

**Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh On Monday in an Interview Criticized Turkey's Lack of Cooperation With Iran on Having The Blasted Iran-Turkey Natural Gas Pipeline Repaired**

# IRAN NEWS

**Head of Iran's Health Ministry's Public Relations Office Said Yesterday That 107,713 People out of A Total of 137,724 Infected With the Coronavirus Have Recovered While So Far 7,451 Have Lost Their Lives**

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## Iran Will Not Need Oil Income in 5-10 Years

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iranian caretaker OPEC governor Amir Hossein Zamaninia says U.S. sanctions on Iran's oil industry have created an opportunity for the country to distance itself from routine crude incomes.

The Iranian Deputy Oil Minister, who took over his acting role after former Iranian OPEC governor Hossein Kazempour died earlier this month, said Iran would be totally free of reliance on oil revenues in the next five to 10 years.

"At the end of the day, it seems that in 5-10 years, Iran will find itself in a state where it will not much need its oil income," said Zamaninia in an interview with energy website Platts.

The Iranian diplomat admitted that illegal US sanctions have made it difficult for Iran to find customers for its oil shipments. However, he said the bans have forced Iran to adjust itself to a new economic situation.

"[The sanctions], however, have had a silver lining for the Iranian economy that is facing many challenges. It is gradually causing a structural adjustment to less lean on oil income," said Zamaninia. **See Page 7**

## Iran First Tanker in Venezuela to Deliver Much-Needed Gasoline



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The first of five tankers carrying Iranian gasoline to Venezuela has arrived in the Latin American country despite the U.S. threats.

"The ships of the sister Islamic Republic of Iran are in our exclusive economic zone," Venezuelan oil minister Tareck El Aissami wrote on Twitter.

His tweet came after the arrival of the first tanker, named Fortune, which was escorted by the Venezuelan armed forces after entering the country's waters.

The five tankers are reportedly carrying about 1.5 million barrels of gasoline.

The shipment comes amid tensions between Tehran and Washington, which has imposed sanctions on Venezuelan oil exports and Iran.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani on Saturday warned of "consequences" if the US stopped the ships from reaching their destination.

Meanwhile Venezuela's permanent representative to the UN has welcomed the arrival of Iranian tankers loaded with gasoline to the South American country's waters, urging U.S. President Donald Trump to avoid an act of aggression based on the "wrong advice" of warmongers.

In a series of tweets on Sunday, Samuel Moncada cited an open letter to Trump written by a group of 14 retired experts of the US intelligence community, who warned him against a military attack on the Venezuela-bound Iranian fuel tankers.

"The Iranian gasoline reaching Venezuela is a landmark in the struggle for sovereignty, independence and peace. Trump and his minions are thinking of a military attack against the tankers amidst the pandemic. His experts advise him otherwise," he wrote.

Moncada also enumerated the arguments provided by the experts against any "unnecessary adventure" by the US against Iranian vessels, saying they believe that "the act of war does not serve U.S. interests."

Any such attack could trigger "unpredictable responses" and lead to "unprecedented situations" beyond U.S. control, the Venezuelan envoy quoted the experts as saying.

"Warmongering Generals & advisers in Washington are playing with fire in a dangerous situation and exploiting Venezuelan extremists. They are seeking a war with Iran in the Middle East contrary to US interest. They've have attempted this many times in the past," Moncada wrote.

He further emphasized that Trump's threats will not weaken Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro but rather strengthen him and unify most of the nationals against aggression.

"In their long experience in defending the US, they do not understand how could attacking legal trade between two countries that do not pose a national threat serve their own interests. Venezuelans, meanwhile, want no war either, but dialogue," he wrote.

Moncada said, "Trump's policy thus far has been a failure and, even with the pandemic, it seems to have no chance of success in the near future. Avoiding a war resulting from the wrong advice of adventurers in Washington and Venezuela is the best option for the US."

Also on Sunday, the Iranian embassy in Caracas posted a video of the tanker arriving at Venezuelan waters. "The first Iranian tanker reached the Venezuelan coasts. Grateful to the Bolivarian Armed Forces for escorting them," it tweeted.

The first of five Iranian tankers carrying 1.53 million barrels of gasoline and alkylate reached Venezuelan waters late Saturday to ease the Latin American nation's fuel crunch.

## Iran Defense Readiness at Utmost Level

TEHRAN (MNA) - IRGC Aerospace Force Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh assured the Iranian nation that the country's defense readiness is at its utmost level in the history of the Islamic Revolution.

"Presently, the economy sector is the subject that all of us should pay specific attention to," he added in an interview on Sunday on the sidelines of Eid al-Fitr prayers.

He said the existing concerns about Iran's defense power are baseless and a plot planned by the enemies to distract and disturb the Iranian nation.

"Thank God Iran is powerful and the enemies are worried about this," he said.

Iranian Ministry of Defense [MoD] released a statement on May 23, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Liberation of Khoramshahr [Khordad 3], announcing that increasing the advanced power of the Islamic Republic of Iran is one of the winning strategies taken against the Global Arrogance.

"With closely and careful observation of developments in the global level and precise understanding of conspiracies of the arrogant power, we believe that progressive increasing power is the main strategy of the noble nation of Islamic Iran," he added.

## Iran Trade Undeterred by New Iraqi Import Tariffs

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iranian exporters say they are not worried by import bans and higher tariffs imposed in the semi-autonomous Kurdistan region in the neighboring Iraq, saying they have other customers to fill the gap.

Seyyed Hamid Hosseini, a senior member of Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce, said on Sunday that a recent decision in the Iraqi Kurdistan region to ban or impose higher tariffs on imports of 30 goods and products into the territory would not affect the general situation of trade in Iran.

Kurdistan has been a major destination for Iranian exports for the past years, especially since a series of American sanctions on Iran's sale of oil caused a major boom in exports of non-crude products and goods from the country.

However, the territory imposes periodic bans on imports of certain items, especially the agrifood, as it seeks to maintain a balance in inventories and strengthen a fragile domestic production.

Hosseini says Kurdistan authorities would be forced to lift the bans in a matter of months. **See Page 7**

## Indian Co. to Supply 25 Tons of Pesticides to Iran

NEW DELHI (PTI) - State-owned HIL Ltd will supply 25 tons of pesticides to Iran to control locust, the government said on Sunday.

"HIL is now in the process of production and supply of 25 tons Malathion Technical for supply to locust control program to Iran under Government to Government arrangement," an official statement said.

The External Affairs ministry has approached HIL for manufacturing and supply of this commodity to Iran.

Despite logistics and other challenges posed by COVID-19 lockdown, HIL (India) Ltd, a PSU under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, ensured timely production and supply of pesticides for farming community.

The company has exported 10 tons of fungicide Mancozeb to Latin American country Peru and another 12 tons will be exported in the next one week. HIL has also signed an agreement with the agriculture ministry for the supply of Malathion Technical to Rajasthan and Gujarat for locust control program. HIL had manufactured and supplied 67 tons of Malathion Technical till last week. **See Page 7**

## Iran Exports to China Drop 61% Compared With 2019

BEIJING (Dispatches) - The latest trade figures published by China's customs shows a 61 percent drop in imports from Iran in the first four months of 2020 compared with the same period last year.

Total Iranian exports to China in the four-month period reached \$2.34 billion.

The bulk of the decline is due to a huge drop in Iran's oil exports to China. In January-April 2019, China was one of a handful of countries that still enjoyed a limited exemption from the United States to buy some oil from Iran. By May 2019 the U.S. waiver ended as Washington announced a policy of bringing Iran's oil exports down to zero.

Currently, China is buying just 70,000 barrels of crude per day from Iran; one-tenth of its purchase volume before the U.S. sanctions was imposed in 2018.

As China's imports from Iran have dwindled, its exports to the country have increased and the balance of trade is now in favor of Beijing.

China increased its exports to Iran by 3.2 percent in January-April to almost \$3 billion.

China has been Iran's largest trading partner for many years, but since 2018 its imports from Iran have declined by more than 70 percent and its exports by 48 percent.

## U.S. Accomplice in All Israeli Atrocity Crimes

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said that the U.S. is an accomplice in all Israeli atrocity crimes against Palestinians, saying all destruction, killings were supported by the US.

"The United States particularly the current administration is an accomplice to all the crimes that the Zionist entity has committed," Zarif said speaking in an online videoconference on Instagram on the occasion of Quds Day which was displayed in Johannesburg, South Africa.

"All destruction all mass killings, all aggression have been committed with the blatant support and blind cooperation of the United States government," he added.

