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Dear subscribers

It is with regret to announce that due to financial constraints, this is the last issue of Iran News update. We thank you for your support and feedback over the past year. The first issue was released in April 2016. All past issues will remain available on the MESF archive: <http://www.mesf.org.au/iran-news-update/>

Politics:

Iranian lawmakers [issued](#) a statement condemning US President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. The letter stated that Trump's move is the "last nail in the coffin" of the Middle East peace process. In addition, dozens of Iranian lawmakers [strongly](#) urged all Muslim countries to cut their diplomatic relations with Israel and decrease their economic relations with the United States. Meanwhile in Tehran, [demonstrations](#) took place after Friday prayer to denounce the US decision.

Iran hosted the 31 International Islamic Unity Conference in Tehran. 520 dignitaries, ministers, scholars, university professors and representatives from scientific and cultural associations [attended](#) the conference.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani attended the [launch](#) of the first phase of Shahid Beheshti International Port in the city of Chabahar, southeast Iran.

Iranian intelligence forces [dismantled](#) one of the largest networks of banknote forgery in Kermanshah, western Iran.

Iranian lawmakers [approved](#) a bill that will allow membership of religious minorities in city and village councils.

Senior Iranian nuclear negotiator Abbas Araqchi [stated](#) that Iran's missile capabilities are for defence purposes and are non-negotiable.

Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei [pardoned](#) or commuted prison terms of 1,007 inmates. The move followed a request for amnesty by Iranian Judiciary Chief Ayatollah Sadeq Larijani.

International Relations:

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Hossein Jaber Ansari met with Mikhail Bogdanov Russian Deputy Foreign Minister and Special Presidential representative for the Middle East and Africa, in Moscow. They [discussed](#) peace resolution strategies for Syria.

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri attended a tripartite meeting with his Turkish and Russian counterparts. They discussed ways to [enhance](#) trilateral defence cooperation.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif met with Special Representative for the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan Tadamichi Yamamoto. Zarif [affirmed](#) that Iran is prepared to cooperate with the United Nations and all its affiliates to promote stability in Afghanistan.

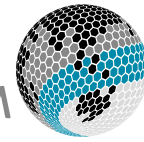
The Presidents of Iran, Russia and Turkey [held](#) a trilateral meeting in Sochi, Russia, to discuss the Syrian crisis.

Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani met with Speaker of Turkey's Grand National Assembly Ismail Kahraman in Istanbul, Turkey. Larijani applauded Iran, Turkey and Russia for their efforts against the Islamic State and [urged](#) for greater cooperation to counter threats against regional security.

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Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif met with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan in Yerevan, Armenia. Zarif [expressed](#) Iran's intentions to develop greater political and economic cooperation with Armenia.

Iran has expressed concern over the deteriorating health conditions of top Bahraini Shia cleric Sheikh Isa Qassim, who is currently under house. Iranian officials have urged international bodies to [intervene](#) and lift the siege of his house.

Iranian First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri attended a Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meeting in Sochi, Russia. Jahangiri [stated](#) that Iran is ready to improve cooperation with member states of SCO in order to play a greater role in promoting regional and international peace, stability, security and development.

The Foreign Ministers from the five Caspian Sea countries of Iran, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Russia and Kazakhstan held a meeting in Moscow, Russia. They [agreed](#) on all outstanding key issues regarding the sea's legal regime and plans to hold a joint drill in the strategic waters.

Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif met with British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson in Tehran. They [discussed](#) economic bilateral relations and the Iranian nuclear deal.

Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces for International and Foreign Relations Brigadier General Qadir Nezami met with Chinese Defence Minister Chang Wanquan in Beijing. Nezami stated that Iran should [increase](#) cooperation with China within the common interests, goals and security of both states.

Iranian President Rouhani met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the side-lines of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit in Istanbul. Rouhani [stressed](#) the importance of maintaining long-term cooperation with Turkey to bolster security in the region, with specific regards to Syria.

Economics:

Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani announced that Iran and Russia are [finalizing](#) new contracts to construct two atomic power plants in southern Iran.

Iran Navy Commander Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi announced that Iran's marine defence industry is now self-sufficient in [producing](#) marine equipment and hardware.

Vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Chen Yuan led a high ranking delegation in a visit to Tehran. Yuan met with the governor of the Central Bank of Iran Valiollah Seif to [discuss](#) banking issues. According to Iranian media, China is moving closer to eliminate the US dollar from Iranian-Chinese bilateral trade transactions.

Iran and Hungary [signed](#) a joint agreement to produce 1,000 buses in Iran.

Iran's private carrier company Mahan Air plans to [establish](#) a direct flight route between Tehran and Pakistan's northern city of Lahore.

Qatari Economy Minister Ahmed bin Jassim al Thani and Iranian Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade Mohammad Shariatmadari held a meeting in Iran. Iran stated that it had received a proposal from Qatar to [significantly](#) increase trade relations between the two countries.

Iranian Health Minister Hassan Ghazizadeh Hashemi [announced](#) that South Korea had agreed to finance the construction of three hospitals in Iran.

Iranian President Rouhani [presented](#) the budget bill for the next Iranian year, commencing in March 2018 to Iran's Parliament. Reports have emerged suggesting that dramatic changes may be implemented to a multiple-year costly subsidy reforms plan.

