23 billion to the Iranians such as 21,000 deaths per annum caused by the air pollution," they added.

At the end of the letter the artists have urged the president and his cabinet to take practical and effective measures to address air pollution properly.

The issue of air pollution has turned into a daily issue for the metropolises' dwellers in Iran and various measures such as imposing traffic restrictions and shutting down sand mines has not proved to be much effective.

So far indices indicate that air quality was unhealthy for sensitive groups over one third of the past 15 days of the Iranian calendar month of Aban (October 22 to November 20).

Iran, Nigeria sign MOU on trade cooperation

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) of Iran and the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) signed a memorandum of understanding to boost bilateral trade, the portal of TPO reported on Saturday.

The MOU was signed by Olusegun Awolowo, the head of NEPC, and Mojtaba Khosrotaj, the head of TPO, on the sidelines of Awolowo's visit to Tehran heading a trade delegation.

Enhancing trade relations between the two countries' private sectors through joint economic committee meetings, increasing investment and commercial transaction, and also



exchanging trade delegations were among the subjects of the MOU.

Exchanging information and answering questions regarding the current laws, import and export regulations, and procedures related to foreign trade in both countries were also among the measures speculated to develop bilateral relations.

Iran's Andranik Teymourian ruled out of World Cup qualifier

SPORTS Iran captain Andranik Teymourian is ruled out of crucial World Cup qualifier against Syria. Iran has been scheduled to face Syria on November 15 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Team Melli, who has moved up to 27th in recently FIFA rankings, sits top of Group A with 10 points.

The top two in each group reach the 2018 finals with the two third-placed sides meeting over two legs for the chance to face a CONCACAF team in a final playoff for a ticket to Russia.

■ **Iran squad:**

Goalkeepers: Mohammadreza Akhbari, Rashid Mazaheri, Sosha Makani

Defenders: Ramin Rezaeian,



Hossein Mahini, Pejman Montazeri, Morteza Pouraliganji, Jalal Hosseini, Ezatollah Pourghaz, Mohammad Ansari, Milad Mohammadi

Midfielders: Ali Karimi, Saeid Ezzatollahi, Omid Ebrahimi, Alireza Jahanbakhsh, Mehdi Torabi, Ashkan Dejagah, Masoud Shojaei, Vahid Amir, Kamal Kamiabinia

Strikers: Mehdi Taremi, Reza Ghoochanejjad, Karim Ansarifard



ARTICLE

By Yuram Abdullah Weiler
Analyst and journalist

The October 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks revisited

On October 23, 1983, resistance fighters in south Lebanon carried out self-martyrdom operations against the U.S. Marine barracks and the French military headquarters at Beirut International Airport killing a total of 299. Prior to the October 1983 bombing, the U.S. embassy in Beirut, which was the operations center for the CIA Middle East contingent, had been the target of another self-martyrdom operation in which 63 were killed including 17 CIA operatives. The U.S. and its western allies have repeatedly blamed these bombings on the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah, or a shadowy faction known as Islamic Jihad with ties to Hezbollah, and always have the involvement of Iran lurking in the background.

These events are usually portrayed in the western media as suicide bombings within the context of a nebulous Lebanese civil war, but in reality, they were directly linked to the Israeli invasions of Lebanon in 1978 and 1982, during which Zionist forces killed at least 15,000 Lebanese civilians and created over 600,000 refugees.

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Pocket-sized glossary of Tehran Times "at special discount price" during the Press Exhibition

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



Zarif, Togolese counterpart hold talks

TT POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The Iranian foreign minister and his Togolese counterpart at a meeting on Sunday in Tehran discussed a range of issues, including joint action against terrorism and extremism, Tasnim reported.

Mohammad Javad Zarif and Komlan Edo Robert Dussey talked about Tehran-Lomé ties, promotion of economic cooperation, the latest regional and international developments, and joint efforts in the fight against terrorism.

In May, President Hassan Rouhani said Iran attaches great significance to friendly relations with African nations.



Iran's nuclear chief leaves for Poland

TT POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Ali Akbar Salehi left Tehran for Warsaw on Sunday.

Salehi kicked off his two-day visit to Poland to hold consultations on the development of peaceful nuclear cooperation based on the nuclear deal, Mehr reported.

In a joint press conference with ITER director Bernard Bigot in Tehran on Sunday, Salehi announced the official start of the Islamic Republic of Iran's cooperation with the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor.



EU to open office in Tehran in months

TT POLITICS **TEHRAN** — An Iranian deputy foreign minister has said Tehran is going through legal and bureaucratic stages to make possible the opening of a European Union office in Tehran.

"The domestic measures for reopening the EU office are being taken and this will happen in a few months," Majid Takht-Ravanchi said on Sunday, according to ILNA.

The EU currently has two diplomats stationed at the Dutch embassy in Tehran, the deputy foreign minister explained.



Armenia to hand over 4 Iranian prisoners

TT POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Armenia has agreed to extradite four Iranian prisoners, Tehran's Ambassador to Yerevan Seyyed Kazem Sajjadi told IRNA on Saturday.

Based on a coordination made with the Armenian government, the Iranian prisoners will be handed over to Iranian authorities on November 9, Sajjadi said.

This is the second time this year (Iranian-calendar year which started March 20, 2016) that Iranian prisoners are transferred home by Armenia, he pointed out.



Faisal Mekdad in Tehran to meet Larijani

TT POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Syria's deputy foreign minister traveled to Tehran on Sunday evening, ISNA news agency reported.

Faisal Mekdad is scheduled to hold a meeting with Iranian Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani on Monday morning.

The meeting will be held at the Majlis building at 9:15, reports said.

On October 28 Mekdad had talked his country's situation with his Russian counterpart Sergey Ryabkov, a few days after he discussed the crisis with Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Hossein Jaber Ansari.



Hojjatolislam Jafar Shojouni dies at 84

TT POLITICS **TEHRAN** — Hojjatolislam Jafar Shojouni, a member of the Combatant Clergy Association's Central Council, passed away on Sunday, Fars news agency reported.

Aged 84, Shojouni was also a member of the Islamic Coalition Party's Central Council.

He had been hospitalized for a while at Tehran's Firouzgar Hospital because of heart disease.

He had been born in Fouman, Gilan Province, in 1932.

He used to be a companion of Mojtaba Navvab Safavi who led a campaign against Mohammad Reza Shah.

Top MP appeared unaware of letter on Russia-annexed Crimea

BY: M. A. Saki

TEHRAN — First Deputy Parliament Speaker Masoud Pezeshkian appeared unaware of a Russian lawmaker's request to the Iranian parliament to recognize Crimea's annexation to Russia.

According to Russian outlets, Evgeny Fedorov, Russian Duma Deputy, had written a letter to the Iranian parliament, urging Iran to become the seventh country to recognize the annexation of Crimea to Russia.

"I haven't seen such letter," Pezeshkian told the Tehran Times on Sunday as he visited the press exhibition in Tehran.

The Ukrainian territory of Crimea was annexed by the Russian Federation on March, 18, 2014.

The Russian lawmaker had cited growing cooperation between Iran and Russia to back his request.

At no point of time have relations between Tehran and Moscow been so close. More than anything else, this political proximity has been strengthened by Russia's role in the nuclear deal between Iran and Western powers and close cooperation between the two on the Syrian battlefield.



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'Tehran, Baku friends, still have differences': ex-ambassador

BY: Ali Kushki

TEHRAN — Mohsen Pakaeen, Iran's ex-ambassador to Baku, has said Tehran and Baku are closer than any other countries in the region in terms of cultural, linguistic, and religious commonalities.

However, there are still disagreements to address, one of which concerns customs issues, Pakaeen said.

"We have differences rather than challenges over customs issues, and it is important to solve them since any delay will slow down trade between the two countries," Pakaeen told the Tehran Times on Sunday at the daily's pavilion at the press exhibition on Tehran.

The differences, however, are not related to the two countries themselves but to different standards defined by larger international frameworks, according to Pakaeen.

"Geographically speaking, Azerbaijan sees itself part of the European zone and has to meet relevant standards. This is while Iran is a member of the Economic Co-



operation Organization with different standard sets."

Considering this, narrowing disagreements on customs issues provides impetus for stronger future cooperation, Pakaeen remarked.

According to Azerbaijani officials, Iranian companies have already invested \$2.6 billion in Azerbaijan. About \$145 million of the total amount has gone to the non-oil

Bombing in Samarra kills several Iranians

Iran says will stand beside Iraq until complete defeat of terrorism

I→ The spokesman also described the cruel attacks as an attempt to retaliate consecutive defeats that terrorists have recently suffered in Iraq.

In Tikrit, a bomber detonated his explosives-laden ambulance at the southern entrance to the city during the morning rush hour, killing 13 people, police and hospital sources said.

Another attacker detonated a vehicle in a car park for pilgrims visiting one of Shiite Muslims' holy sites, the shrines of Imam Hadi (AS) and his son Imam Hassan al-Askari (AS), in Samarra, 125 km north of Baghdad.



The bomb killed at least eight people including seven Iranian pilgrims in Samarra, local officials said. The local operation command, a joint military and police unit, said the vehicle used in Samarra was also an ambulance. The number of Iranians wounded there was reportedly 16.

According to Iranian Red Crescent Society Relief and Rescue Organization director Pirhossein Koulivand, the bomb blast in Samarra blew up a nearby bus carrying Iranian passengers.

No one has yet claimed responsibility for Sunday's attacks, but Daesh frequently carries out suicide bombings targeting Iraq's Shia majority, whom it considers heretics.

'Independent parliamentary bloc backs government's record'

TT POLITICS **TEHRAN** — The director of the presidential office for political affairs said on Sunday that members of the Independent parliamentary have hailed the performance government in economic areas.

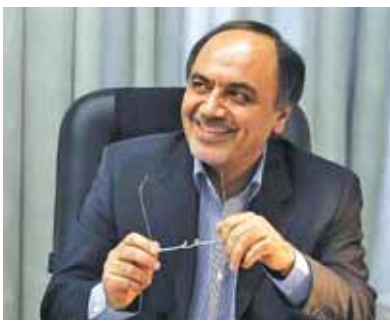
The faction also praised the performance of government in concluding a nuclear agreement with great powers and paying special attention to women and religious minorities, Hamid Aboutalebi said.

"The faction thanked the efforts of the president and his government in the area of economy, and lauded the shining records of government in BARIAM and attention to women and minorities," Aboutalebi tweeted.

BARJAM is the Persian acronym for the nuclear deal which is internationally known as the JCPOA – the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

In the meeting MP Kazem Jalali insisted on the need for cooperation between Majlis and government to better implement the sixth development plan which starts from March 2017, he said.

The MPs said it is necessary that government and Majlis cooperate to prop up the economy and also create employment



opportunities, Aboutalebi wrote.

According to the Iran newspaper, Rouhani thanked the parliamentary faction for proving that "wisdom" and "national interests" are the dominant discourse in Majlis.

The newspaper referred to the MPs as members of Hope faction led by Mohammadreza Aref.

According to the newspaper, Aref said some figures who had no role in the victory of the Islamic Revolution accuse reformists of compromising with the enemies.

The meeting between the parliamentary faction and the administration took place a few days after Majlis endorsed the three proposed ministers by President Rouhani.

Western plot to partition Mideast is dangerous: Velayati

TT POLITICS **TEHRAN** — A senior advisor Iran's Supreme Leader has said plots by the U.S. and some other Western countries to break up countries in the Middle East will lead to "dangerous" consequences.

"What is pursued by the U.S. and Western countries is to partition Syria into four parts and the same issue is also envisaged for Iraq to be divided into three parts and also for Yemen to be divided into at least two parts," Ali Akbar Velayati told a Tunisian parliamentary delegation in Tehran on Saturday evening.

He added, "Terrorists and extremists are a tool in the hands of Americans and Zionists. The aim of terrorism and arrogant powers is to weaken and partition Muslim countries."

Velayati also referred to the war between opposition groups in Libya, saying, "There is an undesirable and dangerous situation surrounding Tunisia."

According to Business Insider, the World Bank has said Libya's economy is near collapse as the civil war worsens and bank reserves plummet.

Tunisia is more prosperous than its neighbors. Mass protests unseated



President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali in 2011 - the first of a series of popular uprisings to sweep the region.

Beji Caid Essebsi came to office in December 2014 after winning the first free presidential election since the uprising that toppled autocratic leader. He was a long-serving speaker of parliament under Ben Ali's rule.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he emphasized that Muslim countries have great resources and can potentially become an important part of the global power structure.

He also expressed hope that the ongoing wars in Iraq and Syria as well as conflicts in regional countries would end soon.

Israel spreading terrorism to weaken Muslims: Larijani

Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani says the Israeli regime is helping terrorist groups spread across the Middle East with the purpose of weakening Muslim nations.

"The prolongation of the existing crises and expansion of terrorist groups are among the policies of the Zionist regime to undermine the might of Muslim nations," Larijani said in a meeting with a Tunisian parliamentary delegation in Tehran on Sunday.

He added that Muslim countries must remain vigilant against regional crises in order to help put an end to them.

Larijani said the US and Israeli regime are pursuing the policy of sowing discord among Islamic faiths and



added that all Shia and Sunni Muslims oppose acts of terror.

"However, a small minority like Wahhabis with inter-

national support seek to cause strife and discord among Muslim nations," the top Iranian parliamentarian said.

Larijani further reiterated that Iran's policy is based on building consensus among Muslim countries, adding that the "immature mentality of some Muslim states" has prevented unity in the Muslim world.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Iranian Parliament speaker said the development of cultural and trade relations between Iran and Tunisia can help the two nations become more acquainted with each others' capacities.

He also stressed the importance of improving parliamentary cooperation between Tehran and Tunis.

(Source: Press TV)

Mosul will be free soon: Abadi to residents

Multiple deadly bombings rip through Iraqi cities

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has vowed the elimination of the ISIL (Daesh) terror group in the near future amid advances on the ground by the army and allied fighters as part of the operation to liberate the city of Mosul.

Abadi made the remarks during a visit to Mar Kurkis (St. George) Monastery in northeastern periphery of Mosul.

The Iraqi leader said that he brought "a message to the residents inside Mosul who are hostages in the hands of Daesh - we will liberate you soon."

Mosul fell to Daesh in 2014, the year the terror group began its campaign of death and destruction in northern and western Iraq.

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

Abadi further stressed that the campaign's progress and the advance into Mosul had been faster than expected.

However, he signaled that the advance may be intermittent in the face of resistance by the extremists and their bombings and sniper fire.

"Our heroic forces will not retreat and will not be broken. Maybe in the face of terrorist acts, criminal acts, there will be some delay," Abadi said.

He further noted that the scale of the destruction caused by Daesh in the country is much more than the one left behind by the Mongolian invasion.

Also on Saturday, the Iraqi premier visited Erbil, where he met with senior officials of the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).

He also sat down for closed-door talks with KRG leader Masoud Barzani.

The Kurdish leader's chief of staff Fuad Hussein said that the two officials discussed more coordination between Iraqi



troops and Kurdish Peshmerga forces in the Mosul operation.

Based on agreements between Baghdad and Erbil, Peshmerga forces will not enter Mosul, Hussein added.

Iraqi army gains

Separately, the Iraqi Defense Ministry announced that 30 terrorists were killed and an arms depot was destroyed in airstrikes in the village of al-Zawiyah, south of Mosul.

Two ringleaders of the terrorist group were among those slain.

The liberation of the strategic town of Hammam al-Alil in southern Mosul was among major gains by the Iraqi forces on Saturday.

Footage released by Iraqi media showed Hammam al-Alil residents celebrating army victories against Daesh.

According to reports, 11 villages were recaptured in the area while the Iraqi flag was hoisted over buildings.

Some 35 other Takfiri elements were also killed, 17 car bombs were set off and 15 improvised explosive devices (IED) were defused as part of the operation

Deadly bombings

Meanwhile, nearly two dozen people have been killed in a string of attacks that rocked Iraq's northern Salahuddin province as well as the capital, Baghdad, security sources say.

On Sunday, a bomber set off his explosives at a checkpoint in the south of the city of Tikrit, Salahuddin's provincial capital, the Arabic-language al-Sumaria TV network reported.

Some reports said the attacker had been riding a bomb-laced ambulance

during the morning rush hour and that Iraqi forces had imposed a curfew in the area after the incident.

Another car bomb went off at a car park for Shia pilgrims visiting al-Askari Mosque in the vicinity of a hospital in the province's city of Samarra, located some 50 kilometers south of Tikrit, Kurdish-language NRT News television said.

At least 21 people were killed in the two explosions.

Iran's Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization said there were 10 Iranian pilgrims among the victims in Samarra, which is home to the holy shrine of Imam Ali al-Hadi (PBUH), the tenth Shia Imam.

Separately, two booby traps went off in two neighborhoods in the Iraqi capital, killing three people and injuring 13 others.

'Terrorists struggling to live on'

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi offered condolences to the families of the victims, calling on the international community to shoulder its responsibility in stopping the spread of terror threats.

He said the "brutal act of terror" is due to the failure of terror groups in pursuit of their "sinister goals" in Iraq, saying the Islamic Republic "will stand by the Iraqi nation and government until the total defeat of terrorism" across the Arab country.

The new wave of terror attacks comes amid a surge in terror activities by Daesh, which has been taking severe blows from Iraqi forces in the areas under its control.

The Iraqi army and allied forces have launched an ultimate push to retake the northern city of Mosul, the last stronghold of the Takfiri Daesh terror group.

(Source: agencies)

Germany's Social Democrats press for new points-based immigration rules

Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD), junior partner in Chancellor Angela Merkel's ruling coalition, will announce a plan on Monday for a points-based system to regulate immigration, a top party official said.

Thomas Oppermann, who leads the Social Democrats in the Bundestag, Germany's parliament, said the goal was to pass the new law governing migration by skilled workers from outside the European Union before national elections in September 2017.

"The core of the law is a point system modelled on the Canadian system," Oppermann told the newspaper Bild am Sonntag. The law would not change rules on refugees and migrants applying for asylum in Germany, he said.

Oppermann said the plan would assess immigration applications based on age, education, work experience, language skills and ability to integrate into German society, with a target of allowing 25,000 immigrants to enter in the first year.

The targeted number of skilled migrants would be re-evaluated each year, depending on the needs of the German labor market, he told the newspaper. Migrants who earn enough to support a family would be allowed to bring spouses and children. But migrants accepted under the new scheme would be excluded from receiving welfare and other social benefits for the first five years after entering Germany, unless they had paid in enough contributions.