"But this administration has reminded those Muslim governments who continued to rely on the United States and even today disgracefully cooperate with Israel against other Muslim countries that this is a dead-end," Iranian top diplomat noted. **See Page 7**

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# FM Hopes for a United Islamic Ummah

TEHRAN (MNA) – In a tweet in Arabic on Sunday, Iranian FM Mohammad Javad Zarif hoped that the Islamic Ummah would move towards unity, as well as a brilliant human civilization.

His tweet came on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr, marking an end to the fasting month of Ramadan. "On the day of Eid al-Fitr, we ask God Almighty to lead the Islamic Ummah on its continuous path towards unity and dignity and to create a model of brilliant human civilization," he wrote in Arabic.

## Tehran, Ankara Move to Reopen Land, Air Borders

TEHRAN (IFP) - The presidents of Iran and Turkey have discussed plans to reopen the land and air borders between the two neighbors and restart trade exchanges in compliance with the health protocols.

In a telephone conversation on Sunday, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan called for the immediate reopening of the land and air borders between the two countries in conformity with the health protocols to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Citing the global economic problems caused by the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, the two presidents called for the resumption of the trade exchanges and freight services between Iran and Turkey.

They also expressed hope that a new session of Iran-Turkey Joint Economic Cooperation Commission in the near future and after settlement of the coronavirus crisis would give fresh impetus to the economic collaboration between the two Muslim neighbors and help implement the previous bilateral agreements.

Hailing the history of close cooperation between Tehran and Ankara,



the two presidents stressed the need to promote interaction and share the experiences and knowledge in the fight against COVID-19.

"In the current situation, reopening of the land and air borders in conformity with the health protocols and the resumption of the trade and commodity exchanges is a must for both countries," President Rouhani underlined.

For his part, President Erdogan emphasized that the mutual cooperation and sharing experiences in the battle with the novel coronavirus will be highly effective.

Emphasizing the importance of expansion of economic and trade ties with Iran, the Turkish leader said he will be issuing the necessary orders to reopen the border crossings and restart the trade exchanges with Iran.

The outbreak of coronavirus epidemic in February led to the closure of common border between Iran and Turkey, cancelled the flights, and greatly reduced the trade interaction between the two neighbors.

## Iran Still Stands Despite Sanctions

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iranian UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador of the World Crisis of the Century Mehdi Karimi-Tafreshi said that despite the sanctions in the past 40 years, Iran has still stood on its own feet.

Speaking in a press conference on the occasion of being chosen as the UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador of the World Crisis of the Century, Mehdi Karimi-Tafreshi said that despite the pressures and sanctions imposed by the United States, the Islamic Republic of Iran always seeks peace and goodwill.

"Iran has still stood on its own feet and the Iranian nation has got the top positions in the international arenas like NASA and Google," he stressed.

The UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador added that Iran's production line is active in spite of being grappled with the toughest sanctions and nothing can stop its improvement.

"While the country is facing and fighting with the economic war in the world, the young generations are active to create job opportunities by their self-belief," he stated.

Iranian UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador of the World Crisis of the Century also referred to the efforts of the Iranian medical staff to find a treatment for the novel coronavirus as the global pandemic, highlighted Iranian producers' activities despite being under pressure of both coronavirus and sanctions.

"Iran has actively stood and combat against them," he stated.

## Tehran-Caracas Ties Stronger Than Ever

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian ambassador to Venezuela Hojatollah Soltani hailed on Sunday the growing friendly ties between Tehran and Caracas.

Posting a photo of a meeting between Venezuelan late leader Hugo Chavez and Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khamenei on his Twitter account, Soltani wrote "Two leaders, two countries, and to revolutions that care for each other."

Friendly and brotherly ties between Iran and Venezuela are now stronger than ever, he added.

The remarks come as the first of the five Iranian tankers, laden with fuel, has arrived in Venezuela despite threats of the United States.

Soltani also appreciated Venezuelan Defense Ministry for escorting the tankers.

In another tweet, he said that the response for kindness is kindness. He went on to say that led by Hugo Chavez, Venezuela transferred gasoline in 2008 to Iran that was under US sanctions, and today, the Iranian nation, guided by Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah Khamenei, sent fuel tankers to Venezuela.

Tehran has highlighted that it has the right to retaliate any US aggression against its tankers and free trade between independent countries.

## Leader Grants Clemency to 3,721 Inmates on Eid al-Fitr



TEHRAN (IFP) - Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution, has pardoned or commuted prison terms of 3,721 convicts found guilty by various Iranian courts.

The pardon was granted at the request of the country's Judiciary Chief Ebrahim Raisi on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr, one of the most important Islamic festivals.

Several political prisoners, including a number of university students, the workers of Haft-Tappeh factory, and those arrested on the International Labour Day protests are among the inmates who were granted clemency.

Article 110 of the Constitution grants the Leader the right to pardon or reduce the sentences of convicts upon a recommendation from the head of the Judiciary.

The clemency, however, does not apply to all types of convicts, including those who have been sentenced for their role in armed struggle against the country, armed or organized drug trafficking, rape, armed robbery, arms smuggling, abduction, bribery and embezzlement.

Eid al-Fitr, also called the Feast of Breaking the Fast, is an important religious holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide.

The religious festival is a day that Muslims are not permitted to fast on that specific day.

## Iran Ready for Any Cooperation With Neighboring States

TEHRAN (MNA) – Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli said that Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to establish any cooperation and interaction with neighboring states.

He made the remarks in a telephone conversation with his Turkish counterpart Suleyman Soylu and emphasized the need to prevent sabotage acts conducted by terrorist forces in Iran's joint borders with neighboring countries.

In this bilateral talk, Turkish interior minister congratulated the arrival of Eid al-Fitr to Iranian Interior Minister and pointed to the recent move taken by the United States in designating him [Rahmani Fazli] in its sanctions list and added, "to us, the US move taken in this regard is not acceptable and Turkey condemns the move categorically."

For his part, Iranian Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli felicitated the advent of Eid al-Fitr to Turkey's minister of interior, government and people and expressed thanks to the stance of his Turkish counterpart in condemning recent U.S. move taken in this regard.

The U.S. is trying to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries by all means, Rahmani Fazli stressed.

The United States imposed tough sanctions against all Iranian people even at the condition that the country was grappling with the outbreak of coronavirus, COVID-19, he criticized. While condemning the U.S. supports of regional terrorists including ISIL and Takfiri terrorist groups, Rahmani Fazli added, "regional countries including neighboring states should try to be more active in strengthening the security of the region and deepening the political-economic and security ties."

## Iran Supports One-China Policy

TEHRAN (IFP) - The Iranian Foreign Ministry has denounced any outside interference in the internal affairs of China, reiterating Tehran's support for the One-China policy as Beijing is going to pass a controversial national security law for Hong Kong.

In a statement on Sunday, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Seyed Abbas Mousavi emphasized that "non-interference in the affairs of the other countries, protection of the territorial integrity of the world countries and respect for their national sovereignty" are among the clear and immutable principles in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"Based upon such principles, the Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes the importance of respecting the 'One-China' policy, condemns any foreign interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of China and any harm to that country's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and stresses the need for enforcing law and keeping order for the stability, welfare and security of people of Hong Kong," he added.



His comments came after the National People's Congress of China, which opened its annual session on Friday, announced a plan to impose national security legislation on Hong Kong. The proposed law would allow the Chinese authorities to set up agencies and carry out their duties in the territory.

China's Foreign Ministry says the countries voicing opposition to, or concern over, the planned national security law for Hong Kong should stop interfering in China's internal affairs.

## Tehran Ready for Economic Cooperation With Baghdad

TEHRAN (IP) – Majlis Speaker Speaker Ali Larijani held a phone conversation on Saturday with his Iraqi counterpart Mohammed al-Halbusi to discuss the expansion of ties between the two countries, the effects and consequences of the coronavirus outbreak and ways to deal with the problem.

Larijani expressed his satisfaction with the formation of the new government in Iraq and said: "The Islamic Republic of Iran, as it has repeatedly proved, is always ready for economic cooperation with Iraq and strengthening stability and security in this country."

"The Iraqi parliament has played an important role in contributing to form an efficient government to ensure Iraq's national interests and economic prosperity," Iranian Parliament Speaker stressed. He Larijani congratulated his Iraqi counterpart on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr and voiced Iran's readiness to share the experiences in the fight against the coronavirus.

Iraqi Parliament Speaker Mohammed al-Halbusi also congratulated Ali Larijani and Iranian nation on Eid al-Fitr, noting: "The consultation between the speakers and representatives of the parliaments of Iran and Iraq has always played a significant role in helping to develop cooperation between the two countries."

