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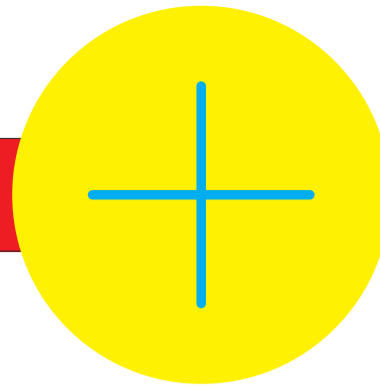
## Sailor rescued by Colombian navy after 24 days adrift



**THE GUARDIAN** - The Colombian navy has rescued a man from Dominica who says he survived 24 days adrift in the Caribbean on a sailboat by eating ketchup, garlic powder and seasoning cubes.

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# Tow-bafi, a celebrated handicraft from South Khorasan Province

Tow-bafi is the dominant handicraft of Khorashad village in Birjand, South Khorasan Province. The World Council of Handicrafts registered Khorashad as the global village of tow-bafi.

The most common product of tow-bafi is a towel. In fact, due to the softness and delicacy of tow-bafi fabrics and their high absorbability of moisture, this craft is also known as howleh-bafi, or the craft of making towels.

The primary material of this product is cotton yarn, which is used as the weft that is inserted between the warp. Then the weave is packed by a comb to complete the final step of the process, visitiran.ir reported.

In addition to cotton, silk, and wool, synthetic yarn such as acrylic is incorporated into this beautiful



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and valuable handwoven product. Tow-bafi is done using the traditional "chahar verdi" textile machine; the most important and notable characteristic of this handicraft is that all of the steps of the manufacturing process are done by

the hands and feet of the makers. To produce a tow-bafi product, the first step is to spin the cotton yarn by the machine and bobbin reel. Then the warp yarn is stretched over multiple wooden rods of the same size, which takes place in

an open space. Then the warps are twisted round a large and fixed rod of wood called "navard". A row is woven when the shuttle is passed through the warps. After each travel of shuttle, the dafeh that acts as a comb is moved forward and

backward to beat the yarn. There is an unlimited possibility for using colorful yarn, and a fascinating mixture of colors in margins and the background of the fabric can be achieved by the imagination of the weaver. Traditional dyeing and

herbal pigments are used to produce colorful yarn. Pomegranate skin, walnut skin, onion skin, "golrang" or safflower, orange, saffron thread, garlic and stone grind are some of the herbal sources of pigments. Other products of tow-ba-

fi are tablecloths, clothing and shawls. It should be mentioned that tow-bafi has a 300-year tradition in Iran, and was revived in 2004 by a group of women in Khorashad. The largest share of tow-bafi production belongs to this region.



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## Tehran, Yerevan sign sisterhood agreement



The mayors of Tehran and Yerevan signed a sisterhood agreement between the two capitals. The signing ceremony was held with the participation of Tehran Mayor Alireza Zakani, Yerevan Mayor Hrachya Sargsyan, and Armenian Ambassador Arsen Avagyan at Milad Tower Conference Hall, Mehr News Agency wrote. Zakani said, "One of the definitive policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran is establishing relations, cooperation and good neighborliness. Armenia also enjoys a special status in Iran, as we are keen to expand bilateral relations." The Tehran mayor further

added, "The relations between Iran and Armenia date back to hundreds of years ago, therefore, in the current situation." "Tehran Municipality has capabilities and needs; we can best provide our capabilities to Yerevan Municipality and use Armenia's capabilities to meet our needs," Zakani stressed. Yerevan's mayor, for his part, pointed to long-standing and deep-rooted Iran-Armenia relations and said, "We haven't fully used our capabilities and potentials that the two neighboring countries have." Sargsyan added that he paid a visit to the Tehran subway system and was impressed by the Irani-

an capital's metro. "For this reason, if possible, I request that a working group be sent to Armenia from Tehran Municipality. I think we can cooperate both in terms of new technologies and in relation to subway spare parts," the Armenian mayor said. He further voiced hope that the sisterhood agreement will lay the ground for more cooperation between the two municipalities. Armenian Ambassador Arsen Avagyan, for his part, said that the embassy will spare no effort to materialize the provisions of the agreement between Tehran and Yerevan municipalities.

## Paranormal activity is all in your head

**SCIENCE ALERT** - Night is naturally suited for paranormal activity, with less light and sound to limit the imagination.

While the relationship is still murky, new research shows an interesting link between paranormal beliefs and one of the most important night-time activities for us earthly beings: Sleep.

In a new study, researchers found subjective measures of poorer sleep quality were associated with stronger beliefs in ghosts and demons, the soul living on after death, an ability for people to communicate with the dead, near-death experiences as evidence



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of an afterlife, and aliens visiting Earth.

This reduced quality of sleep included lower sleep efficiency, longer sleep latency, shorter sleep duration, and increased insomnia symptoms, the study's authors report.

In addition to the self-reported measures of sleep quality, the researchers found the belief that

aliens have visited Earth is associated with isolated sleep paralysis and exploding head syndrome, a disorder characterized by the sensation of a loud noise or crashing sound inside a person's skull. Isolated sleep paralysis - in which a person is aware and alert, yet unable to move, without other symptoms of a sleep disorder like narcolepsy - was also associated with the belief that near-death experiences are evidence for life after death, the study found. "To the best of our knowledge, this is a novel finding worthy of further examination," the researchers write.



People watch books arranged for sale by vendors who sell them every Friday in Tehran's Enqelab Avenue.

FATEMEH AMUZAD/FARS