The proposal comes as Germany reassesses its immigration policies

after the influx of nearly 900,000 migrants last year, most fleeing war and violence in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, and struggles to fill jobs given its ageing workforce.

Merkel's government has been under fire for its "open door" refugee policy, with her Christian Democrats suffering losses in a series of regional elections as voters switch to the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) party.

The SPD's public support dropped one percentage point to 22 percent - its lowest rating in three months - in a new poll conducted by the Emnid group for the Bild am Sonntag newspaper.

Merkel's Christian Democrats remained in the lead with 34 percent, with the AfD getting 12 percent, the pro-environment Green party 11 percent, the Left party 10 percent and the libertarian Free Democratic Party five percent.

German businesses are having trouble finding skilled workers despite the influx of migrants, most of whom must first learn German before entering the labor market.

German unemployment fell more than expected in October, pushing down the jobless rate in Europe's biggest economy to 6.0 percent, the lowest level since German reunification in 1990, and the number of job vacancies to a record high of 691,000.

Experts estimate Germany's working age population, whose pension contributions support a growing number of retirees, will shrink by up to 6 million by 2030.

(Source: Reuters)

More than 2,000 refugees rescued off Libya's coast

Almost 2,200 refugees and migrants have been rescued off the Libyan coast while 10 bodies have also been recovered from a rubber dinghy, the Italian coastguard said.

An AFP news agency correspondent aboard the Topaz Responder, a search and rescue ship chartered by Maltese NGO MOAS and the Italian Red Cross, saw several hundred people, including children, being rescued.

People shrouded in foil survival blankets crowded onto the deck of the vessel following the rescue efforts in which at least one baby was saved during the early hours of Saturday.

The Red Cross tweeted that 707 people were on board the vessel.

Doctors without borders (MSF) also confirmed a ship on Friday rescued 867 people, including 119 women and eight babies, four of whom were only a few months old.

Meanwhile, the Libyan Red Crescent said it recovered the bodies of six people at a beach west of Tripoli on Saturday, taking the number of drowned migrants and refugees found along the North African country's coast to 40 since last Sunday.

Smugglers have exploited the chaos gripping Libya since the 2011 uprising that overthrew Muammar Gaddafi to traffic refugees across the Mediterranean Sea to Europe.

As many as 4,220 people have died trying to cross the Mediterranean so far this year, a higher number than the full-

year totals for any other year on record, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

More than 725 others have died in 2016 than at the same point last year, the IOM said.

Aid groups helping rescue efforts over the past weekend accused the European Union of being in denial over the unprecedented carnage unfolding at its southern doorstep.

"In the face of this new and shameful record, the European Union cannot continue to pretend nothing is happening and make itself an accomplice to this ever greater tragedy," said Tommaso Fabbri, the Italy head of MSF.

"There is an urgent need for safe and legal ways for desperate people to reach safety in Europe without risking or losing their lives," added Fabbri.

Pope Francis added to their voices on Saturday, calling the situation of the refugees "shameful" and "a bankruptcy of humanity".

"What has the world come to, if when a bank goes bankrupt, scandalous sums of money immediately appear to save it, while when this human bankruptcy [the migration crisis] happens, not even a thousandth of those sums are ready to save our suffering brothers and sisters," he said.

"The Mediterranean has become a graveyard, and not just the Mediterranean. There are many graveyards near walls, walls stained with the blood of innocents."

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Western forces growing 'much weaker' in Syria: Assad

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad says Western powers are "becoming much weaker" in his conflict-ridden country as government forces, backed by fighters from allied popular defense groups, are gaining more ground in battles against foreign-backed terrorists.



"In the past, if I said anything, people would say the Syrian president is disconnected from reality. Now it is different. The West is becoming much weaker," Assad said in an interview with the British weekly The Sunday Times published on Sunday.

The 51-year-old Syrian leader further questioned the role that the so-called U.S.-led military coalition is playing in the fight against ISIL (Daesh) extremists, saying, "They don't have a leg to stand on explaining to people what's going on. Daesh was smuggling oil and using Iraqi oilfields under American satellites and drones to make money, and the West was not saying anything."

He then praised Russian airstrikes on the positions of Daesh and other terrorist groups in Syria.

"What made the difference, of course, was firepower. They have firepower we don't have. At the end we were fighting an unlimited reserve of terrorists coming to Syria and we struggled, so Russian firepower and Iranian support has compensated," Assad pointed out.

The Syrian president underlined that Russia is not interfering in Syria's international affairs, and that Moscow is not looking for political deals with the Damascus government.

"They never try to interfere because they don't want anything from us. They don't ask us to be a puppet president," Assad commented.

He also expressed determination that Syrian forces will eventually retake Aleppo, once Syria's largest city and the country's industrial and financial center, from Takfiri terrorists.

"Aleppo is an issue where terrorists have occupied part of the city, and we need to get rid of them," the Syrian president said.

Also on Sunday, Syrian army soldiers killed scores of militants as they attacked their hideouts in the Dara'a al-Balad district of Dara'a, located about 90 kilometers south of the capital Damascus, as well as al-Ghariya al-Gharbia village northeast of Dara'a. Syrian troopers also thwarted an assault by Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, previously known as al-Nusra Front, militants on a military camp outside the town of Khirbet Ghazaleh, located roughly 17 kilometers northeast of Dara'a, killing and injuring a large number of terrorists.

The foreign-sponsored conflict in Syria, which started in March 2011, has claimed the lives of more than 400,000 people, according to an estimate by United Nations Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura.

(Source: Press TV)

Japan, India 'to ink controversial nuclear deal'

Japan and India are set to sign a controversial civil nuclear deal this week, in what would most likely ring alarm bells in Pakistan and China.

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe are set to sign a deal on Friday that would allow Japan to export nuclear technology to India, Japanese paper Yomiuri Shimbun reported.



It would be the first such deal between the two countries. Several other business deals are also set to be signed alongside the nuclear deal. Modi will arrive in Japan Thursday for a three-day visit.

The Indian prime minister had already visited Japan in August 2014 on his first trip outside South Asia, months after coming to power. Abe also paid a two-day visit to India last December. The two leaders held talks on the sidelines of a Southeast Asia meeting in Laos in September as well.

Under the deal due to be signed, Japan would commit to pulling out of the agreement if India conducts a new nuclear test, Japanese media reported. It will be likely to alert Pakistan, nevertheless.

Japan is a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); India is among the only four countries and entities that have refused to sign the text. So is Pakistan, India's nuclear-armed arch-rival to the west, where statesmen routinely keep a close eye on New Delhi and seek to keep abreast. India and Pakistan have been engaged in an arms race, including in the nuclear field, ever since they bitterly partitioned in 1947.

India also has a separate spat with Pakistan over the Himalayan region of Kashmir. People in the Muslim-majority region are opposed to Indian rule. The deal would also come against a backdrop of mounting regional tensions involving powerhouse China.

Both New Delhi and Tokyo are involved in territorial disputes with Beijing. Japan lays claims to territory also claimed by China in the East China Sea as well as in the Indian Ocean, and India has a long-standing dispute of its own along its border with China.

(Source: AFP)

U.S., Saudis feeding intelligence to ISIL in Mosul: Hashd al-Shaabi commander

Saudi Arabia is the "mother of all terrorism," says the second-in-command of the Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units, Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes.

Mohandes made the remarks during an interview with the al-Alam television network.

He stressed that both the ISIL (Daesh) and al-Qaeda terrorist groups are the product of Saudi Arabia, and that Daesh's psychological and media campaign is partially funded from Riyadh.

Mohandes noted that the operations to free Mosul from the Takfiri terrorists will take some time as the militants are receiving intelligence from several external sources, mainly the U.S.

He went on to praise Iran's support for Iraq's battle against terrorism, stressing that if Baghdad had not



called for Tehran's assistance, the Iraqi army would never have reached Mosul.

He also noted that the Hashd al-Shaabi forces, also

known as the Popular Mobilization Units, will move on towards Tal Afar after Mosul is cleared of Daesh militants.

He stressed that the units' goal is not just to push back Daesh militants, but to destroy them.

ISIL leaders rob own treasury, flee Mosul

Meanwhile, as Iraqi forces push on with operations to liberate Mosul, five high-ranking Daesh commanders have looted the terrorist group's treasury and fled towards Syria.

The robbers, including Daesh's treasury official Abu al-Bara al-Qahtani and several other terrorists, have taken millions of dollars.

The terrorists have launched a manhunt to reclaim the stolen money and arrest and execute the escapees.

(Source: Press TV)

CETA deal will damage European economy, put 'health and safety' at risk

CETA will have a negative impact on the European farming industry. In addition, the agreement will open the European market to GMO-containing products from Canada and, possibly, from the U.S., thus creating risks for the health of European consumers, Polish lawmaker Mirosław Maliszewski told Sputnik.

On October 30, the European Union and Canada signed the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). The deal is aimed at establishing a free trade zone between Canada and the EU.

A political agreement on CETA was reached in 2013. According to estimates by the European Commission, a free trade zone between the EU and Canada will remove nearly 99 percent of customs fees. The deal also includes increased quotas for European dairy products and Canadian meat. The EU-Canada free trade deal has been criticized by European politicians, businessmen and public activists. Opponents fear it would undermine standards and regulations on environmental protection, health, safety and workers' rights. In an interview with Sputnik Polska, Polish lawmaker and head of the Association of Polish Fruit Growers Mirosław Maliszewski commented on the possible consequences of the deal for the economy of Poland and the entire European Union. "We, farmers and agricultural producers, believe that the agreement is disadvantageous since it would create unequal terms for the European farming industry, small agricultural firms and the agricultural industry in Canada and, possibly in the future, in the United States. There is the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) facilitating trade between the U.S. and Canada," Maliszewski said.

He pointed out that Canadian agricultural products will be cheaper than those made in Europe. Canadian products will be exported to Europe, while European farming products will not be able to enter the Canadian market. "Free access for Canada to the European market will be very dangerous for Europe's agricultural producers," he added. Furthermore, Maliszewski stressed that the deal will be beneficial for major European companies, but it will not be good for the farming industry and small agricultural businesses. "I think time will tell that the European farming market, including Poland, will sustain losses because of this agreement. In particular, there will be a negative impact on prices of European agricultural products," he said. Before it comes into force, the free trade deal between the EU and Canada must be ratified by the parliaments of all 28 EU members as well as by the European Parliament. Maliszewski suggested that finally the deal will be ratified but there is still the need for discussion of the possible risks of the agreement.

"Our party, the Polish People's Party (PSL), stresses that the majority of CETA provisions still should be discussed. Only EU officials were involved in the negotiations. Now, the deal should be discussed on the national level. I think that finally CETA will be ratified, but with an effort. This discussion should be focused on the possible risks of the deal," Maliszewski said. He also said that new protests against CETA cannot be ruled out since the agreement is "dangerous for farmers, the economy and consumers." "The deal will pave the way for GMO-containing products to the European market. But it also will allow agricultural products made with the use of industrial technologies. Now, we're concerned about the health and safety of consumers," Maliszewski concluded. Such major initiatives like CETA should be discussed with people, stressed UN independent expert Dr. Alfred de Zayas. "I am concerned about the impact CETA could have on Europe because it would multiply by a factor of ten the number of potential claims by companies that would sue European governments. This is a really serious matter and the consequences are enormous for the population. That's why the population must be consulted," he said in an interview with Radio Sputnik.

Dr. Gus Van Harten, an investment law professor at Canada's York University, underscored that such deals as CETA prioritize the rights of major corporations. In particular, this is why the details of the negotiations were never made public. "From the point of view of institutional analysis, you can see how the public is not given a full opportunity to really scrutinize these deals. The disparity between these powerful protections of foreign investor rights, without any corresponding responsibilities for foreign investors if they don't respect local standards, on the environment or health or really anything – it's just an incredible gap that these deals endorse," he told Sputnik.

(Source: Sputnik)

Australia, Indonesia continue push for trade deal, after President skips visit

Trade ministers from Australia and Indonesia continued negotiations on Sunday to seal a trade deal between the two neighbors, despite Indonesian President Joko Widodo postponing a trip to Australia to deal with local unrest.

Widodo postponed his Nov. 6 to 8 visit on Saturday after a mass protest in Jakarta on Friday that briefly turned violent as Muslim extremists pressed for the resignation of the capital's governor, a Christian they say insulted the Koran.

Indonesia's president has faced criticism for failing to rein in hardline groups that had promised for weeks to bring tens of thousands onto the streets of the capital.

Meanwhile, Indonesian Trade Minister Enggartiasto Lukita continued negotiations with his counterpart Australian Trade Minister Steven Ciobo on Sunday for a bilateral trade agreement expected to be reached by late next year.

Long-stalled discussions to secure a trade agreement resumed in March, despite the often uneasy relationship between the two neighbors.

"While it is unfortunate President Widodo had to postpone his visit, Minister Lukita's decision to visit Australia at this time to discuss the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement reflects the importance of this agreement to both governments," Ciobo said in a statement.

Widodo had been expected to address Australia's parliament on Monday after attending meetings with Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on Sunday.

(Source: Reuters)

Economic, political experts review impacts of JCPOA at Press Exhibition

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"Before the embargo, Iran and Tunisia had an excellent partnership. Tunisia used to sell phosphate to Iran about ten years ago, before the financial embargo, while Iran exported cars to Tunisia. But when the French carmaker, Peugeot, stopped manufacturing cars in Iran, Tunisia's imports of cars made in Iran also stopped," he explained.

Now after JCPOA implementation those opportunities could be reintroduced. In recent weeks, Iran has restarted selling its cars to Tunisia and Iranian car manufacturers have set up their showrooms in the Tunisian city of Sousse," he stated.

"In my opinion, there is no obstacle to re-commence trade and tourism relationship between the two countries. Both countries' embassies, as far as I know, are now working on re-launching common economic ties and there is a mixed high commission formed by both sides' ministries of economy," he added.

U.S. sabotaging JCPOA

The Head of Iran's Innovation and Development Fund, Behzad Soltani, during his visit to the Tehran Times pavilion, asserted that JCPOA implementation has provided a chance for improvement of Iranian knowledge-based companies via making contracts with a large number of foreign companies who have applied to start businesses in Iran.

"The Iranian administration has recently enacted a proposal which obligates transfer of knowledge in all the contracts that are to be made in future with the foreign partners," he said, "accordingly, when foreign



companies express readiness to start operation in Iran, it is vital for them to pick up an Iranian partner"

"There are 2,759 knowledge-based companies in Iran and that makes a huge market for foreigners," he underlined.

As he further elaborated, since the implementation day, a number of foreign companies have shown tendency to cooperate with Iranian companies and transfer modern technology to our country. "Related negotiations have been made and even some of the related contracts have been written but they have been postponed to be signed in future due to the problems made by the U.S. government about the monetary transactions with the Islamic Republic," he lamented.

Majlis, administration closely cooperate on JCPOA implementation

The spokesman of the Majlis (the Iranian parliament) economic affairs committee, Hassan Hosseini-Shahroodi, said MPs are closely cooperating with the administration on JCPOA implementation.

During his visit to the Tehran Times pavilion, Hosseini-Shahroodi said that the legislators have ratified all regulations to boost foreign investments as well as all the related bills proposed by the government in this regard. He underlined that parliament members fully cooperate with the administration to reach its set targets.



UK PM Theresa May seeks to boost trade ties with India before Brexit

British Prime Minister Theresa May will use her first bilateral trade trip since taking office to try to boost ties with India before leaving the European Union.

May's office said the visit started on Sunday night would focus on breaking down barriers to trade and investment and paving the way for a free trade deal as soon as possible after Brexit, which is not expected to happen before 2019.

Explaining the choice of India, a government official said: "It matters now more than ever. India is the fastest-growing major economy."

May said the trip was about seizing the opportunities of Brexit and "expanding our horizons and forging stronger partnerships with countries around the world".

"This is a partnership about our shared security and shared prosperity. It is a partnership of potential. And on this visit I intend to harness that potential, rebooting an age-old relationship," she said in a statement ahead of the visit.

While Britain cannot sign trade deals with third countries until it is outside the EU, the government is keen to hold preparatory discussions.

May, accompanied by trade ministers Liam Fox and Greg Hands and around 40 business representatives mainly from small- and medium-sized technology and healthcare firms, will address a technology summit, have a working lunch with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and meet businesses.

Among representatives of larger firms joining her on the trip are David McMillan, CEO of insurer Aviva, Ivan Menezes, the CEO of drinks firm Diageo and the chairman of Asia-focused bank Standard Chartered, John Peace.

May will visit New Delhi and out-sourcing hub Bengaluru before leaving on Tuesday. Her office said commercial deals to be signed during the trip were expected to create a total of 1,370 jobs in the UK.

One potential area of difficulty is her plan to curb the annual level of net migration to under 100,000 from its rate of more than three times that. India is keen for Britain to welcome more of its students and skilled workers.

"We want to attract the brightest and the best while also doing more to control migration," the official said. "When we get to ... looking at these bilateral deals we are confident that we will be able to do strong and ambitious deals."

May and Modi will also launch a partnership on smart cities and urban development which could generate business worth up to 2 billion pounds for British firms over the next five years, her office said.

Britain will press India to allow its law firms to operate there, and will also offer its government expertise in areas such as deregulation and tax to help make India a more attractive business environment.

(Source: Reuters)

Italian trade delegation due in Tehran this week

THE ECONOMY TEHRAN — An Italian trade delegation is due to arrive in Tehran on November 12 to discuss cooperation with Iranian companies, Shana reported on Saturday, citing Milan Chamber of Commerce.

The delegation comprises the representatives of 25 renowned companies active in various areas including farming, irrigation systems, desalination plants, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, oil and gas, electricity, furniture, industrial equipment, automotive, water and wastewater, recycling and etc. from Lombardy region in the northwest of Italy.

As the top exporter to Iran among Italy's administrative regions, Lombardy accounts for 40.2 percent of Italy's total exports to the country.

PICTURE OF THE DAY

ILNA/Mehdi Nasiri



Sangan iron ore deposits in Iran's northeastern province of Khorasan Razavi



Greek PM looks to 'swift' completion of second bailout review

Greece should complete its second bailout review "swiftly", so that talks on debt restructuring can begin at a meeting of euro zone finance ministers on Dec. 5, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras told his new cabinet on Sunday.