He further called for continued cooperation between the two countries in various bilateral and regional areas. Referring to the coronavirus outbreak in the Arab country, Mohammed al-Halbusi called for sharing experiences with the Islamic Republic of Iran to curb the virus.

## Call For Prequalification to Hold A Public Bidding

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT

### Water and Wastewater Company of Isfahan Province

Water and Wastewater Company of Isfahan Province intends to hold a prequalification for a public bidding through the Iran Public e-Procurement System based on the following information:

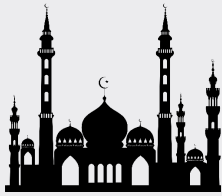
| Item | Subject   | Reference No. | Iran Public e-Procurement System No. |
|------|---|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1    | International Bid for Financing (Foreign Finance), Inspection and Rehabilitation of the Mains and Sub-mains of Isfahan Sewage Collection System | 99-1-25       | 2099001434000001                     |

The whole bidding process from receipt and delivery of the prequalification documents up to sending invitation for the other bidding processes will be held through Iran Public e-Procurement System ([www.setadiran.ir](http://www.setadiran.ir)); in case the bidders have not registered in the mentioned website yet, they are required to register and obtain their electronic signature certificate in order to attend the bidding. The publication date of call in website is 13/05/2020. Information and bidding documents will be submitted to the bidders through the Iran Public e-Procurement System after holding prequalification process and sending invitations.

| Title   | Hour  | Day      | Date       | Remarks                      |
|---|-------|----------|------------|------------------------------|
| Deadline for receiving the prequalification documents | 14:00 | Thursday | 18/06/2020 | One month after publication  |
| Deadline for responding to prequalification documents | 08:00 | Sunday   | 19/07/2020 | Two months after publication |

Information of the bidding holder in order to take more information about the prequalification documents:  
Address : Isfahan wastewater renovation project management's office- Isfahan water and wastewater building- Ferdousi Street- Isfahan- Iran. Phone No: (+9831)32223700 Fax: (+9831)32228800  
Contact information of Setadiran website in order to attempt the registration process:  
4-1- Call center: 021-41934 4-2- Registration Office: 021-88969737 & 021-85193768





## PRAYER TIME

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| ■ Noon (Zohr)            | 13:01 |
| ■ Evening (Maghreb)      | 20:31 |
| ■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr) | 04:09 |
| ■ Tomorrow's Sunrise     | 05:51 |

40. And the (Unbelievers) must indeed have passed by the town on which was rained a shower of evil: did they not then see it (with their own eyes)? But they fear not the Resurrection.

41. When they see thee, they treat thee no otherwise than in mockery: "Is this the one whom Allah has sent as an apostle?" Surah 25. The Criterion, The Standard (40 - 41)

## Countries Under U.S. Embargo Urged To Form Club

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN - Iran's former ambassador to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Mohammad Ali Khatibi said it seems vital for countries sanctioned by the U.S. to get united and establish a club of sanctioned countries to ease international trade among themselves.**

"The increase in the number of countries sanctioned by the United States has provided a better capacity to create alternative solutions to supply demands," he said in an interview with Fars News Agency.

Khatibi referred to a swap of goods for goods or for gold as a practical method for trade among sanctioned countries, saying that "sanctioned countries can get united to establish an organized cooperation system against the US sanctions to supply a great number of their requirements."

"All the sanctioned companies, from different countries, can also join the club", he noted.

Iran's recent exports of gasoline to Venezuela can be an opportunity to form the 'sanctioned countries club', as he said.

Iran and Venezuela have always had their oil and gas ties and there are close relations between the two countries," he said referring to the time when Iran was in need of gasoline back in 2011 and Venezuela met its demand.



He added that under the coronavirus pandemic Iran's domestic consumption of gasoline has decreased and the country can export its extra amount of the product to Venezuela.

"Exporting gasoline to Venezuela, in addition to strengthening political ties between the two countries, has brought good economic benefits to Iran," he noted.

Khatibi said it is Iran's legitimate right to export its gasoline to each applicant country via mutual agreements.

"Freedom of trade and commute of ships in international waterways is a natural right of Iran and no country can violate it," he underlined.

Khatibi added that Iran's exports of gasoline to Venezuela has transmitted a political message to the world, questioning U.S. sanctions.

"Trading goods is not a violation of international trade protocols or shipping treaties," he underlined, "Therefore, there is no need for Iran to hide its international trade."

The former OPEC official noted that Iran is now powerful enough to question U.S. sanctions and threaten its enemies to give a harsh response to any probable aggression.

## Gov't Aims to Create 96,000 Jobs in Tehran

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The government is expected to create 96,000 job opportunities in the Tehran Province in the current Iranian year (started March 20,2020), said Saeed Dehghan, a deputy in Ministry of Cooperatives Labor and Social Welfare.

"The government has assigned one fourth of its budget to individuals that got affected by the coronavirus, including a \$1.1 billion loan to Tehran Province, with a 12 percent interest rate that is currently being paid," said Dehghan.

"The assigned advances would cover 13 groups of businesses, and applicants can register online to obtain the aid," he said.

"Islamshahr county had the highest rate of job creation in Tehran Province in the last Iranian year (started March 21,2019) and so far 4,000 people has applied online for the loan," he added.

"The working regulations at offices have changed due to coronavirus. The Iranian government has promised to create 935,000 jobs to help out," he said.

Earlier a representative of Industry, Mine and Trade Ministry of Iran announced that the government is to provide loans to guilds with three months delays in payment.

## Iran's Dams 70% Full

TEHRAN (MNA) -Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian announced that thanks to the increase in precipitation, 70 percent of the total capacity of dams in Iran is full now.

Dams in the country can hold 50 billion cubic meters of water, of which 30 percent is currently kept empty as more rainfall is expected in the coming month, he said.

"Since the beginning of the current year (March 20, 2020), the country has registered over 300 millimeters of rainfall, which is 30 percent higher than the long-time average," Ardakanian added.

There are 193 dams in Iran. However, the water level in all dams is not the same. While some are over 90 percent full, the water in some others is less than 30 percent of their capacity.

Although the increase in rainfall and high water levels in dams are good news, the huge rise in water consumption across the country is disturbing.

The hike in water use is unprecedented at this time of the year. The soaring consumption is due to the spread of the novel coronavirus and the need to wash hands and substances several times a day to avoid being infected with the deadly and contagious virus.

Ardakanian appealed for more conservation and judicious use of water so that the country would not face any water shortages during the summer.

## Armenia; Iran's Corridor to Europe

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's ambassador to Armenia said that Armenia is considered as Iran's corridor to other countries, especially the European ones.

Abbas Zolouri said in a videoconference that Armenia has a unique capacity that should be scientifically described and programmed.

Zohouri said that economically and politically speaking, Iran's priority is its neighbors.

He added that there are several economic opportunities in Armenia, including oilseeds, raising cattle and birds, and extraterritorial cultivation, as well as,

Aras Free Trade Zone and its numerous exemptions.

He said that despite the coronavirus outbreak and the

border points' being closed for a short time, the trade between the two countries was not hurt.

The deputy for international affairs of Iran's chamber of commerce said in the meeting that culturally Armenia has a lot in common with Iran and is a neighbor of Iran, so there are no restrictions for expansion of ties with the country, and Iran's signing an agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) further improved the conditions.

Hervic Yarijanian, the head of Iran-Armenia Chamber of Commerce, said in the videoconference that the biggest problem for commerce between the two countries is banking issues.



## Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan Borders to Be Reopened

TEHRAN (MNA) - Borders of Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan will be reopened on June 1 which had been closed due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, also known as COPVID-19.

Iranian Ambassador to Turkmenistan Gholam-Abbas Arbab Khales in an interview with IRNA on Sat. said, "diplomatic and political talks are underway between the two countries daily for reopening joint borders with the aim of resuming exports, transiting and exchanging goods with Turkmenistan and other countries in the region."

He added, "These talks have been made by the Embassy and Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the field of reopening the origin of joint borders between the three countries of Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan especially in the last few weeks." In this line, a trilateral meeting was held last week between CEOs of Railways companies of the aforementioned three countries through video conference.

The Iranian envoy said, "This trilateral talks was held last week in the presence of ministers of roads and urban development of three countries of Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan within regarding the transit cooperation and reopening of borders including Incheh Borun, Sarakhs and Lotfabad."

## CBI Governor Hails 3 Branches of Gov't

TEHRAN (IP) - The Governor of the Central Bank wrote that the support of the Supreme Council of Economic Coordination and the powers granted by the heads of the three branches of government have made significant contributions to the advancement of the Central Bank's reform programs in the money and currency markets.

