

October 2016

Politics:

The deputy Director of Security within Iran's interior ministry [asked](#) Iranians to report any suspicious activities that took place in Ashura commemorations during the holy month of Muharram.

The chairman of the reformist Hope faction in the Iranian Parliament Mohammad Reza Aref [accused](#) conservatives of attempting to isolate reformists by making unfounded accusations.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei [attended](#) a graduation ceremony for army cadets in Tehran.

A group of Iranian parliamentarians [wrote](#) to the chief of the judiciary Ayatollah Amoli Larijani urging an investigation into an appeal court's decision to sentence Narges Mohammadi to 16 years in jail.

Supreme Leader Khamenei [announced](#) guidelines for next year's elections to the three main executive divisions after discussions with the Expediency Council. Judiciary chief Ayatollah Larijani [confirmed](#) that a committee will be formed to implement the guidelines.

An Iranian court [sentenced](#) six people, including two Iranian-American dual nationals, to 10 years in jail after finding the accused guilty of espionage and collaboration with the US government.

The Iranian Vice President for Women and Family Affairs Shahindokht Molaverdi [said](#) that her department would attempt to implement new projects on women's empowerment at the national level this year.

Russian's RIA news agency [reported](#) that Iran's order of Russian made S-300 surface-to-air missiles systems has been delivered.

Iranian parliamentarians submitted a bill that [would limit](#) the Guardian Council's ability to reject the qualifications of presidential and parliamentary election candidates.

International Relations:

The Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif [held talks](#) with the former Swedish Prime Minister Nils Daniel Carl Bildt in Tehran. They discussed international and regional issues, including the Syrian ceasefire.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) [warned](#) the Saudi Arabian navy that violating Iran's maritime boundaries would provoke an immediate response from Iran's armed forces.

President Hassan Rouhani traveled to Thailand to [participate](#) in the second Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) summit in Bangkok. During the summit, he [announced](#) that 'Iran seeks to play a more active role in transport networks in Asia and Europe.' Rouhani later met a Thai delegation in Bangkok, with Rouhani [declaring](#) that Thailand could act as a bridge between Iran and East Asia.

Foreign Minister Zarif [wrote](#) to the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to condemn the Saudi attack on a Yemeni funeral that killed more than 140 people.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Ghassemi [rejected](#) US claims that Iran had manufactured the missile used by Yemen's Houthi fighters to destroy an Emirati military vessel.

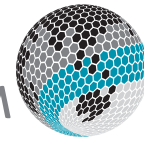
The Iranian interior minister Abodreza Rahmani-Fazli [met](#) with Azerbaijani's President Ilham Alyev in Baku, announcing that enhanced Iran-Azerbaijan cooperation could span fields including bilateral economics and regional security.

In a press conference following a meeting with the speaker of Kenya's national assembly Justin Muturi, the Iranian Parliamentary Speaker Ali Larijani [announced](#) that Iran and Kenya will enhance bilateral ties, including by cooperating closely in the fight against terrorism.

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Foreign Minister Zarif [canceled](#) his meeting with the German Vice Chancellor and Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy Sigmar Gabriel. Gabriel gave an interview to *Der Spiegel* shortly before his trip, in which he said that Iran must accept Israel's right to exist before it can establish normal relations with Germany. Nonetheless, Vice Chancellor Gabriel's visit, on which he was accompanied by more than 100 German businesspeople, was a success. Iran and Germany [signed](#) 10 joint cooperation agreements across fields including investment, finance, banking, gas, oil and ecology.

During his Southeast Asia trip, President Rouhani also [met](#) with officials from Vietnam and Thailand to express Iran's desire to expand cooperation with countries in the region.

In a sign of improving relations, Foreign Minister Zarif [made](#) an unscheduled stop in Turkey on his way home from New York to meet with the Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim.

Foreign Minister Zarif [participated](#) in the ministerial talks on Syria in Lausanne, Switzerland.

During a visit to Malaysia, Vice President Molaverdi [announced](#) that Iran is willing to extend its relationship with Malaysia to cooperate on women and family issues.

Economics:

Vodafone [announced](#) that it will work with Iran to provide internet services and improve Iran's IT infrastructure and mobile networks.

RighTel, a major Iranian telecommunications operator, [confirmed](#) that an international roaming deal had been made with the American telecommunications giant, AT&T.

President Rouhani [held](#) a telephone conversation with the Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro to discuss the need for oil producing countries to take action to increase oil prices on the international market.

OPEC [announced](#) that Iran's oil production reached a record of 3.5 million barrels per day over the last two months.

Iran's deputy foreign minister Abbas Araqchi [said](#) that negotiations with Airbus and Boeing continue, but Iran Air hopes to receive its first new purchase soon.

The Central Bank of Iran [informed](#) all Iranian banks that they will not longer face difficulties in providing dollar related services to Iranian nationals.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran Valiollah Seif [said](#) that Iran is not satisfied with western banks' level of cooperativeness in the wake of the nuclear deal.

The Central Bank of Iran [introduced](#) credits cards for the first time in Iran.

Iran [announced](#) that it is ready to increase its natural gas exports to Turkey to six million cubic meters per day.

NEW MESF PUBLICATIONS ON IRAN:

Shahram Akbarzadeh & James Barry (2016):
'State Identity in Iranian Foreign Policy,' *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 43, no. 4.
pp. 613-629. Available [here](#).

This article examines the role of corporate identity in Iran's foreign policy making. Drawing on interviews with Iranian stakeholders and an analysis of Iran's political developments, this article surveys the three key elements of Iranian nationalism that shape Iranian foreign policy: Iranism, Islam and Shi'ism.

Shahram Akbarzadeh (October 19, 2016):
'Australia as an honest broker in Iran-Saudi dispute,' *Australian Outlook*, Australian Institute of International Affairs. Available [here](#).