Tsipras reshuffled his government late on Friday to speed up reforms Athens has agreed to implement under its third EU/IMF bailout. Restructuring its mountain of debt, the highest in the euro zone, is the government's primary goal.



Monte dei Paschi foundation proposes Falciai as bank's new chairman

The foundation of Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena has proposed businessman Alessandro Falciai to become the troubled Italian lender's new chairman, it said in a statement on Sunday.

Shareholders will be asked to vote on the proposal at a meeting scheduled for Nov. 24.

Once confirmed, Falciai, a Monte dei Paschi board member and head of the bank's nomination committee, will replace Massimo Tononi who has said he would step down after the November shareholder meeting.



German prosecutors widen market manipulation probe to Volkswagen chairman

German carmaker Volkswagen said on Sunday that German prosecutors had widened an investigation into suspected market manipulation to include supervisory board Chairman Hans Dieter Poetsch.

The investigation, which relates to Poetsch's time as finance chief of VW, is the latest fallout from the carmaker's admission last year that it cheated on diesel emissions tests.

The prosecutor's office in Braunschweig first announced the probe in June, targeting former VW Chief Executive Martin Winterkorn and VW brand chief Herbert Diess for suspected market manipulation related to the carmaker's emissions scandal.

S.Korea's oil imports from Iran more than double through Sept.

South Korea's imports of oil from Iran more than doubled in the first nine months of this year from a year earlier after international sanctions on the Middle East country were lifted in January, industry data showed on Sunday.

According to the data, imports of Iranian crude oil and condensates reached 78 million barrels in the January-September period, compared with 33.63 million barrels a year earlier.

The Iranian oil accounted for 9.7 percent of the country's total oil imports during the cited period, the data showed.

In September alone, the country imported 12.15 million barrels, worth \$526 million, up 106 percent and 72.3 percent, respectively, from a year earlier.

Iran had been a major exporter of crude to South Korea, but international sanctions on Tehran for its nuclear program had sharply reduced bilateral trade.

Last year, South Korea imported \$2.20 billion worth of crude oil from Iran, down 51 percent from the previous year and far lower than \$9.36 billion in 2011. By volume, imports of crude and condensates came to 42.4 million barrels last year, down from 44.92 million in 2014, 56.14 million in 2012.

So far, South Korea has been importing condensates from Qatar and the U.S., but after the lifting of sanctions on Iran, local oil refiners sharply jacked up the imports of the gassy ultralight fossil fuel from Iran.

(Source: Yonhap)



Saudis could raise oil output again as sparring with old rival Iran returns

Clashes between the two OPEC heavy-weights have become frequent in recent years.

Tensions subsided, however, in recent months after Saudi Arabia agreed to support a global oil supply limiting pact, thus raising the prospect that OPEC would take steps to boost oil prices.

But a meeting of OPEC experts last week, designed to work out details of cuts for the next OPEC ministerial gathering on November 30, saw Saudis and

Iranians clashing again, according to five OPEC sources who were present at the meeting and spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity.

"The Saudis have threatened to raise their production to 11 million barrels per day and even 12 million bpd, bringing oil prices down, and to withdraw from the meeting," one OPEC source who attended the meeting told Reuters.

OPEC headquarters declined to comment on discussions during the closed-door meetings last week. Saudi

and Iranian OPEC delegates also declined official comments.

A senior Persian Gulf OPEC source said Saudi Arabia did not say output will rise, rather that it "could" rise. "Saudi didn't threaten, Saudi Arabia doesn't produce more than the customers need," the source said. "All oil producers could raise their production if there was no agreement, this is a fact."

Oil prices fell on Friday. Brent crude was down 77 cents at \$45.58 a barrel. Saudi Arabia has increased output

since 2014 to record highs of around 10.5 million-10.7 million barrels per day and adding extra supply would only worsen the global glut, which has already seen prices more than halving from \$115 a barrel since mid-2014.

The Saudi stance followed objections by Iran, which said it was unwilling to freeze its output, the same OPEC sources said. Iran has argued it should be exempt from such limits as its production recovers after the lifting of EU sanctions.

(Source: Reuters)

SOCAR reveals volumes of gas export to Iran

Azerbaijan's state oil company SOCAR swapped 167.3 million cubic meters of gas with Iran in January-September 2016, said Rahman Gurbanov, SOCAR vice president for oil and gas transportation and gas facilities, in his interview published by Natural Gas World Nov. 2.

"Iran takes 15 percent of the received Azerbaijani gas as swap fee and delivers the remaining volume to Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic with which it shares a border," added Gurbanov.

SOCAR exported 1.363 billion cubic meters of gas to Georgia in 2015.

Georgia also additionally receives about 1.5 billion cubic meters of gas per year produced at Azerbaijan's Shah Deniz field with participation of SOCAR and foreign companies.

Deliveries to Iran are carried out in order to send gas to the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic (NAR), located in the blockade because of the occupation of 20 percent of Azerbaijani lands by Armenia.

About 287 million cubic meters of gas was delivered from Azerbaijan to Iran in 2015 for the needs of NAR.

Azerbaijan and Iran are connected with the Gazi-Magomed-Astara-Bind-Biand gas pipeline.

(Source: Trend)

Canada to implement northern B.C. oil tanker ban this year: CBC

Canada's Liberal government will this year deliver on its pledge for a moratorium on oil tanker traffic along the northern coast of British Columbia, CBC News reported.

Transport Minister Marc Garneau confirmed the plan in an interview with CBC Radio's "The House," the broadcaster said on its website.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau last year instructed Garneau to formalize the ban on oil tanker traffic, effectively slamming the door on a pipeline project that was already facing massive development hurdles.

The ban is one of several obstacles to the building of Enbridge Inc's Northern Gateway pipeline, which would carry oil sands crude from near Edmonton, Alberta, to a deepwater port at Kitimat, British Columbia, for export to Asian markets.

Separately, Garneau said the government was looking at a recommendation that it privatize airports, but that "it's not a front-burner exercise" and people should not jump to any conclusions, CBC said.

(Source: Reuters)

Under the Pretext of Success of "GHASHTOUR" Tour & Travel Agency as Top National Exemplary Exporter:

Tourism Industry Is Tied with Name of "GHASHTTOUR" Travel & Tour Agency in Country



Under the wise management of **Mr. Alireza Qajar, "Ghashttour" Travel and Tour Agency** once again managed to be introduced as top national exporter in the field of presenting high-quality tour and travel services to incoming and outgoing tourists as compared with other similar tour and travel agencies across the country.

To learn more about the details, our reporter has conducted an interview with Mr. Alireza Qajar the able managing director of the company which comes as follows:

Let's review the interview in questions and answers.

Q: What is the main reason behind success of your company as exemplary exporter in recent years and also current year? Since large companies such as electronics and cement production companies as well as other large industrial and production companies have managed to attain such success, how come your company has managed to win such a prestigious rank in nationwide level?

A: In response to your question, I should say that Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) embarks on introducing exemplary exporter of the country every year on the occasion of National Day of Industry due to yielding currency of industrial and production units. Accordingly, TPOI introduced the company as exemplary exporter unit in the field of offering high-quality tour and travel services to tourists. Given the above issue, the company managed to attract a great number of tourists in a yearlong who travelled to Iran.

Q: How do you evaluate the impact of entrance of foreign tourists in economy of our country?

A: As compared to the current situation of country and other industries available in exports field, tourism industry has many advantages and differences. With the increase of inbound tours, the employment rate is increased in the country on one hand and a high number of individuals will be prepared to offer quality services to the tourists as well, the issue of which will reduce unemployment rate as well.

On the other hand, each foreign tourist will bring currency into the country and this means the main concept of exports. The most interesting point here is this that there is no need to import raw materials into the country and any source is not exited from the country, the issue of which is considered as one of salient advantages of this industry. With the entrance of foreign tourists into the country, income distribution will be observed in all walks of life in society, so that other sectors such as industry, transport, hotel construction,



handicrafts and even food industries, etc., will witness a considerable growth and development.

Q: Has percentage of incoming tours been increased in current year as compared to the previous year (ended March 19, 2016)?

A: After lifting of sanctions and removing international barriers, golden opportunity was created for the country for developing and enhancing tourism industry. Given the above issue, a wave of Iranology hit among many countries in world. Broadly speaking, number of foreign tourists was increased after implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

According to the public statistics, the number of foreign tourists travelled to the country in the past Iranian year in 1394 (ended March 19, 2016) hit 5.2 million, accounting 0.5 percent share of tourists in world. In other words, 0.6 percent tourist income in world registered in Iran. Iran enjoys high potentials and capabilities in a way that the country has witnessed a considerable growth in tourism industry as compared to previous years.

Q: What is your suggestion for increasing entrance of foreign tourists into the country?

A: First of all, we should bear in mind that the tourism industry is on the verge of boom and industrialization in the country. Therefore, accepting this industry from industrial perspective is much more important than its cultural perspective. On the other hand, attraction and guidance of domestic and foreign investors for making investment in various sectors of the country is of paramount importance. Also, improvement of infrastructures in transport, hotel construction, tourism services and training sectors as well as employment of the most experienced domestic

and foreign manpower should be taken into serious consideration.

Q: What is your recommendations and advices to the state officials?

A: With the effective measures taken in this regard in the past years, Think-Tank Chamber is on the very of establishment in tourism industrial sector of the country but these chambers should be used in practical meaning and should not be deviated from its main mission.

Also, responsible officials are expected to avoid illogical measures and adopt a positive and expert approach to the said issue, knowing that tourism

Given the multi-sectorial tourism industry and in order to remove problems in the field offering quality services to foreign tourists, this industry is much more important than security as well. Islamic Republic of Iran has had significant growth in the field of offering tourism services but we are aware of this issue that much effort should be taken in order to attain requirements of international standards. Diversified tourism, cultural, climatic and natural attractions is the third issue. Iran is unique of its kind among other world countries in this aspect. Moreover, Iran is a collection of peaceful life of religions and various cultures in cultural and anthropological terms.

Q: In your opinion, what are the main concerns of tourism industry currently?

A: Tourism industry is like a chain which is linked to one another. If one part of this chain is weakened, whole system will face shortfall. Since this industry is a newly-fledgling industry in our country, all of these chains should be in tandem with one another. First of all, manpower should be taken into consideration.

For this purpose, Iran should establish amicable and intimate interaction with other countries and prestigious academic centers in order to train most experienced and competent manpower. The second issue is related to the infrastructures which include as follows: hotels and transport system (air, marine, rail and ground fleets). Today, this chain is in good condition with the participation of important foreign airlines but Iranian airlines should be renovated rapidly in order to take advantage of services of foreign companies. With regard to the land transportation, it should be noted that the country has not suitable condition in this respect. The land transportation of country is in dire need of repair and maintenance services.

Q: What is your expectation from the government?

A: Considering the current situation of the country and specific condition of the Middle East

region, the government faces many challenges ahead. It is better that tourism industry should help the government and not vice versa! Government is advised to remove obstacles created ahead of tourism industry of the country. In other words, we expect the government to remove obstacles created ahead of tourism industry, so that most objectives of tourism industry will be materialized.

Unfortunately, we feel weakness of management or mismanagement in the field of tourism industry, so that this industry has created some problems ahead of private sector. ITB 2015 Exhibition held in Berlin was a solid evidence of the said claim. Fortunately, organizing this exhibition will be transferred to the private sector this year and it is hoped that government will attend the exhibition as an observer / supervisor.

Q: Would you mind naming the credits won by your company in the past five years?

A: Winning title of the best exemplary national exporter in 2016 by the Presidential Office in tourism sector, exemplary national exporter in tourism industry for second consecutive year by the First Vice President (2013 and 2014), exemplary provincial exporter in 2015 in the field of attracting foreign tourist, winning the best title as organizer of "FAM TOUR" in 2012 and 2013 by the Tourism Affairs Deputy Office, commissioner of the first and largest international marathon track- and-field

competition in 2016, etc.

Q: Any concluding remarks.

A: Since Iran enjoys high potential and capability in tourism industry, certainly, the country will witness a considerable growth. After a landmark deal inked between Iran and P5+1, Iran will host more foreign tourists and economic status of the country will be boomed.

A manager who is a man of nature and travel with the slogan of "honesty, expertise and experience"

Alireza Qajar is a successful manager of **GASHTTOUR Travel & Tour Agency**. He was born in 1963 in **Shoushtar, Shiraz**. After spending military service, he organized the first family and camping tours due to his vehemence and deep interest in nature and mountaineering.

GASHTTOUR Travel & Tour Agency

www.GASHTTOUR.com

● **Granting Golden Statue of National Exemplary Exporter in 2016 by Respected President of Islamic Republic of Iran**
● **Winning Title of National Exemplary Exporter in 2013, 2014 and 2016 in Tourism Industry**



How much Europe do Europeans need?



By Joschka Fischer

In his final address to the European Parliament in 1995, then-French President François Mitterrand, whose failing health was evident to all, found the following indelible words to characterize Europe's great scourge: "Le nationalisme, c'est la guerre!"

Nationalism and war were the defining experiences of Mitterrand's political career, and he was referring not only to the dreadful past – the first half of the twentieth century, with its two World Wars, dictatorships, and the Holocaust. He viewed nationalism as the greatest future threat to European peace, democracy, and security.

Although nationalist war was tearing apart Yugoslavia at the time, few of those who listened to Mitterrand in Strasbourg that day could have imagined that, 21 years later, nationalism would be experiencing a Europe-wide revival. But nationalist politicians whose declared goal is to destroy Europe's unity and peaceful integration have now won in major democratic elections and referenda.

The United Kingdom's decision in June to leave the European Union marked a momentary climax for resurgent nationalism, but one can also see it on the march in Hungary, Poland, and France, where Marine Le Pen and her far-right National Front have been gaining strength in the run-up to next year's presidential election. How could it have come to this, given Europe's first-hand experience with nationalism's destructive power in the twentieth century, when it caused millions of deaths and devastated the entire continent?

For starters, the 2008 financial crisis and ensuing global recession are widely, and justifiably, seen as a massive failure on the part of the "establishment." Anti-elite sentiment continues to erode intra-European solidarity and mutual trust, and the EU has become mired in a prolonged bout of slow growth and high unemployment.

Across the West, a general feeling of decline has taken hold, owing to the shift in global wealth and power toward Asia. Worldwide, there is growing discontent with globalization, digitization, and free trade, accompanied by a slow shift toward protectionism. Europeans, in particular, seem to have forgotten that protectionism and nationalism are inextricably linked – one cannot be had without the other.

■ Inflows of foreigners

Finally, there is a generalized fear of the unknown, as many countries confront issues relating to inflows of foreigners – whether refugees or migrants – and internal changes brought about by the increasing economic and political empowerment of women and minorities. These developments, which have coincided with the larger-scale transformations and ruptures in Europe that began in 1989, have triggered fears that establishment political parties and democratic institutions have failed to address.

As always, when fear runs rampant in Europe, people seek salvation in nationalism, isolationism, ethnic homogeneity, and nostalgia – the "good old days," when supposedly all was well in the world. Never mind that the bloody, chaotic past was anything but perfect. Nationalist leaders and their supporters today are living in a "post-empirical" reality, where the truth and experience have no purchase.

All of this reflects a profound change in how Europeans see themselves. After two World Wars and during the Cold War, European integration was a no-brainer. But the shared understanding that unity delivers peace, prosperity, and democracy has been weakened over time by persistent crises, and it could now be lost completely unless it is reinforced by a forward-looking message.

It is absurd to think that Europe's historic nation-states are an answer to the globalized political, economic, and technological realities of the twenty-first century. If Europeans believe that, then they must be willing to pay the price for less integration, in the form of declining prospects and new dependencies. The most important global decisions in this century will not be made democratically in Europe, but unilaterally in China or elsewhere.

Europe's languages and cultures have a long history. But, lest we forget, its nation-states are a more recent development, especially outside of Western Europe. It would be a grave mistake to think that they represent Europe's "end of history." On the contrary, if the nation-state model wins out over integration, Europeans will pay a high price in this century. How European countries fare in the future is a question that can be answered only collectively, not on the basis of some individually defined national interest, as in the nineteenth century.

Moreover, with Russia, Turkey, the Middle East, and Africa nearby, Europe lives in a difficult and challenging neighborhood. It does not enjoy the American luxury of having its security guaranteed by geography. Rather, its safety and prosperity must constantly be defended through politics, which is necessarily a joint effort.

The central question for Europe's future is how much power the EU needs in order to guarantee peace and security for its citizens. That, too, can be addressed only collectively. What is already clear is that Europeans will need not just more Europe, but also a different and more powerful Europe.

(Source: Project-Syndicate)

We can't let ISIL get away

By Joni Ernst

As the United States supports our allies and continues the fight for Mosul, we cannot ignore where ISIL will spread next. I am not alone in my fears that key leaders escaped the city before the major assault began -- especially considering the advance warning about our battle plans. More importantly, should we and our allies be successful in Mosul, and I have the utmost faith that we will be, I fear ISIL will continue retreating to its al Qaeda roots.

In the past, terrorist groups like al Qaeda have used the ability to expand globally as a way to increase their deadly and horrific acts of terror.

ISIL started with a different approach. Their self-proclaimed caliphate, a decreasing area of ISIL-held territory covering Iraq and Syria, has given the administration and Operation Inherent Resolve a clearer area of operations. This is a plot of land we appear to be using to measure our success.

Yet, using this new perspective is blinding us to the changing tactics and the spread of our extremist enemy.

■ The growing threat of extremism

As the President prepares to travel to Peru this month, I want to be sure he goes there with the intent to address the growing threat of extremism in Latin America. ISIL's increased use of messaging in Spanish and Portuguese, and its calls for terror in Latin America should be a red flag to the administration.

In August, before President Obama's final trip to Asia, I criticized his failure to focus on the spread of ISIL in Southeast Asia. His administration agreed with



me that ISIL in the region was an issue, and Secretary of Defense Carter later discussed some steps forward for counterterrorism efforts with defense ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

But, unfortunately, Southeast Asia is not the only region where the administration is falling short in their attempt to counter ISIL.

A Brazilian extremist group, Ansar al-Khilafah Brazil, pledging allegiance to ISIL shortly before the Olympic Games this year, should have encouraged a

continued collaboration with our allies.

Yet, while the Olympics put a conversation about ISIL in motion, it appears the discussion of next steps left town with the Olympic torch.

This conversation is important because Latin America presents a unique situation for extremists.

The decades of violence in countries like Colombia, Mexico and Peru, coupled with instability and funding through illicit activity throughout the region, presents an area in which extremist groups could thrive.