Governor of Central Bank of Iran Abdul Nasser Hemmati released pictures of yesterday's meeting of the Supreme Council of Economic Coordination with the presence of the heads of three branches of government (President, Speaker of the Parliament and Chief of Judiciary) and Ali Larijani's last appearance at the meeting and noted, "I appreciate Larijani's of ideas, plans and proposals of the Central Bank over the past two years for reforms in the banking system and the management of the currency and monetary markets during the meetings of the Council as well as the parliament."

According to the secretary of the council, most of the approvals of the last 50 sessions of the council have been related to the proposals of the Central Bank.

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT



PERMIT NO : 1399.913

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY - AHVAZ-IRAN

**TENDER NO.: 08-21-89-9240008**

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY (NISOC) INTENDS TO PURCHASE THE FOLLOWING GOODS:

| ITEMS | MATERIAL DESCRIPTION         | QUANTITY |
|-------|------------------------------|----------|
| 01    | HEAVY WEIGHT CEMENT PREFLUSH | 2000 BAG |

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The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 1,300 EURO or 200,000,000 RIAL in favor of NISOC.

Tender documents including the materials through technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via:

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## Tehran Ready to Exchange Transportation Experiences With Baghdad

BAGHDAD (IRNA) - Iranian Ambassador to Baghdad Iraj Masjedi in a meeting with Iraqi Minister of Transport Nasser Hussein Al-Shibli voiced Iranian companies' readiness to exchange knowledge and experiences in road and transportation fields with Iraq.

Masjedi congratulated Hussein Al-Shibli on his appointment as transportation minister of Iraq and expressed hope for developing cooperation in transportation field.

Referring to Iran's achievements and successes in transportation, Iranian diplomat said Iran is ready to present its experience to its friend and neighbor, Iraq.

Meanwhile, Hussein Al-Shibli welcomed Iranian envoy's suggestion.

He vowed to try hard for developing transportation relations with Iran and to follow up joint projects.

## Revenues From Overflight Rights Fall Sharply

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran Airports Company (IAC) has reported an 85 percent reduction in overflights by airlines using Iran's airspace in March-April compared with the previous year.

According to Tasnim News Agency, IAC has reported that in the period between March 21 to April 20 the number of international flights passing over Iran has dropped from 33,189 in the previous year to 5,162.

Ahsan Alavi, a lawmaker, on May 11 said the number of daily flights passing through the Iranian airspace had dropped from 900 to 200 and caused a significant drop in Iran's revenues from overflight rights.

The fall in the number of international flights has been attributed to the coronavirus pandemic that has had a significant impact on the international aviation industry due to the travel restrictions imposed by various countries as well as the unwillingness of many to travel at a time of crisis.

International airlines diverted their flights to the airspace of neighboring countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia following the incident despite higher overflight costs, the report said.

The pandemic has also grounded many domestic flights. According to the IAC report quoted by Tasnim some flights by airlines such as Zagros and Pouya Air dropped to one and four respectively in the first month of the new Iranian year.



## U.S. Ambassador to Germany Grenell to Step Down

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - U.S. Ambassador to Germany Richard Grenell is planning to step down in the coming weeks after little more than two years in the job, German news agency dpa reported on Sunday, without saying where it obtained the information.

Robin Quinville, deputy chief of mission at the embassy, is expected to replace Grenell on an interim basis, the report said.

The news comes only days after the U.S. Senate confirmed Representative John Ratcliffe, like Grenell a staunch political ally of President Donald Trump, as the permanent director of national intelligence (DNI).

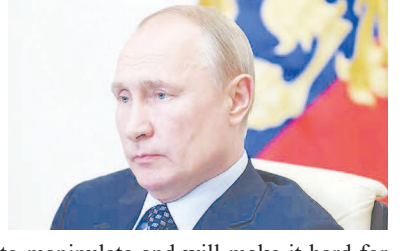


## Putin Changes Russia's Electoral Law

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russian President Vladimir Putin has approved changes to the country's electoral law, allowing Russians to vote electronically or by mail in future polls, according to the Kremlin.

Opponents to Saturday's move say an electronic system will be easier to manipulate and will make it hard for independent observers to notice irregularities.

They also say that the changes are being introduced at a point in time when the coronavirus lockdown means the public is not able to express opposition by protesting against the changes. The new electronic voting software should be available nationwide and can be used for local and national elections, as well as referendums.



## China Warns U.S. Pushing Relations to Brink of New Cold War



BEIJING (AFP) - The United States is pushing relations with China to "the brink of a new Cold War", China's foreign minister said Sunday, rejecting U.S. "lies" over the coronavirus while saying Beijing was open to an international effort to find its source.

Keeping up the worsening war of words with Washington over the pandemic and a Beijing move to tighten control over Hong Kong, Wang Yi said the United States had been infected by a "political virus" compelling figures there to continually attack China.

"It has come to our attention that some political forces in the U.S. are taking China-U.S. relations hostage and pushing our two countries to the brink of a new Cold War," Wang told reporters during a press conference at China's week-long annual parliamentary session.

Longstanding friction between the two powers over trade, human rights and a range of other issues have been pushed to new heights since the virus outbreak.

Wang did not identify what "forces" he was referring to, but U.S. President Donald Trump has led world criticism of China's initial response to the pandemic, which has caused more than 340,000 deaths and economic carnage worldwide.

Trump and members of his administration have said China covered up the emergence of the virus late last year and bungled its initial response. Washington's criticism has been widely seen in the United States as an attempt by Trump to divert attention from the White House's own COVID-19 failures.

Wang took an apparent swipe at the U.S. struggles to contain the virus, which has now infected more people in the United States than anywhere else.

"I call on the U.S. to stop wasting time and stop wasting precious lives," Wang said.

He said China was "open" to international cooperation to identify the source of the novel coronavirus, but stressed that any investigation must be "free of political interference".

"Some political figures in the U.S. rush to label the virus and politicize its origins, stigmatizing China," Wang said.

Most scientists believe the virus jumped from animals to humans after emerging in China, possibly from a market in the central city of Wuhan where exotic animals were sold for meat.

Governments including the U.S. and Australia have called in recent weeks for an investigation into the exact origins of the virus.

The World Health Organization has also called on Beijing to invite them in to investigate the source, with China proposing instead that the "global response" to COVID-19 should only be assessed when the pandemic is over.

WHO members on Tuesday adopted a resolution, tabled by the European Union, at the UN body's first virtual assembly to review the international handling of the pandemic, but it does not single out China.

Wang said an investigation must "oppose any presumption of guilt".

"Aside from the devastation caused by the novel coronavirus, there is also a political virus spreading through the U.S.," he said.

"This political virus is the use of every opportunity to attack and smear China. Some politicians completely disregard basic facts and have fabricated too many lies targeting China, and plotted too many conspiracies."

The introduction at China's legislature on Friday of a proposal to impose a security law in Hong Kong to suppress the semi-autonomous city's pro-democracy movement also has drawn US and world condemnation. But Wang defended the plan, saying it must be implemented "without the slightest delay", adding that months of often-violent Hong Kong protests last year against China's growing influence in the financial hub had "seriously endangered China's national security".

## Hong Kong Police Fire Tear Gas as Thousands Protest Security Law

HONG KONG (Reuters) - Hong Kong police fired tear gas and water cannon to disperse thousands who, in defiance of curbs imposed to contain the coronavirus, gathered on Sunday to protest against Beijing's plan to directly impose national security laws on the city.

In a return of the unrest that roiled the financial hub last year, crowds thronged the bustling shopping area of Causeway Bay, where chants of "Hong Kong independence, the only way out," and other slogans echoed through the streets. To Communist Party leaders, calls for independence for the Chinese-ruled city are anathema, and the proposed new national security framework stresses Beijing's intent "to prevent, stop and punish" such acts.

As dusk fell, sporadic standoffs broke out between police and demonstrators in the bar and nightlife district of Wan Chai near the heart of the business district.

The protest, the first since Beijing proposed the new laws on Thursday, had mostly died down by then - but the day's events pose a fresh challenge to Beijing's authority as it struggles to tame public opposition to its tightening grip over the city.

The security laws have also sent a chill through financial markets and drawn a rebuke from foreign governments, human rights groups and some business lobbies.

"I am worried that after the implementation of the national security law, they will go after those being charged before and the police will be further out of control," said Twinnie, 16, a secondary school student who declined to give her last name.

"I am afraid of being arrested but I still need to come out and protest for the future of Hong Kong."

The demonstrations come amid concerns over the fate of the "one country, two systems" formula that has governed Hong Kong since the former British colony's return to Chinese rule in 1997. The arrangement guarantees the city broad freedoms not seen on the mainland, including a free press and independent judiciary.

Sunday's rally, the largest since COVID-19 lockdowns began, was initially organized against a national anthem bill but the proposed national security laws sparked calls for more people to take to the streets. As the city government sought on Sunday to give reassurances over the new laws, police conducted stop-and-search operations in Causeway Bay and warned people not to violate a ban on gatherings of more than eight.

That restriction, imposed to contain the spread of coronavirus, has kept protesters largely off the streets in recent months.



## Afghan President to Accelerate Taliban Prisoner Release

KABUL (Dispatches) - Afghan President Ashraf Ghani vowed Sunday to speed up the release of Taliban prisoners after welcoming a surprise offer by the insurgents of a three-day ceasefire during the Eid holiday.

"As a responsible government we take one more step forward -- I announce that I will expedite the Taliban prisoner releases," Ghani said in an address to the nation marking Eid al-Fitr.

He also urged the militants to press on with the release of the Afghan security personnel they hold.

A U.S.-Taliban deal signed in February stipulated that the Afghan government would release up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners while the insurgents would free about 1,000 Afghan security force personnel.

The prisoner swap is seen as a confidence-building move ahead of long-awaited peace talks between the government and Taliban.

Kabul has so far released about 1,000 Taliban inmates while the insurgents have freed about 300 Afghan security force personnel.

The Eid al-Fitr holiday marks the end of the Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan.

Since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 there has only been one other pause in the fighting -- a three-day ceasefire between the Taliban and Kabul, also marking the end of Eid in 2018.

That ceasefire was initiated by Ghani.

## N. Korea Discusses New Policies for Increasing Nuclear War Deterrence

SEOUL (AFP) - North Korea discussed new policies for increasing its "nuclear war deterrence" during a military meeting presided over by leader Kim Jong Un, state media reported Sunday.

The meeting was Kim's first reported public appearance in more than three weeks and came after US media said Friday that the Trump administration had discussed holding the first US nuclear test in decades.

Set forth at the meeting of the Central Military Commission were "new policies for further increasing the nuclear war deterrence of the country," the North's official KCNA news agency said, without giving further details.

"Crucial measures" were taken "for considerably increasing the firepower strike ability of the artillery pieces of the Korean People's Army", it added.

Discussions also centered on "putting the strategic armed forces on a high alert operation", in line with the "building and development of the armed forces of the country".

The date of the meeting was not given, but a separate KCNA dispatch from the same meeting reported a military order signed by Kim was issued on May 23.

That marked Kim's first reported public appearance in more than 20 days, after he reappeared following an earlier three-week absence which triggered intense speculation about his health.

A photo carried by the official Rodong Sinmun newspaper on Sunday showed Kim wielding a long stick and pointing to what appeared to be a blurred out TV screen while making a presentation to a room full of uniformed officers.

None of those shown in the photo -- including Kim -- were wearing masks and sitting close to each other, despite the global coronavirus pandemic. The North has insisted that it has not seen a single case of coronavirus, although experts say that is unlikely.

The meeting also reviewed and analyzed "a series of drawbacks in the military and political activities" and discussed ways for "drastic improvement", according to KCNA.

Rumors swirled for weeks about Kim's health after he failed to appear at the April 15 celebrations for the birthday of his grandfather, the North's founder -- the most important day in the country's political calendar.

His disappearance triggered a series of unconfirmed reports and fevered speculation until he reappeared at a factory opening in May.



## Trump Urges Libya De-Escalation On Call With Erdogan

ISTANBUL (Reuters) - U.S. President Donald Trump called for a "rapid de-escalation" of the Libyan conflict on a call with Turkish counterpart Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday, the White House said, after recent gains by forces backed by Turkey prompted threats of retaliation.

Ankara said the NATO allies agreed to continue pursuing stability in the eastern Mediterranean region, including in Syria, while a spokesman for Erdogan said the international community must stand with Turkey in the Libyan conflict.

Turkey backs Libya's internationally recognised Government of National Accord (GNA), which has made significant military gains in recent weeks in battles with the eastern-based Libyan National Army (LNA) of Khalifa Haftar.

With Turkish help, the GNA has seized a string of towns, captured a strategic airbase and destroyed several of the LNA's Russian-made air defence systems.

The surge has put pressure Haftar's 13-month campaign to seize the capital Tripoli and has squeezed his foreign backers Russia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.

White House spokesman Judd Deere said in a statement: "President Trump reiterated concern over worsening foreign interference in Libya and the need for rapid de-escalation."

As the LNA has promised to respond with a massive air campaign, diplomats have warned of the risk of a new round of escalation with the warring sides' external backers pouring in new weaponry.

Turkey "will not bow to threats by Haftar or anyone else," Turkey's presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said separately in an interview on NTV.

"The international community must take a stand against Haftar. We need to go back to the table for a political solution as soon as possible," Kalin said.



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## Turkey to Prepare Foreign Direct Investment Strategy

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey announced plans for a foreign direct investment strategy aiming to benefit from the conditions following the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Technology and Industry Minister Mustafa Varank told businesses in a virtual conference that as power balances shifted, the world would likely transition from a unipolar order to a multipolar one.

"So, we need to focus on getting a big slice of this division," he added.

Together with the Presidential Investment Office, the ministry will soon complete the country's Foreign Direct Investment Strategy, said Varank.



## ILO Issues Guidelines for Safe Return to Work Amid Covid-19

GENEVA (Dispatches) - Special attention will be needed to ensure that return to work policies do not create discrimination related to gender, health status, or other factors

The International Labor Organization (ILO) has issued two guidance documents for creating safe and effective return-to-work conditions during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The "Guidance Note" says that return to work policies need to be formed by a human-centered approach that puts people's rights at the heart of economic, social and environmental policies, reports BSS.

Social dialogue – bringing together governments, workers' and employers' organizations – will be critical in creating effective policies and trust needed for a safe return to work, according to an ILO webpost.

The note draws on specialist ILO guidance documents and International Labor Standards, which provide a normative framework for creating a safe return to work.

The document stresses that policy guidance should be embedded into national Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) systems, as these create the basis for safe workplace environments.

The guidance can therefore contribute to a culture of continuous, country-level improvement, in administration, institutions, laws and regulations, labor inspections, information gathering, and other areas.

Workers must feel safe at their workplaces, both from risks directly related to Covid-19, and indirect risks, including psychosocial issues and ergonomic risks related to working in awkward positions or with poor facilities when working from home, the guidelines say. They should have the right to remove themselves from any situation "which they have reasonable justification to believe presents an imminent and serious danger to their life or health," and "shall be protected from any undue consequences."

The document proposes that each specific work setting, job or group of jobs should be assessed before returning to work and that preventive measures should be implemented to ensure the safety and health of all workers according to a hierarchy of controls.

The specific measures to implement are specific to each workplace, but may consist of installing physical barriers such as clear plastic sneeze guards, improving ventilation, or adopting flexible working hours, in addition to cleaning and hygiene practices. The guidelines also recall that the use of appropriate personal protective equipment may be required to complement other measures, in particular for the most hazardous occupations, and that this equipment should be provided for free to workers.

The needs of workers at higher risk of severe illness should be taken into account; including older workers, pregnant workers, those with pre-existing medical conditions, refugees, migrants and those in the informal sector.

Special attention will be needed to ensure that return to work policies do not create discrimination related to gender, health status, or other factors.

"Unsafe work practices anywhere are a threat to both health and sustainable business, everywhere. So, before returning to work, workers must be confident that they will not be exposed to undue risks," said Deborah Greenfield, ILO's deputy director-general for Policy. "And, to help enterprises and economies get going as soon as possible, workers will need to cooperate with these new measures. This means that social dialogue will be particularly important because it is the most effective way to feed information and views into policies and actions, creating the best chance for a swift and balanced recovery," Greenfield added.

## Lebanon's Economic Rescue Plan Good Starting Point

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Talks between Lebanon and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been constructive, and the country's economic plan is a "good starting point," IMF Spokesperson Gerry Rice said via his Twitter account.

Lebanon is in the midst of an unprecedented economic crisis and has begun talks with the IMF to restructure its debt after defaulting on its \$1.2 billion Eurobond payment in March.