ISIL's increased use of messaging in Spanish and Portuguese, and its calls for terror in Latin America should be a red flag to the administration.

What President Obama must tell Israel before January

By Henry Siegman

There has been much speculation during the electoral campaign season whether there is still something President Obama could do before the end of his term to change the course of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Most of this speculation has focused on the possibility President Obama would finally support a UN Security Council resolution that spells out terms of reference for a two-state agreement, ending Israel's occupation of the West Bank.

The critical moment of decision for such a presidential intervention is now, as Israel is about to cross a line with its illegal settlement project that permanently precludes a two-state solution, having transferred over six hundred thousand Israeli Jewish settlers beyond the pre-1967 Green Line, Israel's internationally recognized border. Having lost their struggle for self-determination and separate statehood, Palestinians may decide to launch a new popular struggle for citizenship and equal rights in the de facto Greater Israel that has been imposed on them.

Yet it is precisely this impending loss of the option of separate Palestinian statehood that may have opened an opportunity for a two-state agreement that did not exist until now. It is that opportunity, not a return to futile negotiations that a final Middle East peace initiative by President Obama should focus on.

U.S. and international Middle East peace diplomacy failed catastrophically because it never addressed the only real obstacle to a two-state solution: the vast and unbridgeable power gap that always existed between Israel and the Palestinians, an imbalance that led Israel's leaders to the strategic rejection of Palestinian statehood. They decided that since they could have it all, they would have it all, the UN Partition resolution's division of Palestine notwithstanding. And the path chosen by Israel for the achievement of this goal is its colonial settlement project, which the United States pretended is an unintended obstacle that could be overcome by the good will its diplomacy and generosity to Israel would generate.

What was actually needed to change Israel's cost/benefit calculations for its permanent disenfranchisement and displacement of the Palestinians was the bridging of this vast power gap through outside intervention. With the



Likud and other even more reactionary political parties in power, there was no chance for such change coming from within. But instead of exercising its leverage, U.S. diplomacy granted Israel virtual impunity by opposing all such efforts from the outside. The notion that President Obama would now allow such outside intervention, or initiate it himself, is entirely fanciful.

■ Permanent loss of statehood

But the impending permanent loss of statehood for the Palestinians is exposing and bringing into far sharper focus an apartheid—not its threat but its current de facto reality—that is obliterating Israel's democracy. President Obama, in his speech at last September's session of

U.S. and international Middle East peace diplomacy failed catastrophically because it never addressed the only real obstacle to a two-state solution.

Imagining America on Nov. 9

This surreal, miserable presidential campaign exposed a lot of rot in our democracy's infrastructure, and anger in the populace. Those conditions are related. It has exposed a sick Republican Party. Some in the never-Trump movement tie

It is a history of coded race-baiting combined with myopia and cowardice that puts the Republican establishment in lock step now with the alt-right, the Ku Klux Klan, the racists and misogynists and nut, the crowds that scream, "Lock her up." For some it is taxes, abortion or immigration, for many it is simply Clinton hatred that allows them to justify supporting a candidate who also stands for torture, reckless war, unchecked greed, hatred of women, immigrants, refugees, people of color, people with disabilities. A business fraud, a liar who runs on a promise to

destroy millions of immigrant families and to jail his political opponent.

■ A momentary breather

If Trump is rejected on Tuesday, the nation will have a momentary breather. And some good news to build on. The Republicans who have spent the last weeks and months jumping on, then off, then on the Trump bus will have been discredited, and some may be unseated. Those in the Trump inner circle will be freshly disgraced, and perhaps go away — like Rudy Giuliani, former New York mayor, now Trump's conspiracy ghoul, and Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey, who has been separately brought low in an unrelated courtroom drama. And the electorate will have demonstrated its decency.

The rejection of Trump is the simple part. Win or lose, the harder job will be confronting the conditions that spawned

Trinidad and Tobago has been estimated to have over 100 individuals depart its small region for the Middle East to support ISIL. And even Jamaica has had its issues with radicalization.

The tri-border region of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay has long been known to be a fundraising and training hub for radicalized individuals.

These countries are not the far-off lands of the Middle East and Asia -- they are right here in our own hemisphere, and we should take note because it is an issue that can directly impact us here at home.

Both our current and previous commanders of U.S. Southern Command have raised the issue of radicalized extremists utilizing drug trafficking routes from Latin America to enter our country.

Just as the administration underestimated the rise of ISIL in the Middle East, I fear their inability to see the bigger picture will only lead them to repeat mistakes in Latin America as well.

A more comprehensive strategy means partnering with and supporting our allies in Latin America to counter a common enemy. Given Panama is the only Latin American country to join the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL (ISIL), it is my hope the President actively encourages more to join the fight during his trip this month.

As we continue to strike ISIL in its self-proclaimed caliphate and the assault wages forward on Mosul, our enemy is spreading, and it is changing its tactics. It is time the administration wakes up, recognizes that and changes their strategy accordingly.

(Source: CNN)

the UN General Assembly, warned that Israel "cannot permanently occupy and settle Palestinian lands," implying that with the option of Palestinian statehood denied by Israel, the United States could not conceivably fail to support a Palestinian demand for citizenship and equal rights.

If there is one price the overwhelming majority of Israel's Jews will not pay for a Greater Israel, it is the loss of their state's Jewish identity. This has been repeatedly confirmed by successive Israeli polls. Most Israelis are fully prepared to pay the price of condemnatory rhetoric from the international community, as long as the United States continues to have Israel's back. They believe this will continue to be the case because the illusion that the occupation will be resolved when some future Palestinian generation will produce "partners for peace" acceptable to Israel—an illusion concocted by Netanyahu for American consumption—can be successfully maintained. They believe this because that's what they have heard from America's leaders, who even when warning Israelis they are on the path to apartheid assured them that "no daylight will ever come between us."

The most transformative message President Obama could convey to Israelis—because I believe he truly cares about Israel's future more than any of his predecessors, even as he finds their current leader contemptible—is that their complacent assumptions about the sustainability of the status quo are entirely unjustified, for no future U.S. administration can allow America to be complicit in the permanent disenfranchisement of the Palestinian people and in facilitating apartheid. An Israel that abandons the shared values that are the foundation of the unprecedented relationship between the two countries abandons that alliance.

Such a warning to Israel would also be an important message to a younger generation of Palestinians that if they engage Israel in a nonviolent popular struggle for their rights, they can count on America's support. The readiness of this younger generation to undertake such a struggle, as confirmed in several recent studies, gives the lie to the belief of many Israelis that Palestinians would not risk losing what pathetic benefits the occupation now offers them via the Palestinian Authority, an institution that increasingly serves as a handmaiden to the occupiers.

(Source: National Interest)

him. This country's problems will still be deep and complex, and the Republicans in Congress show no signs of giving Clinton any more respect than they gave President Obama, or of abandoning their terrorist against responsible governing. If she wins, Clinton will have the burden of managing the terrorists, while governing for the benefit not only of her supporters but also of the tens of millions who will have voted for Trump expecting — against all evidence — that he will make everything better. It won't be easy.

Autumn is here in the United States, too. It's time to focus. To confront what Trump represents, the better to end it. Let this election have the salutary effect of reminding Americans as a nation of who we are, and the good we can do, when we are put to the test.

(Source: nytimes)

INTERVIEW

By Mohammad M. Maleki

Former Ambassador: Tehran-Moscow ties in new highs due to regional events

Nasser Nowbari was Iran's ambassador to Moscow (1986-1990) when the Soviet Union was still an entity. He was in charge when Mikhail Gorbachev received a delegation from Iran's Revolutionary government delivering Imam Khomeini's message which had famously predicted the fall of the Soviet Union.

Nowbari had been keeping a low-profile, avoiding media contacts and interviews, during past 2 years. His interview with Tehran Times is his first since then. He credits himself with securing an Iranian embassy in the Soviet Socialist Republics; he believes Russia was the first to announce using Nowjeh Airbase so that it could enter a trade-off with the west with an upper-hand. Here is the first part of our interview with Mr. Nowbari:

■ **What is your analysis of Iran-Russia relations? What factors had taken Russia closer to Tehran, and what are the prospects of this bilateral co-operation?**

Iran-Russian ties have grown in par with developments in the region; when little politics is at stake, Iran and Russia would be distanced accordingly. For example, when Russia was engaged in Afghanistan, there had been new highs in Iran and Russian relations. Mr. Boris Yeltsin's term however saw a perigee of the relations, since he welcomed approaching to the US; when the US or any other western power approached Russia, a corresponding recession would govern Tehran-Moscow ties. The situations were so until Mr. Vladimir Putin assumed power, when the country had not yet found itself in international setting when it wondered whether west would welcome Russia. Russia under Putin recovered soon and sought to establish a new eastern strategic body to counter-balance hegemony of the west; it

thus turned to the east. In Putin's era, for example, S300 missile defense system was pledged for and signed with Iran. After collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia for a time entertained to join the west and to dissolve into western hegemony to not least enjoy the technological advancement and the welfare coming from its lifestyle, a project, which, during Yeltsin's era, was addressed insufficiently, and it was only a thin layer of cooperation with the US. The political elites recommended a turn to the US, which, Dmitri Medvedev was also pursuing. During all these times, relations with Iran tumbled to a nadir.

■ **Why would the west reject Russia?**

Russia had been inherently a Communist entity, bold enough to address its imperialist ambitions in international community. Russia had been for a prolonged period

an enemy to the US during the Cold War, and a formidable rival in many strategic fields; Putin himself has alluded to its inherent imperialist ambitions in many occasions. The passing of time and experiences with the west has taught Putin to face the west with an eastern system and using weaponry often in use in the east.

■ **So this is why Russia annexed Crimean Peninsula? And would it be compared to nuclear negotiations Iran had with the west, where Russia had Iran's trump card?**

This is an accurate example. Russia was to face US-aligned system in the Peninsula and manage the situation to avoid more violent confrontation. The US should have Russia on its own side during nuclear negotiations to save itself from a war; if Russia approached Iran, no nuclear agreement would



be possible. In Ukraine, Russia sought a win-win situation with the west through its preponderance in nuclear negotiations. In any détente with Moscow, Tehran had had developments in the region as good omens; crises in Syria, Yemen, and Iraq catapulted Tehran-Moscow ties to new highs; in any situation when peace persisted, bilateral ties had been historically low.

■ **Despite the generally upheld hatred of the Britain and the US, at least part of the elites seek détente with the US, while this is not true of the relations with Moscow, with elites eluctantly viewing possible openings with Moscow. What factors contribute to this?**

Economic and cultural relations with the west draw the elite to the

western culture and weltanschauung; that level of affiliation is lacking with Moscow and ties have been only in security and political levels; economically speaking, Iran has more affinities with west than Russia, which has roots in history. Even after a period of turning to east, with JCPOA, west occupies a prominent place from an Iranian perspective. Infatuation with the west has been largely inveterate among the elites. Political and cultural hegemony lay in the west according to Iranian elites. Russia and Iran had opportunities to change this trend when Turkey distanced itself from Moscow; however, they had largely been a key player in Russian markets and had improved their exports to Russia since then.

■ **What hope-inspiring pros-**

pects does Iran-Russia détente provide?

I believe Tehran-Moscow will be less when the Middle East sees an end to its crises; we lack necessary cultural and social relations which would bolster political relations; Moscow needs Tehran as long as its strategic and security reasons persist, just when it had done during war in Afghanistan in 1980s.

■ **Would a Cold-War rivalry persist between the US and Russia?**

It would, albeit with little heat and intensity; Russia solely seeks to revive its idealized past glory when it had been recognized an international player; it would not seek to ingrain its ideology of the left just as it did during Soviet era. Today, Russia does not pursue a plan to secure interests of its camp and affiliated satellite countries, since there is no commitment in Moscow for a possibly new Eastern Block. Russia however would seek revival of its traditional importance without any Block commitment and announcing of using Nowjeh Airbase served this objective; Russia was triumphant in assertion of its hegemony in the region where the US and its allies were merely on-lookers.

■ **Why would you oppose using the airbase by Russians?**

I think the government should have developed a plan whereby it would gain some points for allowing Russia to use the airbase. But the latter brought home the bacon: they communicated to the US that they would spare no option to find a way forward, but Iran was passive viewer and achieved nothing special.

(Part one)





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Legit reasons the elliptical is better than a treadmill

By Alexandra Duron

If there's one piece of gym equipment that elicits a nearly universal eye roll, it's the elliptical machine. With commonly cited faults like being boring (research even says so) and not challenging enough, it's no wonder the elliptical doesn't get any love. But as with anything, an elliptical machine workout is what you make of it. And you actually can choose to make it great!

So get ready to change your ways, elliptical skeptics. We've rounded up all the reasons—both silly and scientific—that the hated cardio machine legitimately rocks.

If there's one piece of gym equipment that elicits a nearly universal eye roll, it's the elliptical machine. With commonly cited faults like being boring (research even says so) and not challenging enough, it's no wonder the elliptical doesn't get any love. But as with anything, an elliptical machine workout is what you make of it. And you actually can choose to make it great!

So get ready to change your ways, elliptical skeptics. We've rounded up all the reasons—both silly and scientific—that the hated cardio machine legitimately rocks.

■ You can absolutely do it

The elliptical is good for all ages and fitness levels (barring those who are injured), says New York City-based fitness expert Amie Hoff. "It's a very easy motion and can give people a sense of security," she says—which can be particularly helpful to gym newbies who may be intimidated by other equipment. Bonus: You don't need a manual to understand how to use it.

■ You can find them almost everywhere

Need a boutique studio (and a ballooning savings account) to access an elliptical machine? Nah. These bad boys are in just about every gym, including the measly ones found in apartment buildings and hotels.

■ You CAN get your heart racing

Believe it or not, your pulse revs up



during elliptical training—higher than the treadmill, according to one study (even when perceived exertion is the same). Another study found that runners' legs felt more tired after using the elliptical than a comparable workout on the treadmill.

■ You can avoid unwanted competition

Friendly competition? Awesome. Trying to power through your workout with the dude next to you eyeballing your mileage and speed? Not so much. Thankfully, that phenomenon seems to be limited to the treadmill, so you can hit the elliptical in peace.

■ You can get an upper-body workout too

Just pump your arms to move the handles (and thus your legs). You can also grab some dumbbells, ditch the handles, and do shoulder presses as you move your legs.

■ You can improve your life

It may sound like a lofty claim, but science actually suggests elliptical training may improve quality of life and beat back fatigue—though it's worth noting that this study measured both effects in people

with multiple sclerosis. An extreme case, to be sure, but definitely a benefit in our books!

■ You have plenty of variety

Not only do the built-in programs make switching up workouts super simple (i.e. they do the work for you with pre-set options), but manually switching the settings is also a cinch. Tip: If you're sticking to the programs, keep tabs on how challenging they are for you—you don't want it to feel like you're breezing through the movements 15 minutes into the workout, Hoff says.

■ You can multitask

Whether you're dying to catch up on your favorite show (oh hey, Scandal) or just have to fire off e-mails on a tablet or phone, checking stuff off your to-do list is totally possible on the elliptical. And, OK, so you can technically do all of this on any cardio equipment at the gym, but it's especially easy when you're on this machine.

■ You can go easy on your knees

The elliptical is softer on the body in general—and that's pretty major for people with joint, knee, and lower back issues, Hoff says. The gliding motions are low im-

pact, but can also have major payoffs.

■ You can get a killer workout

But it's up to you. One study suggests exercising on an elliptical machine leads to similar fitness improvements as hitting the treadmill or a Stairmaster. They key? Making sure you work as hard (read: keep that intensity UP) and as long as you would on the other two machines. In other words: no coasting! Hoff suggests challenging yourself by cranking up the incline (which works the booty a little more) for three to four minutes, then decreasing the incline as you increase speed, and alternating until you've completed your routine.

■ You don't need tons of energy

Some days, beast mode just isn't in your workout repertoire. When that happens, hit the elliptical. Since it's low-impact and you can adjust the intensity, you can get your sweat on without doing yourself in. Plus, the built-in settings make it even easier for you to coast—in case that's exactly what you need.

■ You can read

Anecdotal evidence shows that turning pages while using a treadmill or Stairmaster is way tougher than doing so on an elliptical machine. So when multitasking's your only option (ahem, you're cramming for finals or frantically prepping for an interview), the elliptical is a pretty safe bet to get your sweat on and your reading done too.

■ You can ease your way back into your fitness routine

Hopping back on the workout wagon after an exercise hiatus isn't an easy thing to do. Just like it's a great tool for newbies to get their sweat on, the elliptical is a solid choice for anyone looking to get back on the straight and narrow.

■ You can work your entire body in less than 30 minutes

We're all about efficiency (who isn't?), and the elliptical has to be one of the most efficient pieces of equipment. Work your upper and lower body and get your cardio fix all in one go.

(Source: greatist.com)

There's no sugar-coating it: All calories are not created equal

Burning more calories each day than you consume may have been the diet advice from the past, but that doesn't work for everyone. Instead, the focus should be on eating whole foods and avoiding processed carbohydrates — like crackers, cookies, or white bread. A recent review in JAMA Internal Medicine further casts a light on the shaky history of nutritional science. Before the 1980s, regulations did not require researchers and physicians to declare conflicts of interest before publishing a paper. By not announcing affiliation, research had the potential to be swayed by money and funding. That's why it had to change.

■ Are fat and cholesterol the dietary "bad guys"?

A study funded by the Sugar Research Foundation (SRF) from the 1960s found that cholesterol and fat were the main contributors to weight gain and responsible for an increased risk for coronary heart disease. These results kick-started the country's decades-long consumption of added sugar. With fat removed, food lost taste and appeal, so manufacturers added sugar to combat this. The country's intake of sugar and processed carbohydrates went up, while our intake of fat went down. Dr. David Ludwig, a professor in the Department of Nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, says "Overall, these processed carbohydrates are worse than the fats they replaced."

The JAMA review from September found that the doctors involved with the study were in fact paid by the SRF. Their research was tainted due to conflict of interest. The SRF — and thus the doctors paid by the SRF — directly benefited from the results of this 1960s study, and they profited tremendously from the uptick in sugar sales, while consumers made health decisions on the basis of questionable information.

■ The scoop on carbohydrates

It is true that fat has more calories than carbohydrates, including sugar. But by that logic, a sugary beverage is better for you than a handful of nuts. That's just not what the unbiased studies have shown. Looking only at calories ignores the metabolic effects of each calorie; the source of the calorie changes how you digest it and how you retrieve energy from it.

Carbohydrates have been categorized as simple or complex in the past. Dr. Ludwig says these classifications are misleading. Many doctors are pulling away from those narrow categories and moving toward the all-encompassing terms of high glycemic index and low glycemic index. An apple is a simple carbohydrate because it is digested quickly by the body, but fruit is better for you than other simple carbohydrates like chips or crackers. That's why Dr. Ludwig views the glycemic index as a more accurate measure of a food's value (good or bad). When something has a low glycemic index, it raises your blood sugar levels slowly, increasing your insulin levels gradually.

(Source: health.harvard.edu)

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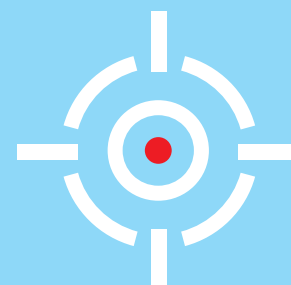
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10 hot titles of IT world

By Alireza Khorasani

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

1 Microsoft Surface phone Powered by a lap-top-class Intel processor appeared in leaked photos.

Evan Blass (@evleaks) tweets some new photos of what could possibly be the Microsoft Surface Phone.

2 Chinese phone maker unveiled three different models of the mid-ranger Redmi 4.

Redmi 4A, Redmi 4 Standard, and Redmi 4 Prime are finally official.

3 Android Nougat beta for Galaxy S7 and S7 edge coming soon at least for users in the US and UK.

4 Britain will boost its cyber security defenses with a 1.9 billion pound (\$2.32 billion) investment.

The new National Cyber Security Strategy will provide funding to develop automatic defenses to help protect British businesses and citizens online, and beef up the country's cyber workforce to help defend against attacks.

5 Android users able to download Microsoft Selfie app from Google Play Store with latest features.

Last December, the Microsoft Selfie app was launched in the App Store for iOS users. Similar to the Lumia Selfie app for phones running on Windows, the app uses algorithms and various data that it detects itself to make a selfie look better.

6 Apple lowered the prices of some of its accessories for connecting to its new MacBook Pro laptops up to end of the year.

The USB Type-C to USB Type-A adapter is down to \$9 from \$19, the Thunderbolt 3 to Thunderbolt 2 adapter is \$29 (was \$49), the 1m USB Type-C to Lightning cable is \$19 (from \$25).

7 The U.K. government unveiled the new National Cyber Security Strategy, with around £1.9 billion (\$2.33 billion) to be invested in improving cyber security and capabilities between 2016 and 2021.

8 Google is using StarCraft II to research A.I.

Google's DeepMind A.I. is better than even the best humans at turn-based strategy games like chess and go. Now, Google wants researchers to take on StarCraft II, which is several times more complex than even go due to its real-time nature.

9 Samsung said it would launch an artificial intelligence digital assistant service for its upcoming Galaxy S8 smartphone.

The world's top smartphone maker in October announced the acquisition of Viv Labs Inc., a firm run by a co-creator of Apple's Siri voice assistant program.

10 Activision Blizzard said it is creating a professional e-sports league based around its popular first-person shooter videogame "Overwatch", as it pushes deeper into the fast-growing market for competitive gaming.

Alcatel's huge Android tablet with 17.3-inch display goes on sale on Amazon for \$500

TCL, the Chinese company owning the Alcatel brand, has just released the Xess tablet in the United States. Officially unveiled last year at IFA trade fair as Alcatel Xess, the Android tablet was originally slated for an April release, but that did not happen.



Those looking for tablet that can replace their TVs will be pleased to know that the Xess is now available for purchase in the United States via Amazon. However, the tablet is now sold under the TCL brand, but the good news is it only costs \$500.

According to TCL, the Xess is an Alexa-powered hub that features JBL audio and comes with a bonus remote camera in the sales package. The huge-17.3-inch display supports full HD (1080p) resolution, but the list of impressive features end here.

Those looking for tablet that can replace their TVs will be pleased to know that the Xess is now available for purchase in the United States via Amazon. However, the tablet is now sold under the TCL brand, but the good news is it only costs \$500.

The tablet is powered by a 1.5GHz octa-core MediaTek processor, coupled with 3GB of RAM and 32GB of internal memory, which can be further expanded via microSD card.

As mentioned earlier, the Xess comes packed with dual 3-watt JBL speakers for an amazing audio experience. Unfortunately, TCL's tablet ships with the rather old Android 5.1 Lollipop operating system onboard and we ca safely assume that it will never get an update to a more recent version of the OS.

There's isn't really anything exceptional about the TCL Xess, so the \$500 price tag might be too high for what the tablet has to offer. It's up to each and everyone to decide whether they want to grab one or choose one of the many alternatives available on the market. (Source: slashgear)

Full autonomy for smart machines might not be possible

By 2020, smart machines -- technologies that learn on their own, adapt their behavior based on experience, and are able to come up with unanticipated results -- will be a top five investment priority for more than 30 percent of CIOs, according to new findings from research firm Gartner.

With these machines moving toward fully autonomous operation for the first time, balancing the need to exercise control over the systems versus the drive to realize business benefits is crucial, the firm says.

Presenting the research findings at a Gartner symposium in Australia, research vice president Brian Prentice said Google's self-driving car project is a prime example of why pursuing full autonomy might be neither possible nor desirable in smart machines.

"Human beings are still required as the final point of redundancy in an autonomous vehicle, so a fully autonomous car requires a steering wheel should a driver be required to take control," Prentice said. "But putting a steering wheel in an autonomous car means a fully licensed, sober driver must always be in the car and prepared to take control if necessary."

Not only does this destroy many of the stated benefits of autonomous vehi-

cles, but it changes the role of the driver from actively controlling the car to passively monitoring it for potential failure." The "Google Steering Wheel Dilemma" is representative of a challenge all smart machine projects must face, according to Gartner.

"Smart machines respond to their environment," Prentice said. "But what is the environment that the smart machine is responding to? Environments that are largely uncontrollable are not amenable to smart machine projects because it is difficult, if not impossible, to model accurately."

The challenge for organizations looking into this technology is to figure out what is actually controllable, and limit smart machines to those activities that can be accurately modeled and managed.

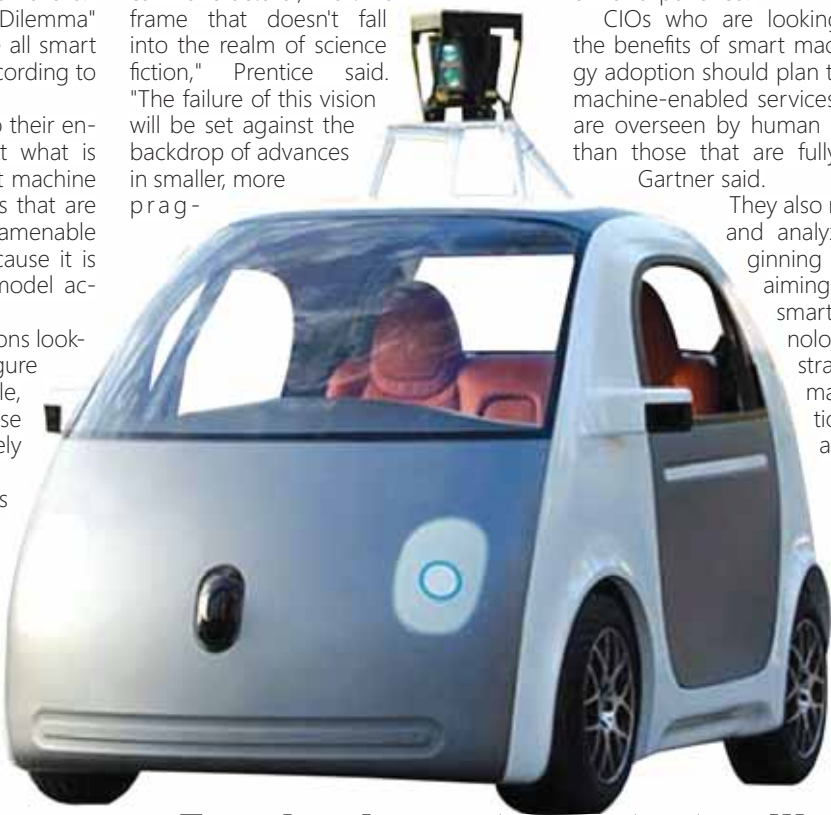
Major unresolved problems in machine learning technologies, such as how to make sure learning data is fully representative and the avoidance of "reward hacking," need to be addressed before any autonomous machine that learns from its environment can be deployed as a mass-market solution, Prentice noted.

"The vision of the fully autonomous vehicle will not become reality, for any car manufacturer, in a time frame that doesn't fall into the realm of science fiction," Prentice said. "The failure of this vision will be set against the backdrop of advances in smaller, more pragmatic applications of machine learning in automobiles that will improve safety and driver experience."

CIOs who are looking to maximize the benefits of smart machine technology adoption should plan to deliver smart machine-enabled services that help and are overseen by human workers, rather than those that are fully autonomous, Gartner said.

They also need to identify and analyze, at the beginning of any project aiming to make use of smart machine technologies, the constraints that smart machine adoption will eventually face.

(Source: Gartner)



US is ready to hack Russia if it interferes with the election

U.S. military hackers have penetrated Russia's electric grid, telecommunications networks and the Kremlin's command systems, making them vulnerable to attack by secret American cyber weapons should the U.S. deem it necessary, according to a senior intelligence official and top-secret documents reviewed by NBC News.

American officials have long said publicly that Russia, China and other nations have probed and left hidden malware on parts of U.S. critical infrastructure, "preparing the battlefield," in military parlance, for cyber attacks that could turn out the lights or turn off the internet across major cities.

It's been widely assumed that the U.S. has done the same thing to its adversaries. The documents reviewed by NBC News — along with remarks by a senior U.S. intelligence official — confirm that, in the case of Russia.

U.S. officials continue to express concern that Russia will use its cyber capabilities to try to disrupt next week's presidential election. U.S. intelligence officials do not expect Russia to attack critical infrastructure — which many believe would be an act of war — but they do anticipate so-called cyber mischief, including the possible release of fake documents and the proliferation of bogus social media accounts designed to spread misinformation.

On Friday the hacker known as "Guccifer 2.0" — which U.S. officials say is a front for Russian intelligence — tweeted a threat to monitor the U.S. elections "from inside the system."



As NBC News reported Thursday, the U.S. government is marshaling resources to combat the threat in a way that is without precedent for a presidential election.

The cyber weapons would only be deployed in the unlikely event the U.S. was attacked in a significant way, officials say.

U.S. military officials often say in general terms that the U.S. possesses the world's most advanced cyber capabilities, but they will not discuss details of highly classified cyber weapons.

James Lewis, a cyber expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, says that U.S. hacks into the computer infrastructure of adversary nations such as China, Russia, Iran and North Korea — something he says he presumes has gone on for years — is akin to the kind of military scouting that is as old as human conflict.

"This is just the cyber version of that," he said.

(Source: nbcnnews)

Microsoft now lets you easily use Kinect as a webcam

Microsoft announced a few updates related to its Kinect sensor.

For one thing, the company said that it has followed through on its promise to expose RGB, depth, and infrared data from the Kinect for third-party Universal Windows Platform (UWP) applications to use, with the launch of a new Kinect driver for Windows 10.

But the new driver also makes it possible for end users to easily set up the Kinect to function as a simple webcam. There were other ways to do this, including code in the Kinect for Windows software development kit (SDK) beta 2, but now it's as easy as opening Device Manager on a Windows 10 machine and locating the driver under the "Kinect sensor devices" folder. You'll be able to use the Kinect to make Skype video calls, and you can configure the Kinect to perform Windows Hello biometric authentication through face recognition, Microsoft's Yin Li wrote in a blog post.

With the release of the Xbox Summer Update in July, Microsoft also enhanced the Kinect's capability for developers. "Apps that use the Kinect sensor's RGB, infrared, and/or depth cameras will run on Xbox with same code, and Xbox can also use the Kinect RGB camera as a normal webcam for Skype-like scenarios," Li wrote.

(Source: venturebeat)

Deutsche Telekom to launch drone defense system

Germany's Deutsche Telekom plans to launch a drone defense system this year designed to guard airports, stadiums, car test tracks and critical infrastructure, German weekly Welt am Sonntag reported on Sunday.

The increasing use of drones for commercial and leisure purposes has led to a rise in the number of near-misses with aircraft and infringements into no-fly zones, prompting companies and public institutions to seek ways to fend them off.

Car manufacturers have asked Deutsche Telekom to provide anti-drone systems to prevent their use to snap photos of prototypes they test on race tracks, Welt am Sonntag reported.

The paper said Deutsche Telekom, which was not immediately available for comment, had confirmed its plans to start offering a drone defense system.

It also reported that soccer club FC Bayern Munich was looking for a system to fend off drones during soccer matches.

German media reported in June that FC Bayern had talked to defense group Rheinmetall about a possible purchase of electromagnetic systems to combat drones.

(Source: Reuters)

Blizzard creates 'Overwatch' e-sports league

lizzard today announced the details for its new Overwatch League, an official organization designed to promote professional, competitive play of its hit team-based shooter. Overwatch is quickly becoming one of the most popular games in the growing esports market that's worth \$493 million. This official league, which will launch in 2017, from Blizzard will help grow its appeal.

Blizzard is also looking to help players that want to play Overwatch as their career. Each player in the league will have a contract that ensures compensation and benefits. These pros will play for teams based in major cities in the Americas, Europe, China, South Korea, and Asian Pacific regions, which is the way the biggest traditional sports leagues like English Premier soccer and the National Basketball Association work.

The Overwatch League will even have its own combine (just like the NFL!), where invited players can show off their skills to team owners in the hope of securing a contract. The regular season will feature matches in front of live audiences, with the best teams moving on to live playoffs.

(Source: itechpost)



Smoking’s effects on genes revealed for the first time ever in horrifying study

The full extent of the genetic damage that smoking does to our genes has been revealed for the first time.

Smoking just one pack a day can lead to 150 extra mutations in the lung cells a year. And it does even more damage to other parts of the body, causing huge numbers of mutations throughout other organs.

The study is the first to quantify the degree of damage that smoking does to our DNA. As such, it could help understand more about the kinds of problems that the habits causes, with each of those mutations potentially leading to cancer.

■ Mutations in lungs
As well as those 150 mutations found in the lungs, scientists found that a pack-a-day habit for a year produced an average 97 mutations in each cell in the larynx (voice box), 39 mutations in the pharynx (top part of the throat), 23 in the mouth, 18 in the bladder and six in the liver.

Smoking, which claims the lives of at least six million people worldwide each year, has been linked to at least 17



different types of human cancer. The disease is triggered by mutations – changes in the genetic programming written in DNA – that can cause cells

Smoking, which claims the lives of at least six million people worldwide each year, has been linked to at least 17 different types of human cancer.

to become “immortal” and multiply uncontrollably.

Cigarettes contain more than 7,000 different chemicals, of which 70 are known to be carcinogenic, the researchers said, pointing to the complexity of how smoke interacts with the body.

■ Tobacco smoke
“This study offers fresh insights into how tobacco smoke causes cancer,” said Ludmil Alexandrov of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, one of the study’s main co-authors.

“Before now, we had a large body of epidemiological evidence linking smoking with cancer, but now we can actually observe and quantify the molecular changes in the DNA due to cigarette smoking,” he added.

“With this study, we have found that people who smoke a pack a day develop an average of 150 extra mutations in their lungs every year, which explains why smokers have such a higher risk of developing lung cancer.”

(Source: *The Independent*)

This battery heals itself if you break it in half

Scientists have developed a self-healing electronic device that repairs itself when broken, using a special magnetic ink to bridge gaps as wide as 3 millimeters (0.12 inches) – a new record in the field.

The technology could be used in a variety of ways, including batteries and sensors for wearables, because it works much faster than other self-healing materials and requires no external input to carry out the patch-up job.

The researchers, from the University of California, San Diego, have crafted their microscopic magnetic particles into conductive materials such as graphite, gold, and silver, so it can potentially be used in all kinds of ways, including electrical circuits embedded in clothing.

“We wanted to develop a smart system with impressive self-healing abilities with easy-to-find, inexpensive materials,” said one of the team, Amay Bandodkar, now at Northwestern University.

■ Magnetic microparticles
The team started with magnetic microparticles made of neodymium – a cheap, conductive metal commonly used for research and known for its particles’ large magnetic fields, enabling them to attract each other over a gap of a few millimeters.

Neodymium isn’t particularly suited to electrochemicals, though, so the scientists added carbon black to the mix – often used in devices like sensors and batteries – to give their ink all the properties it needed to both function well and repair itself.

The final problem was the micropar-



ticles’ magnetic fields, which cancelled each other out in their natural configuration. The team printed the ink alongside an external magnetic field to ensure that the particles were correctly oriented and would attract each other if split apart.

■ Self-healing circuit
To demonstrate their new ink, the researchers put a self-healing circuit on the sleeve of a t-shirt along with a LED light and battery, then cut through it with a pair of scissors. Within a few seconds, the circuit was repaired and the light switched on again.

The researchers say damage is repaired in about 50 milliseconds or 0.05 seconds. The ink can also pull devices back together if they’re repeatedly damaged in the same spot.

Imagine smart jeans that can keep counting your steps after getting into a scrape, or a smartwatch that keeps ticking even as its battery is bent out of shape – that’s the kind of potential we’re talking about here.

(Source: *ScienceAlert*)

Fewer monarch butterflies in southern New Jersey this year

The number of monarch butterflies migrating through the Point fell by more than half this year, according to an annual hourly census study, but it may be more because of the weather than a population change.

New Jersey Audubon’s Cape May Bird Observatory has been running the project for 25 years, counting monarchs three times daily in five-mile routes around the Point from Sept. 14 through Oct. 31.

The hourly average of monarchs counted by the project this year on the census route was 15, compared with an hourly average of 38 last year, according to data provided by Garland.

The high was about 360 an hour in 1999 and the low was 8.9 per hour in 2004 after a bad winter killed off many butterflies.

“This year never got real good, but it was never real bad either,” said Garland, adding that numbers were low but steady all season.

■ Wintering grounds
“We have to wait and see what the numbers are in Mexico,” he said of counts in their wintering grounds, to know if this year’s count signifies a population drop or simply a change in migration route.