"As I said before, we would characterize the Lebanese government's plan as a good starting point for these discussions. It diagnoses the many economic issues facing Lebanon and proposes comprehensive set of policies to address them, so the discussions are ongoing," Rice said. The Lebanese government approved a financial economic reform plan at the tail end of April and on May 1 officially approached the IMF for assistance, asking for \$10 billion. The government is hoping to cash in on around \$11 billion in soft loans pledged at the 2018 Paris CEDRE conference on the condition of reform.

Estimates suggest the country will require as much between \$15-25 billion to recapitalize local banks and pay off foreign currency debt, Lebanese think tank Triangle wrote. However, the IMF may be unwilling to give Lebanon more than \$5 billion, analysis from Carnegie Middle East Center suggested.



While an IMF package may be necessary to pull the country back from the brink in the long run, many fear the toll such a package will have on the middle and lower classes that are already hurting – given it will undoubtedly come with costly stipulations.

The IMF is likely to ask Lebanon to fix its ailing electricity sector, a request also voiced at CEDRE. Today, the sector runs an annual deficit of \$1.2 to \$1.8 billion, and the country still suffers from daily power cuts.

The country is currently facing multiple crises as the economy continues to sink and inflation is on the rise. Coronavirus has recently dealt yet another blow to the country's worsening situation.

## India Plans Stricter Check on FPIs From China and HK

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India is considering additional checks on foreign portfolio investments from China and Hong Kong after making prior government clearance mandatory for any foreign direct investment (FDI) from seven countries it shares land borders with, including China.

The finance ministry is in talks with the commerce and industry ministry, Sebi and RBI on the proposed framework after concerns about such inflows were raised when China's central bank increased its stake in Housing Development Finance Corp (HDFC). The People's Bank of China had raised it to more than 1% from about 0.8%, requiring a declaration by the Indian mortgage lender to stock exchanges.

"The Department of Economic Affairs is working on the FPI issue. It is not finalised yet," a government official told ET.

FPIs from China and Hong Kong may have to undergo more stringent know your customer (KYC) norms at the time of registration and separate mechanisms could be put in place to ensure prior regulatory or government clearance for investments in listed entities.

A dedicated cell could be set up to scrutinize new FPI registrations from these countries and their investments. Reuters first reported the story on Friday.

"The government and market regulator have already begun collecting details on Chinese investments and ultimate beneficial owners of FPIs based in China through Sebi, and this additional data gathering is aimed to create barriers for Chinese investors," said an expert on foreign investment. "Chinese funds have begun slowing their investments in India and are in wait-and-watch mode."

Compared to FDI, which is a more long-term and stable source of funding, FPI is considered hot money invested in listed shares that's easier to liquidate and exit.

India's move comes at a time when the U.S. has begun a crackdown on Chinese companies listed on American bourses and a Bill to delist them is already under Washington's consideration.

The fear is that Chinese companies may acquire stakes in strategically important companies at a time when stock prices are volatile.

The finance ministry and the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) are also working on defining the beneficial ownership threshold beyond which prior clearance will be necessary. This is crucial for FPIs as they receive pooled investments from multiple entities. A clarification on the issue is likely soon, the official said.

## China Will Not Return to Planned Economy

BEIJING (Dispatches) - Chinese President Xi Jinping said he won't let the world's second-largest economy return to its days as a planned economy, pushing back against U.S. criticism that the nation has failed to deliver on promised reforms.

"We've come to the understanding that we should not ignore the blindness of the market, nor should we return to the old path of a planned economy," Xi told political advisers gathered in Beijing for their

annual legislative sessions on Saturday, according to the official Xinhua news agency. He reiterated the government's stance that markets should play a "decisive role" in the economy.

The comments come as China faces mounting pushback from the Trump administration on a range of issues from trade to its handling of the coronavirus outbreak. The White House this week issued a broad critique of China's economic and military policies in a report to Congress, including accusations of intellectual property theft and economic protectionism.

Xi said the virus has put considerable pressure on China's economy, and the country should seek "development in a world that is increasingly unstable and uncertain" as he listed risks ahead including a deepening global recession, a significant drop in trade investment, financial market turmoil, reduced international interactions and rising geopolitical tensions.

Chinese lawmakers on Friday abandoned their usual practice of setting a numerical target for economic growth this year due to the turmoil caused by the virus, breaking with decades of Communist Party planning habits in an admission of the deep rupture that the disease has caused.

They're also using the legislative meeting to pass a bill establishing "an enforcement mechanism for ensuring national security" for Hong Kong, prompting swift pushback from pro-democracy activists in the city and condemnation from American politicians. Xi didn't address the legislation in his speech, but stressed that China should "stand on the right side of history," adhere to multilateralism and maintain an "open, cooperative" attitude despite rising protectionism.

## Dozens of Chinese Companies Added To U.S. Blacklist

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The United States said it would add 33 Chinese firms and institutions to an economic blacklist for helping Beijing spy on its minority Uighur population or because of ties to weapons of mass destruction and China's military.

The U.S. Commerce Department's move marked the Trump administration's latest efforts to crack down on companies whose goods may support Chinese military activities and to punish Beijing for its treatment of Muslim minorities. It came as Communist Party rulers in Beijing on Friday unveiled details of a plan to impose national security laws on Hong Kong.

Seven companies and two institutions were listed for being "complicit in human rights violations and abuses committed in China's campaign of repression, mass arbitrary detention, forced labor and high-technology surveillance against Uighurs" and others, the Commerce Department said in a statement. Two dozen other companies, government institutions and commercial organizations were added for supporting procurement of items for use by the Chinese military, the department said in another statement.

The blacklisted companies focus on artificial intelligence and facial recognition, markets that U.S. chip companies such as Nvidia Corp and Intel Corp have been heavily investing in. Among the companies named is NetPosa, one of China's most famous AI companies, whose facial recognition subsidiary is linked to the surveillance of Muslims.

Qihoo360, a major cybersecurity firm taken private and delisted from the Nasdaq in 2015, recently made headlines for claiming it had found evidence that CIA hacking tools were used to target the Chinese aviation sector.



The Commerce Department said it was adding the firms and institutions to its "entity list," which restricts sales of U.S. goods shipped to them and some more limited items made abroad with U.S. content or technology. Companies can apply for licenses to make the sales, but they must overcome a presumption of denial.

Softbank Group Corp-backed CloudMinds was also added. It operates a cloud-based service to run robots such as a version of Pepper, a humanoid robot capable of simple communication. The company was blocked last year from transferring technology or technical information from its U.S. unit to its offices in Beijing, Reuters reported in March.

Qihoo, NetPosa and CloudMinds could not be immediately reached for comment.

Xilinx Inc, which makes programmable chips, said at least one of its customers was on the list but that it believes the business impact will be negligible.

## Argentina in Default But Creditor Negotiations Continue



BUENOS AIRES (Dispatches) - Argentina defaulted on Friday for the second time in less than 20 years after failing to pay \$500 million of interest on its bond debt, but it continues to negotiate a restructure with creditors, Finance Minister Martin Guzman said.

"There is still a significant distance to go but, more importantly, all sides remain at the table to find a solution," he said. The default -- Argentina's ninth overall -- was widely expected after the economic ministry announced on Thursday that it was extending, for a second time, talks with international creditors on restructuring \$66 billion of its debt. The new deadline is June 2.

President Alberto Fernandez's government is expecting to come to an agreement before Argentina suffers the full effects of its default.

The announcement of the extension "provides flexibility in case the Republic decides to make modifications in the coming days to ensure a sustainable agreement with our creditors," Guzman said.

The crisis-wracked South American country, which has been in recession for two years, currently owes \$324 billion, amounting to around 90 percent of its GDP.

The crisis was aggravated when its economy was hit -- like others all over the world -- by the coronavirus pandemic.

Though it is one of the world leaders in food exports, Argentina has already defaulted eight times in its history, most recently in 2001 when it owed \$100 billion.

That triggered a painful social and economic crisis. Ratings agency Moody's said the default would provoke "significant losses for investors."

"Moody's expects that the panorama for the restructure of Argentina's debt will very probably become more complicated," said vice president Gabriel Torres.

Argentina's main group of creditors is demanding "a direct and immediate discussion" on its restructure plans.



## JCPOA Opponents Seeking to Undermine Tehran-IAEA Cooperation

TEHRAN (MNA) - Russia's Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov, in a tweet on Monday said the main purpose of JCPOA opponents is to undermine the cooperation between Iran and IAEA.

"The purpose of #JCPOA is to restore confidence in

exclusively peaceful nature of nuclear program of #Iran," he tweeted.

"The deal fulfills this task. No sign of military dimension was found. The goal of opponents is opposite- to undermine confidence and cooperation between Tehran and #IAEA," he added.



## Oil Giants' Loss Exceed \$20b in First Quarter 2020 Due to Coronavirus

ANKARA (Dispatches) - The world's top 12 publicly-traded oil-producing companies posted a total net loss of more than \$20 billion in the first quarter of 2020, according to data compiled by Anadolu Agency on these firms' financial results.

As the widespread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has brought global transportation to almost a complete halt, oil consumption around the world has decreased dramatically over the past several months. Low oil demand pushed crude prices to plummet in April to their lowest level since 1999.

While the price of international benchmark Brent crude averaged \$63.10 per barrel in the first quarter of 2019, it fell 20.7% to average \$50 per barrel during the first quarter of 2020.

Due to low oil prices, American ExxonMobil, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Halliburton, Schlumberger, Baker Hughes, British BP, Royal Dutch Shell, French Total S.A., Italy's Eni, Russia's Rosneft and Norway's Equinor saw their net loss total \$20.6 billion in the first three months of this year. These 12 oil giants posted a collective net income of \$23.4 billion for the same period last year.

The 12 companies' total revenue also declined by 17% to around \$262 billion in the first quarter of 2020, from approximately \$315.5 billion in the first quarter of 2019, according to the data.

Among the 12 oil firms, oilfield services providing company Baker Hughes posted the largest loss with \$10.2 billion in the first three months of 2020. It was followed by another oilfield services giant Schlumberger, which recorded a \$7.37 billion loss in the first quarter of this year. Italy's Eni came third with a \$3.17 billion loss.

There were only three companies among the 12 oil firms that achieved a net income during the January-March period of 2020. These were the US' Chevron who came on top with a net income of \$3.6 billion. France's Total S.A. followed posting a net income of \$1.78 billion while British BP saw earnings of just \$800 million.

Royal Dutch Shell became the company that recorded the highest year-over-year decline in revenue, in both percentage and amount, among the 12 firms.

While the company posted revenue of \$83.7 billion in the first three months of 2019, this amount fell to \$60 billion in the same period of 2020, marking a \$60 billion decrease.

That year-over-year revenue decline of 28.3% was also the largest percentage fall among the 12 oil giants.



In real terms, the U.S.' biggest oil-producing firm ExxonMobil came in second as its annual revenue plummeted by \$7.46 billion, and France's Total S.A. saw its revenue decline by \$6.54 billion during that period.

Companies in the oil industry are now facing the risk of having higher losses and much bigger revenue declines in the following quarters if prices do not recover.

Although most of these companies have announced in the past months that they are planning to lower their capital expenditures and halt some high-cost projects, crude prices are expected to remain low due to slow economic activity and weak oil demand around the world with COVID-19 measures.

Brent crude averaged \$50 per barrel in the first quarter of this year and is estimated to average only \$23 a barrel in the second quarter, according to the US' Energy Information Administration's (EIA) latest monthly Short-Term Energy Outlook (STEO) report for May.

Brent crude is forecast to average \$32 per barrel in the second half of 2020 and is anticipated to average \$48 a barrel in 2021, according to the EIA's STEO report.

### Iran Will Not Need Oil...

FROM PAGE 1

Iran's governor to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) dies after suffering a brain hemorrhage and going into a coma.

The comments come against the backdrop of other reports and analyses suggesting that Iran is trying to diversify its economy away from oil by introducing measures that could strengthen sectors like agriculture and manufacturing.

Exports of non-oil goods and services from Iran have soared over the past two years while the country has significantly increased its capacity for processing and exports of various petrochemical products.

On choosing a new Iranian governor for Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, Zamaninia said Iran has seven, eight candidates, both inside and outside of the oil industry. He said the next governor could be someone from Iran's Foreign Ministry.

### Iran Trade...

FROM PAGE 1

"Experience shows that such decisions would be cancelled after one or two months. Otherwise, the banned items would be imported through smuggling or through other trade channels," he said.

Hosseini insisted that Iranian exporters would increase their supplies to other customers in the meantime to compensate for the losses suffered over the new bans and tariffs in Kurdistan.

Most of the new tariffs imposed by Kurdistan would affect Iranian farming products, especially the fruit and vegetables that are popular in the Iraqi region.

Hosseini said Iran cannot expect Kurdistan to become a dumping place for its agricultural oversupply, adding that the country should revise its output programs to mitigate the impacts of periodic tariffs imposed in other countries.

### Indian Co...

FROM PAGE 1

HIL supplied malathion technical to municipal corporations for dengue and chikungunya control program.

During the lockdown period till May 15, 2020, HIL produced 120 tons of Malathion Technical, 120.40 tons of DDT Technical, 288 tons of DDT 50 per cent, 21 tons of HILGOLD (water soluble fertiliser), 12 tons of Mancozeb Fungicide for exports and 35 tons of different agrochemical formulations.

These are used in the agriculture and health sectors.

## Spain Will Reopen to Foreign Tourists From July



MADRID (Dispatches) - Spain's prime minister has said that international tourism will be allowed to restart from July as he set out the next steps to combat the economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic in a national address.

"Together we have stopped the worst calamity of the century. Now the challenge of rebuilding our country lies ahead of us," Pedro Sánchez said.

Tourism accounts for about 12 per cent of Spain's gross domestic product and business leaders in the sector have criticized Mr Sánchez for being slower to announce a plan than rival tourist destinations like Greece and Italy, which will reopen to foreign visitors next month.

Mr Sánchez called on businesses involved in tourism to prepare to reopen and urged Spaniards to plan for their summer vacations, adding that the government was preparing additional health measures to avoid outbreaks when foreign visitors are allowed back into the country in July.

"Spain needs tourism and tourism needs security," Mr Sánchez said, noting that more than 80m tourists travel to the country each year.

Mr Sánchez also announced that Spain's football league, La Liga, would return from the week of June 8, and that his leftwing coalition government would next week proceed with a minimum income scheme. He said this would cost €3bn annually and would provide grants to 850,000 households below the poverty line starting in June.

The new measures come as Spain negotiates a complicated exit from lockdown amid a political scene fraught with increasing polarisation.

On Friday Mr Sánchez's government finally gave the go-ahead for Madrid and Barcelona, the two worst-hit cities, to begin phasing out the restrictions put in place to stop the spread of Covid-19.

Madrid's continued lockdown was especially contentious, as the government had twice rejected requests to loosen it — leading officials in the region, which is led by Mr Sánchez's political opponents on the centre-right, to complain of political bias.

Hours before the prime minister's address on Saturday, thousands of protesters drove through Madrid and regional capitals in Spain, calling for the resignation of the government of Mr Sánchez in a series of demonstrations backed by the far-right Vox party.

Mr Sanchez has faced criticism over his use of the "state of alert" — an extraordinary legal order that grants increased powers to the government — to manage the coronavirus pandemic in the country, one of the world's hardest hit.

## Chinese Oil Demand on Recovery Track

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Oil demand in China, the second largest market in the world, is returning to pre-pandemic levels, with prices on the rise, even as the global outlook for the commodity remains bleak.

Since mid-April, Chinese refineries have ramped up production after the government eased lockdowns as the coronavirus came under control in the country.

Sinopec, the country's largest, saw its operations back to around 76% of capacity by the beginning of May, up from 67% two months ago. Independent refineries in Shandong province, that produce 20% of the country's output, were back to around 71% of capacity by the beginning of May, up from just 34% three months ago.

This appetite underpinned the strong performance of Petrobras, Brazil's largest state-owned oil producer, in April. The company said it exported a record 1 million barrels per day in April, largely thanks to Chinese demand, particularly from refiners in Shandong Province.

"We expect to continue with good performance of our exports, due to the resumption of demand from China," said Anelise Lara, chief refining and natural gas officer at Petrobras, in a statement released earlier this month.

China accounts for 15% of the world's oil demand, behind the U.S. That demand had been growing at a double-digit rate each year before the pandemic, and the transportation sector was absorbing 55% of it.



Prices have now also recovered. Russian "ESPO blend crude" is typically a benchmark for Chinese oil appetite. In mid-April, a barrel of ESPO blend was \$4 cheaper than the global benchmark Dubai-linked crude, due to a lack of demand from China. But since then, a barrel of ESPO blend has risen in price and is now more expensive than Dubai crude.

Research company Rystad Energy sees Chinese oil demand growing to 13.55 million barrels a day in June, roughly equal to pre-pandemic levels. At the height of the outbreak, Chinese oil demand had dropped to 9.95 million barrels a day in February, down 26% from the previous month, a reflection of the strict countrywide lockdown.