In addition to counting the insects, volunteers and staff members also tag them to better understand their migration, and offer regular educational workshops to the public.

The tagging is continuing, Garland said, since there are more late migrants this year than most years.



“Late in the season we are seeing more monarchs than usual,” he said of late October into November. “The early reports from Mexico say a lot have already arrived at the winter grounds. But we are still tagging. Is this the result of climate change pushing the migration later?”

Past tagging has shown that those that pass through earlier in the season have a better chance of surviving in Mexico, Garland said.

“Time will tell,” said Garland. “One year means nothing, but a trend for multiple years would be different.”

Most monarchs traveling from the East Coast spend the winter huddled together in trees on land now protected as the 200-square-mile Reserva de la Biosfera Mariposa Monarca (Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve), about 62 miles northwest of Mexico City.

Thousands of people visit Cape May each autumn to see the colorful orange and black insects come through in large numbers, contributing to ecotourism here.

(Source: *The Washington Times*)

GM wheat could be grown in Britain from next spring, researchers say

Genetically modified (GM) wheat could be grown in Britain from next spring after scientists applied to the Department for the Environment for permission to begin trials which could boost grain yields by up to 40 percent, in a ‘world’s first’ experiment.

Researchers at the universities of Essex, Lancaster and Rothamsted Research have proven that it is possible to engineer wheat plants so they photosynthesise more efficiently, and so produce bigger grains.

Greenhouse tests have already shown it is possible to grow GM plants which have yields which are up to 40 per-

cent higher than usual crops, but now scientists are keen to find out whether the same effect can be achieved in the field.

■ Step change
If successful it would mark a ‘step change’ in wheat production and silence the critics who claim genetic modification will never increase yields following 20 years of failed attempts. Even though the U.S. has been using genetically modified versions of corn, rapeseed and sugar beet for some time, a recent report by the National Academy of Sciences from there was little evidence to suggest GM yields had increased more than natural varieties.



However British scientists believe they have cracked the problem by genetically altering wheat so it produces higher levels of an enzyme which is crucial for turning sunlight and carbon dioxide into plant fuel.

(Source: *The Telegraph*)

“MA” Insurance Co. CEO Calls for Interaction and Repelling Large Risks with Reinsurances

Chief Executive of “MA” Insurance Company Eng. Majid Safdari attended in international insurance panel of Iran Development and Investment entitled “Challenges and Opportunities of Insurance Industry in Iran”, Public Relations Dept. of “MA” Insurance Company announced.

On the sidelines of organizing 3rd International Exhibition of Banking, Insurance and Investment Opportunity in Kish 2016 in order to introduce its services, activities and achievements, Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

Senior managers and directors of the bank along with subsidiary companies in international and marketing field attended the exhibition and held

discussions and Investment Opportunity in Kish 2016, a panel discussion entitled “Investment and Development in Iran” was held on Nov. 1-2 in the presence of 70 experts in the field of insurance industry.

Turning to the issue that “reinsurance” is one of the most specialized insurance disciplines in the country, he said: “Creating interaction and repelling large risks

are of the salient points in reinsurances, details of which have been specified in 20-Year Insurance Outlook Plan.”

He pointed to the collection of risks and different risks in industry, production, services and all walks of life and said: “Roadmap of insurance industry has been compiled in country’s 20-year vision plan.”

According to Bernoulli’s Law, contin-

gent risks are collected by insurers in order to create confidence, taciturnity, tranquility and psychological security. Logic and science says that existence of these risks in country, organization and insurer can create risks for the very insurer. For this purpose, reinsurances are considered as one of the most specialized insurance disciplines.

Bank Sarmayeh Takes Part in 3rd Kish INVEX 2016 Exhibition

Bank Sarmayeh participated in 3rd International Exhibition of Banking, Insurance and Investment Opportunity in Kish 2016 in order to introduce its services, activities and achievements, Public Relations Dept. of the bank reported.

Senior managers and directors of the bank along with subsidiary companies in international and marketing field attended the exhibition and held

talks with some domestic and foreign monetary & financial institutions.

Experts and directors of the bank responded to the questions raised by visitors including shareholders, investors and customers coupled with introducing latest services of the bank in the field of modern banking services such as integrated internet bank, credit card and investment deposit of SAMAR Plan.

It should be noted that 3rd Kish INVEX Exhibition was inaugurated on Oct. 31 at Kish Permanent Intl. Fairgrounds and wrapped up its work on Thursday Nov. 3 in the presence of Chief Executive of Kish Free Zone and senior financial managers of the country with the aim of introducing capabilities of domestic and foreign financial institutions, achievements of capital market, money and insurance.

Researchers training in Hawaii to simulate Mars mission

Scientists will mix biology and geology this month inside Hawaii Volcanoes National Park as they help NASA get ready for an eventual manned mission to Mars.

The researchers will hike around Mauna Ulu to practice collecting rock samples as they would on the Red Planet.

The purpose is to develop protocols that would be used on a real Mars mission to identify and protect samples that could host life.

One of the concerns is contamination of rocks that might be home to living bacteria, said John Hamilton, an astronomy faculty member at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. “Really, the whole reason of going to Mars is to see if there’s life there,” he said. “There’s a lot of great geology. But are we alone?” The project is known as BASALT — or Biologic Analog Science Associated with Lava Terrains. Hamilton said NASA selected Hawaii, along with the Snake River plain in Idaho, as research sites because they both host volcanic terrain similar to Mars.

The NASA grant is administered through the University of Hawaii-Hilo. The Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems also is a partner. Hamilton said no spacesuits will be used with this project, though a “mission control” is being set up at Kilauea Military Camp. As many as 20 UH-Hilo students will assist the team.

(Source: *The Miami Herald*)



NASA’s mighty morphing wings make for more efficient flying

Humans may build aircraft that fly higher and faster than any bird, but they haven’t yet matched the elegance of nature’s aviators. Where the animals can go from dive to swoop to glide with a flick of the wing, planes rely on clunky, complicated machinery to slow down, turn, or change their angle of flight.

Now, engineers with NASA and MIT believe they can match that avian flexibility with a new kind of shape-shifting wing that twists and morphs, rendering today’s flaps, ailerons, and winglets obsolete. If it works, the system could make aircraft smoother, quieter, and more efficient.

The materials scientists ditched the conventional system — using millions of different bits of metal, composites, and plastics to make a wing — for just eight basic elements. Those resemble kids’ building blocks, but are black, slightly squishy, and made of carbon fiber.

Each of the eight subunits has a different stiffness, so placing the blocks in a specific pattern gives each wing a ‘tunable’ flexibility. Just two small motors are enough to twist the entire wing, adjusting the way it cuts through the air.

“One of the things that we’ve been able to show is that this building block approach can actually achieve better strength and stiffness, at very low weights, than any other material that we build with,” says NASA’s Kenny Cheung, one of the leaders of the project.

Better yet, when the team put the wings onto a dummy plane body and threw it into the wind tunnel at NASA’s Langley Research Center in Virginia, the mock aircraft flashed some terrific aerodynamics.

(Source: *wired.com*)

Planetary Resources and Luxembourg plan to launch an asteroid-mining mission by 2020

What’s the 21st-century equivalent of the Gold Rush? Why, the Asteroid Rush, of course. On Thursday, asteroid-mining company Planetary Resources, Inc. announced the finalization of a 25 million euro agreement to mine asteroids.

What’s the 21st-century equivalent of the Gold Rush? Why, the Asteroid Rush, of course. On Thursday, asteroid-mining company Planetary Resources, Inc. announced the finalization of a 25 million euro financing agreement, which will aid in the ultimate goal of “launching the first commercial asteroid prospecting mission by 2020.”

Involved in the deal are the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the banking institution Société Nationale de Crédit et d’Investissement (SNCI), who have contributed 12 million euros and grants of 13 million euros, respectively. “We are excited in welcoming the Grand Duchy as a partner and an investor. Just as the country’s vision and initiative propelled the satellite communications industry through its public-private partnerships, this funding and support will fast-track our business — advancing and building upon our substantial accomplishments,” said Chris Lewicki, president and CEO of Planetary Resources, Inc.

For its part, Luxembourg seems thrilled to be partaking in such a modern enterprise, with Étienne Schneider, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy, noting, “The Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg becoming a shareholder in Planetary Resources seals our partnership and lays the ground of the principles of our cooperation in the years to come, while demonstrating the Government’s strong commitment to support the national space sector by attracting innovative activities in space resource utilization and other related areas.”

(Source: *Digital Trends*)

Ban urges governments, businesses and citizens around the world to prioritize environmental care

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his message on the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict, 6 November 2016, urged governments, businesses and citizens around the world to prioritize environmental care and the sustainable management of natural resources for preventing conflict, building peace and promoting lasting prosperity.

The full text of his message reads:

This year, the world began implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With 17 universal and interdependent Sustainable Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda is a transformational blueprint for peace, prosperity and dignity for all on a healthy planet. To achieve this vision, we must recognize that we have a duty of care towards the environment in peacetime and during war.

Poor governance of the environment and natural resources can contribute to the outbreak of conflict. It can fuel and finance existing conflicts and it can increase the risk of relapse. Conversely, there are many examples of natural resources serving as catalysts for peaceful cooperation, confidence-building and poverty reduction.

In the aftermath of violent conflict, natural resources, such as land, timber, minerals, oil and gas, are often the primary assets that governments need to support livelihoods and economic recovery. How governments manage these resources can fundamentally alter the course of post-conflict peacebuilding. That is why it is so important that we work together to combat environmental crime, end the illegal exploitation of natural resources, improve transparency, share benefits more equitably and encourage the participation of women, indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups in decision-making.

The 2030 Agenda explicitly recognizes that "sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security; and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development." That is why, earlier this year, all 193 Member States of the United Nations Environment Assembly adopted a resolution committing to protect the environment in areas affected by armed conflict. At the same time, the United Nations International Law Commission is currently reviewing the international legal framework for protecting the environment before, during and after armed conflict. It aims to establish guidelines that can better support environmental preservation, particularly in protected areas and environmentally sensitive sites, such as drinking water aquifers, which are of critical environmental and cultural importance and can be severely affected by warfare.

(Source: UNIC)

Agriculture ministry bans exploitation of endangered northern forests

ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN — Iranian Agriculture Minister Mahmoud Hojjati has issued an order, urging the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization to stop the exploitation of endangered northern forests.

In a letter to Khodakaram Jalali, the director of the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization, Hojjati called for a halt to the exploitation of northern forests for commercial and industrial purposes at the earliest opportunity, ILNA reported on Friday.

Industrial and commercial exploitations of northern forests either permitted or not would be halted within the framework of a short-term program, Hojjati noted in his letter, adding, the cabinet banned all industrial exploitations from northern forests with the exception of broken branches, fallen or damaged trees in January 2014.

Building any new roads in the northern forests is prohibited by the law and the budget allotted to the roads maintenance must be spent on the forests preservation plans, he added.



This can be considered as one of the best decisions made by the current administration to protect the invaluable

northern forests.

It is worth mentioning that in June 2015 the government also brought a bill before Majlis (Iranian parliament) asking for a 10-year interval for any forests ex-

ploitations.

Chief of Iran's Department of Environment (DOE) Masoumeh Ebtekar has earlier urged all those active in the wood industry to shift from logging to wood import in order to move toward sustainable development.

The CEO of Iran's forestry society Hadi Kiadaliri has also said that it is important to take measures to help this program carry on and succeed such as allocating budget and easing importing regulations.

Kiadaliri believes that logging is only part of the problem and over grazing also plays a significant role in ruining the jungles.

"What we should do is to change the attitudes towards forests as so far they were treated like economic resources while they are great treasures which are shrinking gradually," he suggested.

Based on the figures revealed by the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization some one million hectares of forests have been cut down and destroyed over past 30 to 40 years.

Zaitunia vahabzadehi, a real Persian tale

By Farnaz Heidari

Each known species on the Earth has a specific name which is called the "scientific name" of that species. Scientific names normally have two parts and in some cases, three. These names are considered as common points which allow scientists or even public throughout the world to talk precisely about their determined species of plants or animals.

Zaitunia vahabzadehi is a recently discovered species of the genus *Zaitunia* from Iran that was described by Alireza Zamani, a young M.Sc. student of Animal Biostatistics from University of Tehran and Dr. Yuri M. Marusik from Institute for Biological Problems of the North RAS, Magadan, Russia. As in all scientific names, this one is also made up of a "generic name" or "generic epithet" which is *Zaitunia*, and "specific name" or "specific epithet", which is *vahabzadehi*.



Zaitunia vahabzadehi Zamani & Marusik, 2016



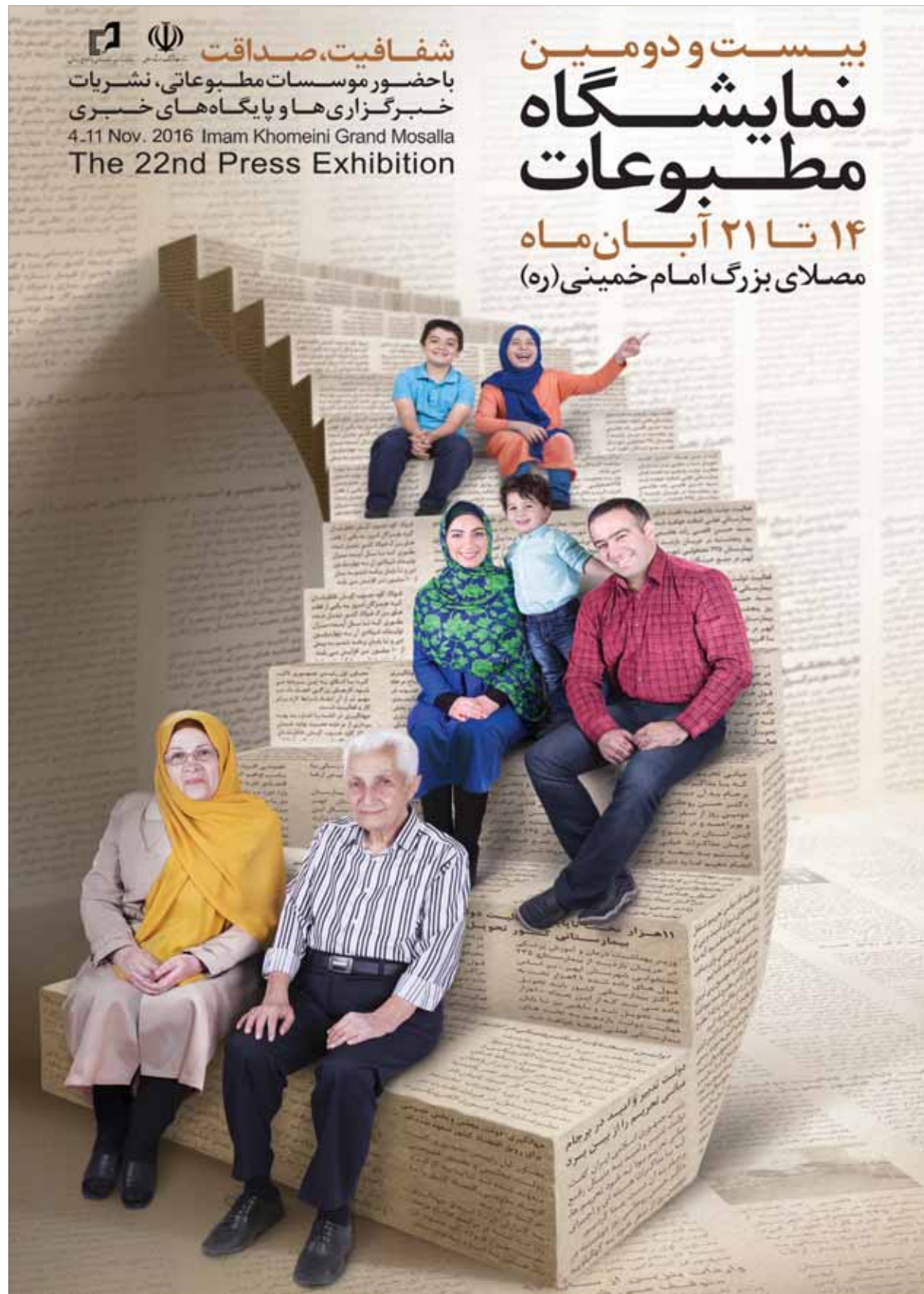
International rules have prohibited the usage of one name for more than once; though this does sometimes happen. Scientific naming is a much formalized process

and there are many rules that must be followed. One would have to follow the rules of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (<http://iczn.org>).

Why the scientific name of a species would change?

There are only a few reasons for scientists to change the scientific name of a species. The most important are: sometimes, it is discovered that a species was identified with a different name earlier in time than the name that is commonly in use. In such cases, they revert it to the earlier name. In other cases, it is discovered that the genetics of a subspecies or species is sufficiently different that a new or different subspecies is identified. In such cases, the original group would normally retain the original name and the newly discovered group would become the new subspecies or species. The other reason for a change in the name might be a mistake of some sort, but this is rather uncommon.

→13



Intl. Energy Globe Foundation Certificate Awarded to Isfahan WWCO



With the completion of construction operation of sewage and wastewater installations in cities of *Mobarakeh and Lenjan* in exchange for allocation of wastewater in limited timespan to *Esfahan's Mobarakeh Steel Company* (implementation of a plan to collect wastewater in Iran's central plateau as privately-funded project), Isfahan Water and Wastewater Company (**WWCO**) managed to receive International Energy Foundation Certificate as green project.

Given the above issue, the company was nominated to receive International Energy Foundation Award and paved its way for the next stage.

Deputy Managing Director of Isfahan Water and Wastewater Company for Engineering and Development Affairs Eng. Mohsen Bisheh announced the above statement and said: "International Energy Award is the most prestigious and recognized environmental award in the world which belongs to the subjects including land, energy, climate and development."

Identifying the projects with accurate and more economical use of natural resources and application of substituted energy resources have been considered as the main aim behind granting this award, he said, adding: "The first International Energy Award was held in 2000 at the initiative taken by Austria, so that more than 1,800 projects from 177 world countries are sent to the relevant secretariat annually."

It should be noted that **Green Project Award** is designed according to the **"EAST"** logic in line with the necessity of identifying countries' successful projects

which have had economic, social, environmental and technical impacts.

Honoring successful projects of countries in national and international levels and also promoting public self-confidence have been cited as the main aim of **Green Project Award**, he stressed.

In current Iranian calendar year in 1395 (started March 20, 2016) and in 9th year of evaluation, Buyback Project of the company on the construction operation of wastewater installations in the cities of *Lenjan and Mobarakeh* was nominated to compete in winning Intl. Energy Award, he said, adding: "Assessment procedures were done by assessors of Europe Green Society in July 2016 under the strict supervision of Mr. **Maxim Gerther** as representative of Global Energy Foundation."

The aforementioned project has been studied in all environmental, technical and socioeconomic fields, the official opined.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he said: "This award was granted by Wolfgang Newman President of Global Energy Foundation to the representative of Isfahan Province WWCO in the presence of Eng. Daemi Deputy Ministry of Energy for Planning and Economic Affairs, Austrian Deputy Minister of Economy and Higher Education, Ambassador of Iran to Austria and Chairman of Austrian Chamber of Commerce."

It should be noted that representatives of Europe Green Management Society, industrialists and a great number of Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) also attended the award-granting ceremony.

Security hustles Trump from stage after protester displays sign

Republican Donald Trump was rushed off stage by security agents at a rally in Reno, Nevada, on Saturday night after a false alarm as someone in the crowd shouted "gun" during scuffles with a man who held up a 'Republicans against Trump' sign.

The incident occurred as Trump and Democratic rival Hillary Clinton crisscrossed the United States a late push to win over undecided voters and make sure supporters turn out enthusiastically on Election Day.

Two security agents seized Trump by the shoulders and hustled him backstage as police officers swarmed over a man in the front of the crowd and held him down and searched him before escorting him away with his hands behind his back.

Trump, seemingly unruffled, returned to the stage and continued his speech after a short time, saying "Nobody said it was going to be easy for us" and adding "We will never be stopped."

After being released, the man who was apprehended told CBS News Reno affiliate KTVN-2 that he was a Republican supporter who attended the rally to express his opposition to Trump.

"I came here with this sign expecting boos ... But it was just a sign," Austyn Crites said.

Crites said when he took it out, the crowd began to attack him, choking and beating him before "someone yelled about a gun."

After being held for a few hours' questioning and security and background checks, Crites said he was released, and that the police "did their job."

Crites said he wanted to contrast President Barack Obama's reaction to a protester during a rally a few days ago, in which he urged the crowd to respect the protester, with Trump's, saying he wanted "people to understand" the difference.

"I have nothing against Trump supporters," Crites told the station. "We are all registered Republicans and support many of the same candidates for local offices. I have serious concern against Trump," he added.

The Secret Service confirmed that the incident erupted when an unidentified individual in front of the stage shouted "gun."

"Secret Service agents and Reno Police Officers immediately apprehended



the subject. Upon a thorough search of the subject and the surrounding area, no weapon was found," the Secret Service said in a statement.

The incident began when Trump noticed what he considered a heckler. Seconds later people near the stage began pointing at someone in the crowd near the front, and agents took Trump away.

In a statement, Trump thanked the Secret Service, Reno and Nevada law enforcement for "their fast and professional response."

Meantime, in Philadelphia, pop singer Katy Perry performed at a Clinton rally, the latest in a string of celebrity appearances aimed at getting out the vote among millennials.

"When your kids and grandkids ask you what you did in 2016, when it was all on the line, I want you be able to say you voted for a better, stronger, America," Clinton said.

Opinion polls show Clinton still holds advantages in states that could be critical in deciding the election. But her lead has narrowed after a revelation a week ago that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was looking into a new trove of emails as part of its probe into her handling of classified information while she was secretary of state.

A McClatchy-Marist opinion poll released on Saturday of voters nationwide showed Clinton leading by 1 percentage

point compared to 6 percentage points in September.

A Reuters/Ipsos tracking poll on Saturday showed Clinton ahead by 4 percentage points nationally compared to 5 points on Friday, while an ABC News-Washington Post tracking poll had Clinton ahead by 48 to 43 percent.

■ Competing for Florida votes

Both candidates spent time in Florida, considered one of the most hotly contested states. The 2000 presidential election was decided in Florida after a dispute over votes and recounting of ballots went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of Republican George W. Bush over Democrat Al Gore.

The Real Clear Politics average of Florida opinion polls found Clinton with a lead of about 1 percentage point - indicating the race there is a virtual tie.

Trump spoke at a rally on Saturday morning in Tampa, Florida, where he continued to criticize Clinton for supporting the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, in the wake of an announcement that premiums are going to rise next year.

Shortly before Clinton took the stage in Pembroke Pines, Florida, rain poured down. People in the crowd waiting for Clinton at the outdoor rally remained in place, taking out umbrellas and fashioning garbage bags into head coverings.

"I'm thrilled to be here and boy is

this a hardy group, rain or shine you are ready," Clinton said, her voice cracking with hoarseness.

She cut her speech short as she became soaked in rain, saying, "I don't think I need to tell you all of the wrong things about Donald Trump."

At the JFK library in Hialeah, Florida, people lined up outside for early voting. Nearby, supporters of both candidates waved signs and shouted slogans, urging passing drivers to honk their horns.

"We want someone to come in and clean house," said Cuban-American Ariel Martinez, 42, a Trump supporter.

Early voting began in September and the data firm Catalyst estimates more than 30 million ballots have been cast in 38 states. There are an estimated 225.8 million eligible U.S. voters. Saturday was the final day for early voting in many Florida counties.

■ Changes in plans

Trump and Clinton campaigns adjusted travel schedules for the next two days to states where they saw opportunity.

Trump told the crowd in Tampa that there would be a campaign event in Minnesota this weekend, although one had not previously been scheduled. Minnesota has not voted for a Republican since 1984. His campaign confirmed a rally scheduled for Wisconsin on Sunday has been cancelled.

Clinton started the day by stopping by the West Miami Community Center, a Cuban American neighbourhood, with telenovela star Jencarlos Canela, a Miami native of Cuban descent.

She then visited her campaign's office in Little Haiti where there is a large concentration of Haitian-American residents. Clinton was joined by Sybrina Fulton, the mother of Trayvon Martin, the unarmed black teenager who was shot dead in 2012 by a Sanford, Florida neighbourhood watchman, George Zimmerman.

While Trump prefers large-scale rallies, Clinton has filled her campaign schedule with targeted appearances meant to court voters in specific demographics. Cuban voters have historically favoured Republicans, but younger generations have shifted toward Democratic Party candidates.

Lebanese president vows to build a strong nation

1→ "Our hopes are high and there's will," he said.

"God, Lebanon and Aoun only," the crowd roared.

Aoun's supporters said they were delighted over his election, and vowed to stand by him until the end.

"We have met in this arena before, during difficult times ... we lost martyrs and others went missing ... but we will continue on the path and build the future," said Aoun, flanked by six of his most loyal men.

A "major international game triumphed in the past and allowed non-Lebanese troops to storm our country (26 years ago) ... we lost the game but they didn't crush us."

"We continued a [peaceful] struggle in exile for 15 years," Aoun continued. "No one managed to suppress us, because

freedom and dignity are derived from our basic values."

The atmosphere on Sunday couldn't have been more different from when a Syrian military assault forced Aoun to flee Baabda Palace 26 years ago over his objection to the Taif Accord, which ended the 1975-90 Civil War. Aoun went into self-imposed exile in France in 1991 and returned to Lebanon in 2005.

The rally "was not a familiar scene," Presidential spokesman Rafic Shalala told Al-Jadeed.

"This is the first time in the tenure of a [Lebanese] president that the [palace] gates are open for people to express their support without having any fears," Shalala said.

He pointed out that security measures were not strict, but correct, as President Aoun had demanded that security forces facilitate the arrival of people.



An individual held a large banner with the portraits of Aoun, Prime Minister-designate Saad Hariri and Hezbollah Chief Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah, a rare

image of solidarity between the country's main leaders who managed to end the political deadlock that prevented the election of a president.

Security forces were seen confiscating Free Patriotic Movement flags, under orders from Aoun that people should only carry Lebanon's national flag.

"The road ahead of us is long ... we are on the steps towards building a real state ... (which) we will not be able to achieve without the people," Foreign Minister and Aoun's son-in-law Gebran Bassil told reporters.

The FPM had called on its supporters in a statement to take part in the rallies en masse.

Aoun, the FPM founder, succeeded former President Michel Suleiman after a vacuum of more than two years.

(Source: The Daily star)

I doubt if Trump has thought about Iran for more than 10 minutes: Columbia University professor

1→ A: I think Clinton will win, and the tape and subsequent accusations hurt Trump among those who already had grave doubts about him.

Q: Why did Trump remain a competitor despite scandals surrounding him? And basically what groups are going to vote for him?

A: His strength surprised most observers--myself included. Some of his current support is from traditional Republicans who will vote for anyone of that party.

Additional support is from those, largely white males without a college education, who believe the system has treated them unfairly and that the country they know and love is being stolen from them. And a third, overlapping, group believes that Washington is broken and isolated from the country and that anything that drastically shakes things up will lead to an improvement.

Q: Why does Trump blame the media for a coordinated action against himself?

A: I think it has accurately reflected his character, often using his own words and pointing to his behavior.

Q: Among the two candidates which one is more aggressive toward Iran?

A: I doubt if Trump has thought about Iran for more than 10 minutes. He merely believes that he is the only one that can make a "good deal." I suspect that Hillary would continue the same basic policy as Obama, but might not try as hard to relax some of the sanctions.

Zaitunia vahabzadehi, a real Persian tale

12→ The change of the scientific names is because scientists understand more about their relationships with other species. For example, Arctic fox were called *Alopex lagopus* for many decades and recently have been moved to the genus *Vulpes* with the current name *Vulpes lagopus*. This was done because it was discovered that the Arctic fox was more closely related to the red fox *Vulpes vulpes*. The change of a scientific can happen and actually is happening a lot these days, especially because a lot of new insights about species are being revealed through the genetics.

■ Unique because of science

But scientific naming routinely is unique. For example, if *Zaitunia*, a genus

of spiders in the family Filistatidae, has a species whose name is *Zaitunia vahabzadehi* no other animal species can be given the same name. So, if you are a Persian scientist studying relatives of *Zaitunia* and you want to discuss about it with a Finnish researcher, you both use the scientific name and know exactly what the other one is talking about.

Filistatidae are well known in our country because of many taxonomical surveys that have been carried out by scientists such as Paolo Brignoli, Alireza Zamani, Omid Mirshamsi and Yuri M. Marusik.

Another species *Zaitunia akhanii* was also described last year by this team (Marusik and Zamani). As you can see, *Zaitunia vahabzadehi* and *Zaitunia*

akhanii both share the same generic epithet and this indicates that they are all thought to be more closely related to each other than to any other non-*Zaitunia* species of Filistatidae.

Both specific epithets adopted by the scientific team in the honor of two persons who had great effects on the Environment Field in Iran.

Iranian ecologist, Hossein Vahabzadeh is admired by his colleagues and students for many reasons: He has taught ecology and environmental science more than 40 years in various universities of Iran, and has many magnificent books in his field too. Vahabzadeh has also established the first generation of "Nature Schools" in Iran as a primary practical learning and

creativity school.

The other species, *Zaitunia akhanii*, was appointed to Dr. Hossein Akhani, Associate Professor at the Department of Botany, University of Tehran. Akhani is a pioneer Iranian scientist who is hoping to revitalize the Lake Urmia, once one of the world's largest brine shrimp habitats and now considered as a water body which is trapped in the extinction vortex. Akhani, as a biologist and conservationist has published many books and articles and also has collected a total number of ca. 18000 specimens from most parts of Iran and some countries in SW Asia and Europe. Many environmentalists admired him because of his tireless efforts for natural environments of Iran.

Syrian rebels announce offensive to retake Raqqa

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) has declared its intention to launch an assault on ISIL terrorist group-held Raqqa. The U.S.-backed Syria Democratic Forces (SDF), an alliance of Kurdish and Arab armed groups, first announced on Sunday that a campaign to retake Raqqa would begin within hours, with U.S. forces providing air cover. Soon afterwards, it said that the operation, called Euphrates Anger, had begun.

In the press conference in Ayn Issa, northern Syria, it was announced that rebel fighters would "continue [their offensive] until all objectives are met, namely, seizing and toppling the capital of ISIL." "On this occasion, we call on the international community and regional forces to coordinate and take part in the operation to exterminate ISIL," the SDF said before announcing the U.S. would offer air support in the offensive.

"We also call on international humanitarian and relief agencies to perform their duties for the people in Raqqa after the city has been liberated."

The fighters called on civilians to stay away from areas in which ISIL fighters are known to be, and to try to run to "liberated" areas of the country.

The announcement came as the Iraqi government and Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga forces, with the help of the U.S.-backed coalition, continue a bloody battle in Iraq to retake Mosul.

■ Regional forces

Al Jazeera's Mohammed Adow, reporting from Gaziantep on Turkey's border with Syria, said although the SDF called on international forces to assist the offensive, it has made it clear it does not want Turkish military involvement. "Who will participate with the SDF [in the assault on Raqqa] remains to be seen," he said before adding that the Turkish military has been weary of the mainly Kurdish SDF, preferring to ally with the Free Syria Army (FSA) instead. Andreas Krieg, a researcher at the Near East Centre for Security and Strategy at Kings College London, told Al Jazeera that "Turkey did not want the YPG [Kurdish People's Protection Units] or the SDF to take more control of land [in Syria], which is why their military got involved there in the first place."

Krieg added that rebel forces were 40 to 50km outside Raqqa, and there were many towns and villages along the way.

"It is unlikely that the SDF would be able to fight this battle alone," Krieg added. "But it remains to be seen who, whether the FSA, Syrian government forces, or any international forces, will participate."

■ Militants kills 74 Syrians in 8 days

Dozens of civilians have lost their lives since foreign-sponsored Takfiri militants launched an offensive against the government-held part of the Syrian city of Aleppo more than a week ago, a Britain-based monitoring group says.

The so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said that 74 civilians, including 25 children, have been killed since Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, previously known as al-Nusra Front, and so-called Free Syrian Army militants launched counter-attacks against government soldiers and their allied forces to break a months-long siege on the eastern part of Aleppo, located some 355 kilometers north of the capital, Damascus, on October 28.

The group went on to say that three civilians were also killed in the militant-held eastern Aleppo during the mentioned period.

(Source: agencies)

The October 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks revisited

1→ Due to the obvious lack of any effective Lebanese defense to counter the Israeli juggernaut, Iran sent a contingent of military advisors to train resistance fighters in the Bekaa valley in 1982. Many of these individuals, among them Hajj Imad Mughniyah, later went on to become the cadre of Hezbollah.

An example of this western propaganda, written by former CIA operative Robert Baer, shows the typical, not-so-subtle attempt to implicate both Iran and Hezbollah. Baer writes, "Though there's no conclusive evidence for it, Mughniyah may have been at the center of the most notorious terrorist acts of the 1980s: the April 1983 bombing of the U.S. embassy in Beirut and the October 1983 Marine barracks bombing there." Previously, Baer had stated unequivocally that Iran "bombed the U.S. embassy in Beirut in 1983, and bombed the U.S. Marine barracks there the same year" without presenting any substantiating evidence for these statements.

Certainly, Hezbollah itself could not have been responsible for the bombings since it was not organized operationally until mid-1985, some two years later, and Iran's foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati explicitly denied any involvement on the part of the Islamic Republic. While it is arguable that Hezbollah took its form over the 1980s with input from Iran, even some western scholars candidly admit there is no clear evidence of a connection between Iran and these bombings. Nevertheless, Iran remains condemned in the U.S. court of opinion to this day.

U.S. president Ronald Reagan understood the message and withdrew the American occupying force from Lebanon. Justifying his commander's actions, Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Gen. John Vessey explained, "It is beneath our dignity to retaliate against the terrorists who blew up the Marine barracks." And in regards to Hajj Imad Mughniyah, we will never know whether he personally was involved in any way with the Beirut bombings in 1983. On February 12, 2008, he was killed by a car bomb, which many suspect was in actuality a Zionist covert operation.

Boyd remembers Braveheart, Gazza & Wembley woe

It is the oldest rivalry in international football, and whenever and wherever Scotland and England do battle, the encounter is never trivial. The summer of 1996, though, witnessed a meeting laden with extra significance.

That the match took place at a major tournament – the first between these neighbouring nations to do so – provided some of the added magnitude. But there was also an emotional element to the frenzied-pre-match build-up that owed more to the silver screen than to UEFA EURO 96.



It was, after all, against the backdrop of Braveheart – the box-office hit about William Wallace, hero of Scotland's First War of Independence against the English – that the game took place. The Mel Gibson movie had dominated the Oscars ceremony just a couple of months before and, in Scotland, had whipped up passions ahead of facing 'the auld enemy'.

"The build-up was huge," recalled Tom Boyd, a Scotland stalwart of that period. "It had

been seven or eight years since we'd last played England and everyone was really looking forward to it. Even with the wider tournament going on, that was the game everyone seemed to be talking about. Given the backdrop – with Braveheart having put the whole Scotland-England thing centre stage – it seemed to capture the world's imagination.

"Craig Brown (Scotland's then manager) actually took the whole squad to see Braveheart at a special screening beforehand to get us riled up. Sadly, the outcome at Wembley was the same as it had been in the film – the Scots ended up losing! At least we weren't hung, drawn and quartered (the grisly fate that befell Wallace). Then again, I think a few of our supporters were ready to do that to Gary McAllister after he missed the penalty..."

McAllister's spot kick, saved by David Seaman at 1-0 at a time when the Scots were dominating, would come to be seen as the game's turning point. Moments later, a rejuvenated England surged to the other end of the park and sealed a 2-0 victory thanks to a player Boyd knew only too well. Paul Gascoigne was, after all, someone the Celtic defender had come up against on several occasions in Old Firm derbies, and this did not serve to make the seemingly endless replays any less painful.

"I must have seen that goal about a hundred times," he lamented. "It's a superb bit of skill, there's no denying that, and with Gazza playing at Rangers back then we all knew what he was capable of. The ironic thing is that he was about to be subbed. He didn't really have the legs to last 90 minutes at that time and we were on top in midfield, so [Terry] Venables had the change ready to go. But Gascoigne could produce moments like that, and obviously that's now what people remember the game for.

"From a neutral's point of view, it was a brilliant match. Unfortunately for us we ended up on the receiving end of a very unfortunate defeat, and we were all devastated. It's not nice to look back on even now because that defeat ended up costing us. We'd drawn with Holland and went on to beat Switzerland, and only went out on goal difference by a single goal to the Dutch in the end. We could have beaten England too. We were certainly in the ascendancy around the time of the penalty. If that goes in, there was only going to be one winner. But seeing it saved took the wind out of our sails and there was no way back for us after Gazza's goal."

■ Twenty years of hurt

Nor would there ever be, for Boyd at least, a shot at redemption in this fixture. Despite winning 72 caps, that EURO 96 meeting would – to his continued regret – prove to be his one and only appearance against England. It will, therefore, be with some envy that he watches Gordon Strachan's team walk out at the revamped Wembley on Friday amid the cheers and jeers of a 90,000-strong crowd.

The current squad would, in turn, readily swap that privilege for the three major tournaments, including the 1998 FIFA World Cup, in which the former Celtic and Chelsea defender participated. While Scotland's involvement in such competitions was at that stage almost for granted – by France 1998, they had qualified for six of the seven most recent World Cups – it has been a very different story in the years since. By the time Russia 2018 rolls around, two decades will have passed since the Scots last took part in one of the game's big events, and recent results – a 1-1 home draw against Lithuania and 3-0 defeat away to Slovakia – do not hint at an imminent end to that drought.

A consequence of these recent woes is that, despite Scotland having fallen at the first hurdle in France 1998, that tournament – even Boyd's unfortunate own goal in a narrow opening-match defeat to Brazil – has come to be seen in a new and more positive light. Not that the goalscorer himself appreciates such wistful reminiscing.

"I wish that Brazil game had been wiped from the memory by now," he admitted. "But the lack of success since means that it's the last big tournament we can all look back to and talk about. Because of that, people talk about the match pretty fondly now. And, again, we played pretty well and were unlucky to lose.

"I would certainly never have thought back then that we'd still be waiting for another major tournament all these years later. Hopefully the run ends soon, and it looks to be getting easier in the EURO at least now with the added places. It's still very tough to qualify for the World Cup though, and the start we've made hasn't made things any easier. But I really do believe that Scotland, and the Scottish supporters in particular, enhance any competition they make it to, so hopefully the team can surprise us all by getting to Russia.

"I always feel we play better as underdogs, so who knows? If we can go down to Wembley and get a result against the auld enemy, we might just have a chance."

(Source: FIFA)

Aubameyang's four-goal apology



Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang plundered four goals in Borussia Dortmund's 5-2 thrashing of Hamburger SV on Matchday 10, moving level with 1. FC Köln's Anthony Modeste as the top scorer in the Bundesliga, and indeed all of Europe.

"I am really glad we won because there was a lot of pressure before the match because we had not won in the Bundesliga for so long," said the striker, whose four-goal salvo almost single-handedly ended Borussia Dortmund's four-game Bundesliga run without victory. With Hamburger SV legend Uwe Seeler in attendance to celebrate his 80th birthday, Aubameyang wasted little time in playing party-pooper, scoring a hat-trick inside 24 first-half minutes.

Seeler, scorer of 404 goals in 476 games for the Red Shorts and a FIFA World Cup runner up with West Germany in 1966, was serenaded before kick-off, but only four minutes had passed by the time the Gabon international dampened any further HSV celebrations.

After the opening goal – a tap-in after Rene Adler had parried Emre Mor's shot – Aubameyang made a beeline for his coach, Thomas Tuchel. "I apologised to him after my goal, and he told me that I should score two more goals and I said okay!" said a beaming Aubameyang in his post-match interview.

Although he scored 25 goals last season – the second-best return in the Bundesliga – Aubameyang was left out of the squad Dortmund's recent 1-0 win over Sporting Clube de Portugal in the UEFA Champions League for internal disciplinary reasons. The 27-year-old was keen to extend an olive branch after the win against HSV, though.

"I made a mistake and apologised to the coach and the whole team before the Sporting match," said Aubameyang. "I am really happy that I scored four goals today and helped the team. I do not want to risk my good relationship with the coach."

Perhaps assuaged by Aubameyang's first ever single-game four-goal haul,

Tuchel was also in the mood for rebuilding bridges.

"Four goals – that exceeds every expectation, even for a top striker," said Tuchel. "It's clear that we can't achieve any of our aims without Aubameyang. That is why it is fantastic to have such a player. He can make the difference in any situation."

Aubameyang left the pitch at the Volksparkstadion with the match ball tucked proudly under his arm. "I always keep the match ball when I score three goals," he said. "My son gets the ball as a gift."

As if sealing his third Bundesliga hat-trick was not enough, though, Aubameyang went on to grab his fourth goal in the 48th minutes, before teeing up Ousmane Dembele to make it 5-2 in the closing stages.

"I've never managed to score four goals in a game before," Aubameyang said. Not many have. The last Schwarzenberger player to manage the feat was current sporting director Michael Zorc, in a 4-2

win over Bayer Uerdingen back in 1988.

This victory came at the perfect time for BVB, whose last win in the Bundesliga was a 3-1 triumph over SC Freiburg on Matchday 5. Their next test after the international break is the visit of champions FC Bayern München.

"I heard that Bayern only drew 1-1, that's good," said Aubameyang. "Now we are only six points behind. We have a chance to make the title chase exciting again in the next game."

The man who pipped Aubameyang to the Torjägerkanone last season? Robert Lewandowski. Bayern come to the SIGNAL IDUNA PARK with their top scorer on seven goals, now four behind Aubameyang. The Poland captain never managed to score four in a game in his time at Dortmund, but BVB's current talisman respects the threat he poses.

"Lewa knows how to score goals. It's nice to come up against him again."

(Source: Bundesliga)

Ismael appointed full-time Wolfsburg coach



Valerien Ismael has been appointed as VfL Wolfsburg's coach on a full-time basis after a successful interim period at the Volkswagen Arena.

"We have analysed the situation together and come to the conclusion that Valerien Ismael is the right coach for VfL Wolfsburg," said sporting director Klaus Allofs. "Thorough examination of the other candidates showed that he is the best solution. We take this decision with real confidence."

Ismael, a Bundesliga champion as a player with SV Werder Bremen and FC

Bayern München, succeeded Dieter Hecking on an interim basis last month, and scored his first win on Saturday, with a Mario Gomez brace helping the Wolves to a 3-0 victory at SC Freiburg.

"I thank Klaus Allofs and all responsible for the confidence in my work and the chance to be able to continue working at this level," said Ismael, who has signed a contract until 2018. "I know that we still have much work to do, but I am convinced that the team will pull together 100 per cent and that we will succeed together."

(Source: Bundesliga)

Man United legend Eric Cantona wants Jose Mourinho to 'hang in there'



Manchester United legend Eric Cantona has urged Jose Mourinho to "hang in there" amid criticism over his start to life at Old Trafford.

Mourinho has won just eight of 16 matches so far and has started off worse than either predecessors David Moyes or Louis van Gaal, but Cantona insists that he must be patient.

"I understand your frustration," Cantona said in his role as 'Football Commissioner' for Eurosport.

"The Special One [Mourinho], the Swedish One [Zlatan Ibrahimovic], the

expensive one [Paul Pogba], the one with the hair transplant [Wayne Rooney]! All these ones they don't make a whole yet.

"But give them a little credit, football is not a f---ing science! Plus Mourinho's nemesis Pep [Guardiola] and Arsene [Wenger] are co-leading the Premiership [Premier League] so I strongly doubt Jose is going to give up.

"Hang in there Jose! Could be worse -- you could be coaching Sunderland!"

(Source: Soccernet)

Pekerman discusses Falcao return, Chile clash

Colombia coach Jose Pekerman has discussed Falcao and praised forthcoming opponents Chile. The 30-year-old Monaco striker has returned to the Cafeteros squad for the first time in over a year for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™ qualifiers at home to La Roja and away to Argentina.

"Falcao has always been a key player in the national team," said Pekerman. "Unfortunately his injury kept him out of the last World Cup. Now we're in another stage and, after a timeout, he is finding his best form.

"You have to start from bottom to top. Hopefully he can find his best form and realise his highest expectations."

Colombia entertain Chile in Barranquilla on Thursday, and Pekerman is expecting an entertaining game.

"Chile are one of the best national teams in the world," said the former Argentina coach. "They have won two



Copa Americas, which showed their high level. Now, in the World Cup preliminaries, they'll always be candidate to qualify.

"They're an efficient and experienced team. They've had, like all national teams, some ups and downs, but I think it will be a great match because Chile always put on a show."

Colombia are fourth in South American qualifying, behind Ecuador on goal difference, Uruguay by three points and leaders Brazil by four. Chile and Argentina are a point behind in fifth and sixth.

Colombia have won just one of their last seven meetings with Chile, with a James Rodriguez free-kick and a Falcao goal securing a 3-1 comeback victory in Santiago in Brazil 2014 qualifying.

(Source: FIFA)

All players have chance to play against Syria: Carlos Queiroz

T I S P O R T S Iran national team head coach Carlos Queiroz says that all invited players to Team Melli have chance to play against Syria in the 2018 World Cup qualifier.

Iran has been scheduled to face Syria on November 15 in Kuala Lumpur.

"We are trust in the players who are invited to the national team and all players have chances to play against Syria," Queiroz said.

"We are going to defeat Syria to take another step toward qualifying for the 2018 World Cup. The most important thing for us is winning three points," the Portuguese coach added.

Alireza Beiranvand and Vahid Amiri are injured and were absent in Persepolis match against Sanat Naft in the Iranian Professional League.

"Beiranvand will not travel to Malaysia with us but I hope Amiri can be ready for the match," he said. "Iran will hold a training camp in January and play a friendly match as well. We will give our young players a chance to play in the match", Queiroz added.

Team Melli, who has moved up to 27th in recently FIFA rankings, sits top of Group A with 10 points.

The top two in each group reach the 2018 finals with the two third-placed sides meeting over two legs for the chance to face a CONCACAF team in a final playoff for a ticket to Russia.



Esteghlal legend Pourheydari laid to rest

T I S P O R T S Esteghlal legend Mansour Pourheydari was laid to rest at Tehran's Behesht-Zahra cemetery on Sunday.

He passed away at age of 70 on Friday.

Pourheydari died after a one-year battle with lung disease in Tehran's Iranmehr Hospital.

He began his football career at the age of 17 in Daraei but was transferred to Taj (now Esteghlal) in 1965 and played as a right defender for 10 years and won the Asian Championship in 1970. Pourheydari also played for Iran national football team and made three caps for Team Melli. He announced his retirement in 1977.

He began his managerial career in 1980 as assistant coach to Abbas Razavi and Asghar Sharafi.

He was promoted as the club's head coach in 1983 after the resignation of Sharafi.

Pourheydari led Esteghlal to its second Asian trophy in 1991. The coach also coached Fajr Sepasi and Sanat Naft in Iranian football league.

Pourheydari became head coach of Iran national football team in 1998 and inspired the team to win the Asian Games in Bangkok.

Tehran Times staff express the deepest condolence on the sad demise of Pourheydari.

Iran fails to qualify for AFC U-19 Women's Championship



T I S P O R T S Iran was defeated against Vietnam 2-0 in the AFC U-19 Women's Championship qualification on Sunday.

The Iranian team had already tied with India 1-1 in the event in Group D.

Host Vietnam advanced to the 2017 AFC U-19 Women's Championship with two wins against India and Iran.

Australia and Uzbekistan also advanced to the competition.

The 2017 AFC U-19 Women's Championship will be held in China in August 2017.

The top four teams in the 2015 edition of the AFC U-19 Championship — champion Japan, North Korea, South Korea and China — have already received a direct qualification to the tournament.

Oil & Gaz comes 4th at Asian Men's Club League Handball



Iran's Oil & Gaz lost to Lakhwiya of Qatar 31-21 in the bronze medal match of the 19th Asian Men's Club League Handball.

Al Noor of Saudi Arabia also defeated El Jaish of Qatar in the final match and won the title.

Oil & Gaz was held to a 35-35 draw against Al Jazeera of the UAE in

its opening match. The team defeated Al Ahli of Jordan 26-23 and lost to El Jaish 37-28 in group stage.

The Iranian team also lost to Al Noor 35-26 in the semi-final.

The competition started on October 29 in Jordan and finished November 5.

(Source: Tasnim)

Inter Milan to announce new coach and management change in 48 hours

Inter Milan have released a statement confirming they will announce a new head coach in the next few days.

Inter sacked Frank de Boer on Monday evening and are reportedly closing on the appointment of former Lazio manager Stefano Pioli.

The club are also making a change in the boardroom and revealed that an announcement is forthcoming.

"FC Internazionale wishes to confirm that our new head coach will be announced in the next 48

hours," read a statement. "Various meetings have been held over the last few days as the club has sought to identify the right man to take the team forward.

"A change within the club's management structure is also due to be announced.

"In the meantime we are focusing all our attention on winning an important football match against Crotone this afternoon.

"Forza Inter!"

(Source: ESPN)



Iran takes world title in 2016 World Classic Bodybuilding Championships

Iranian national classic bodybuilding squad has been crowned champion in the 70th edition of the International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness (IFBB) Men's World Amateur Bodybuilding Championships & 11th edition of World Amateur Classic Bodybuilding Championships in Spain.

Iran finished at the top of the chart after picking up three gold, one silver, and one bronze medals at the tournament in the eastern Spanish city of Benidorm.

Seyyed Rouhollah Mirnourollahi claimed the first gold medal for the Islamic Republic of Iran in the up to 168-centimeter class. Mehdi Parvani brought home the second gold in the up to 171-centimeter division.



Mohammad Reza Jafari also snatched a bronze for Iran in the up to 180-centimeter category.

In the over 180-centimeter class, Kayvan Rezapour and Hesam Khosravi stood first and second respectively to pocket another gold medal and a silver for the Iranian delegation at the competitions.

The 70th edition of the IFBB Men's World Amateur Bodybuilding Championships & 11th edition of World Amateur Classic Bodybuilding Championships began in Benidorm, Spain, on November 3 and will finish on November 7, 2016.

The sports event has brought together a total of 235 world athletes from various continents.

(Source: PressTV)

Harry Kane spot-on to claim draw for Tottenham at Arsenal on return

In the end, both teams will look back on a compelling, fluctuating match with the sense that perhaps it might have gone their way with some better finishing. For Tottenham Hotspur, perhaps a fully firing Harry Kane might have accepted one of the chances he missed either side of his penalty, on his first start for seven weeks. Yet Arsenal will have their own regrets and were undoubtedly the more frustrated side after being unable to hold on to their first-half lead.

Both sides had spells of superiority and the speed and frequency at which the game swung from one end of the pitch to the other was one of the reasons why it became an absorbing spectacle. Tottenham have now gone seven games without a win in all competitions but they showed the kind of competitive courage that made them authentic title contenders last season. Mauricio Pochettino's side immediately look better with Kane back in the team although they also had to withstand some sustained pressure, particularly in that 20-minute spell in the first half when Arsenal took control and Kevin Wimmer's own goal gave the home side a 42nd-minute lead.

Arsenal will be aggrieved they could not build on that position but it was a spirited response from their opponents after the break and, if anything, the away team looked the more likely winners during the closing stages. Spurs were missing Dele Alli because of a knee injury he suffered in training on Saturday and they also lost Kyle Walker during the second half. Yet Arsenal never looked so dangerous in the second half against a side experimenting with a three-man central defence.

Pochettino was certainly taking a gamble by trying in such a key fixture an unorthodox 3-3-2-2 formation for the first time and there were periods of the first half when Theo Walcott and Alexis Sánchez were trying to get behind their opponents, with Mesut Özil always in close proximity, that it was not easy to remember the visitors had the best defensive figures in the league.

Alex Iwobi really ought to have given Arsenal the lead after the best passing exchange of the first half only to trundle his shot into the arms of Hugo Lloris with so little conviction it was tempting to question his big-game mentality. Iwobi later chose the wrong pass from another threatening break, promoting a rare show of anger from Özil, and Walcott almost scored a beauty with the rising shot he cracked high against Lloris's left post.

Tottenham did, however, have legitimate grievances about the opening goal, when Sánchez and Shkodran Mustafi had both strayed offside when Özil whipped in the free-kick that led to Wimmer heading the ball into his own net. Those two players were conceivably in Wimmer's eye line, perhaps leaving him momentarily fearful of being caught out of position. All that really can be said for certain is that it was a poor misjudgment on the part of a player making his first appearance in the Premier League this season.

Tottenham have won this fixture away from home only once in the last 23 years but there is another statistic that say Arsenal have not beaten them in the league in Pochettino's time.

Moussa Dembélé's switch to a slightly more deep-lying position was a subtle yet important change for the second half. Christian Eriksen became more influential and Son Heung-min was prominently involved. Dembélé still had the licence to roam forward and it was his run from right to left, eluding Francis Coquelin and then coming inside Nacho Monreal, that prompted Laurent Koscielny to make the challenge that led to the penalty. Kane put the ball down the middle and Spurs will also look back on that moment, five minutes from the end, when Eriksen's free-kick curled beyond everyone and hit a post.

(Source: Guardian)

Emre Can: Manchester United don't respect Bastian Schweinsteiger

Liverpool midfielder Emre Can has criticised Jose Mourinho's treatment of Bastian Schweinsteiger at Manchester United.

Schweinsteiger appears to have no future at Old Trafford following Mourinho's arrival in the summer. He was excluded from United's Europa League squad for the knockout stages and had been training away from the first team.

However, Schweinsteiger is now back in the first-team picture after Mourinho confirmed last week that the 32-year-old is back training at the Aon Training Complex.

"I know Schweinsteiger very well and I used to play with him," Can, a Germany international, said. "He's a very good guy and he's a legend. I don't know what happened there but I think they don't have too much respect for him. It's a pity because he's a very good guy. He's always somebody who worked hard and is always a gentleman.

"When I first came up to the first team [at Bayern Munich] he was the first one who came to me and said: 'If you need something come to me'.

"That was a big help. I was very thankful for that and it's something I'll never forget."

Meanwhile, Can has revealed that talks are progressing well with Liverpool over a new long-term contract.

The 22-year-old has 18 months remaining on his current deal which he signed when he moved to Anfield from Bayer Leverkusen in summer 2014.

Can missed the early part of this season due to an ankle injury but has since forced his way back into Jurgen Klopp's starting XI in recent weeks.

"Yes, the club have spoken to my agent," Can said regarding his contract negotiations. "The talks are going very good.

"I have one-and-a-half years left. I am still under contract and it is my agent's work [to sort it out]. I am very happy here at Liverpool!"

(Source: ESPN)