Yusuke Katagiri, an oil trader at the Japanese trading house, Mitsubishi Corp., told Nikkei: "Since April, Chinese buyers are asking for more oil. We are going to see more oil tankers arriving in China in June and July."

Mitsubishi expects Dubai crude to rise to \$35-\$45 a barrel in the year ending in March 2021, up from the current \$30.

The resumption of economic activities has pushed Chinese industrial output in April to a 3.9% annual growth, with an increase in the production of computers, automobiles, metals and cement. Coal power generation, which reflects production output, has now returned to pre-pandemic levels, after falling to nearly 60% of the five-year average in February.

### U.S. Accomplish in...

FROM PAGE 1

"This will only end in disgrace but as the resistance of the Muslim people, of the Palestinian people, of the freedom loving people across the world their rejection of arrogance, their rejection of occupation, rejection of apartheid will bring the atrocity crimes to its end."

Elsewhere in his remarks, Zarif referred to the outbreak of coronavirus in the world, saying: "This year we have a global pandemic which is prevented those who believe in the cause of Palestine in the necessity of ending Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people in ending the most severe case of violation of human rights, the most severe case of threat against international peace and security by demonstrating during the last Friday of Ramadan to show international solidarity and to show the result of the entire international community particularly the Muslim people around the world to resist aggression, to resist propaganda, to resist warmongering, to resist fear-mongering and to resist extortion by the Israeli regime."

"But the pandemic also has shown us that the global powers who have supported the Zionist regime are not omnipotent they are not about all. Their power can be undermined even by small virus."

"The problem has been Muslim countries, Muslim governments have not found the necessity of becoming united in order to deal with this disgrace."

"This year the day of disgrace Nakba Day has been very close to the day of Quds and the disgrace is that we have not been able to support the Palestinians, to support the cause over the past 70 years just because people believe governments particularly governments believed that they could not overcome global arrogance," Zarif said.

"The pandemic has reminded us that the only power is the power of Almighty all other can be defeated even by a small virus, he reiterated.

"The resistance of the Palestinian people has continued for 70 years and has shown that aggression, violation of the international law [even nuclear weapons] cannot end the national aspiration of entire people."

"We have seen once again in the so-called Deal of the Century that those who believed that the United States could be a broker for peace were badly mistaken."

"This is the course of history believing in our service, believing in our ability to resist violence, to resist terrorism, to resist state terror is the response to this global menace."

"Everybody could agree that Israel is the single most serious threat to respectful human rights, to global peace and security, to non-proliferation, to a world free of mass destruction that have ever existed and through propaganda, disinformation and extortion."

"This reality cannot change. We have all come to realize if we had any doubts before that this regime and its supporter, the United States resort to terrorism as a means of advancing their agenda and that is not a sign of strength that is a sign of weakness this year we are celebrating the Day of Quds without one of the greatest champions of the cause of Quds and that is the martyred General Qasem Soleimani but look at how the United States managed to murder this brave man."

Let us once again commit ourselves to the cause of Palestine.

"Let us once again commit ourselves to our own dignity as Muslims, as human beings not to allow this global atrocity to continue."



LICENCE HOLDER: SOKHAN GOSTAR INSTITUTE

**Switchboard:**  
(+98) (21) 44253448  
**Public Relations Tel:**  
(+98)(21) 44253450  
Editorial Board: 44253449  
**Public Relations Fax:**  
(+98)(21) 44253395  
**Advertising Department:**  
Tel/Fax:(+98) (21) 44253335-9/44253234  
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## Bayern Not to Exercise 120m-Euro Option to Buy Coutinho

**B**ERLIN (Dispatches) - Bayern Munich will not activate a 120-million-euro (\$130 million) option to buy on-loan Brazilian star Philippe Coutinho from Barcelona, the German champions' chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge told Der Spiegel magazine. The option expired and "we haven't activated it," said Rummenigge. "Now we're going to draw up squad planning internally (for next season) and we'll see if he still has a role to play with us or not." Coutinho joined Bayern last August but has failed to shine on a consistent basis.

## Goetze to Part Ways With Dortmund

**B**ERLIN (Dispatches) - Borussia Dortmund sports director Michael Zorc confirmed Saturday that Mario Goetze, who scored the winning goal in the 2014 World Cup final, will leave at the end of the season. "We will stop working together with Mario Goetze in the summer," Zorc told Sky before Saturday's Bundesliga game away to Wolfsburg. "It is a joint decision after a constructive conversation. Mario is a really good guy." The decision caps a frustrating season for the 27-year-old attacker, who has made only five league starts this term.

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SPORTS

TUESDAY MAY 26, 2020

# Bayern Munich Beat Eintracht Frankfurt In Empty Stadium

**B**ERLIN (Dispatches) - Bayern Munich beat Eintracht Frankfurt 5-2 on Saturday, surviving a brief second-half comeback scare to stay four points clear of Borussia Dortmund at the top of the Bundesliga with seven games left to play.

The Bavarians thought they had the match wrapped up after efforts from Leon Goretzka, Thomas Mueller and Robert Lewandowski had given them a 3-0 lead in the empty Allianz Arena.

Eintracht defender Martin Hinteregger caught the Bayern defence napping to strike twice in three minutes and inject new life into the encounter.

Yet the visitors then quickly gave away two goals - with Alphonso Davies pouncing on a defensive error on the hour and Hinteregger scoring an own goal in the 74th minute.

Bayern, who had former player and club boss Franz Beckenbauer watching from the stands in a rare public appearance, are on 61 points with Dortmund, who host the Bavarians on Tuesday, on 57 following their 2-0 win over VfL Wolfsburg.

The Bundesliga resumed last week, with no fans in attendance, after being suspended for more than two months due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was the first match to be played without fans at Bayern's home ground but the champions looked unaffected as Mueller set up their first goal with his 17th assist of the season and grabbed the second himself.

Poland striker Lewandowski, chasing Gerd Mueller's 40-goal record haul from the 1971/72 season, hit his 27th of the campaign a minute after the restart before Hinteregger's two goal scare.

But Bayern kept their cool for their 12th win in their last 13 games that kept them favourites for an eighth straight title.

Borussia Dortmund scored a goal in each half through Raphael Guerreiro and Achraf Hakimi to beat hosts VfL Wolfsburg 2-0 on Saturday for their sixth straight Bundesliga win to stay on the heels of leaders Bayern Munich.

Portugal international Guerreiro tapped in a cutback from Thorgan Hazard after Erling Haaland had failed to connect in the 32nd minute, and Hakimi fired in from a fine Jadon Sancho assist - his 16th of the season - in the 78th to make sure of the three points.

The result lifted second-placed Dortmund to 57 points, four behind leaders Bayern, who beat Eintracht Frankfurt 5-2.

The Bundesliga resumed last week, with no fans in attendance, after being suspended for more than two months due



to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dortmund central defender Mats Hummels was taken off at halftime with a knock on the leg, although he did not appear to be seriously injured. They are already missing injured Dan Axel Zagadou and captain Marco Reus.

"I briefly spoke to the doctor," Dortmund sports director Michael Zorc said. "Mats had problems with his heel. He has had them in training for some time. We hope that he will be able to play on Tuesday."

The Wolves only briefly got a look-in when Renato Steffen was sent through right after the restart, but with only keeper Roman Buerki to beat his shot glanced the bar and sailed high.

They have now lost five consecutive home games to Dortmund, the first team to do that at Wolfsburg, while Dortmund have not conceded a goal in their two games since the league restart.

Wolfsburg, who suffered their first defeat in eight league games, were left with 10 men when substitute Felix Klaus was sent off with 10 minutes remaining for a rough challenge.

Germany international Kai Havertz scored a brace for the second match in the row to lead Bayer Leverkusen to a 3-1 win at Borussia Moenchengladbach as they leap-frogged their opponents to go third on 53.

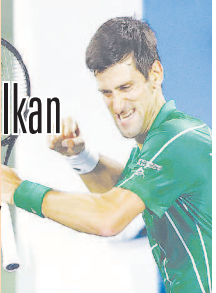
## Djokovic Announces Balkan Region Series, Thiem Joins

**M**UMBAI (Reuters) - With professional tennis shut down by the novel coronavirus pandemic, world number one Novak Djokovic is bringing together some of the world's top tennis players for a series of matches to run from June 13-July 5 in the Balkan region.

All pro tennis tours were suspended in early March and will not return before August as countries went into lockdown and closed borders to contain the spread of the virus. Some players, including Djokovic, have returned to the practice courts while maintaining strict hygiene and social distancing norms, and some exhibition events without fans have also been held in countries like Germany and the United States.

"I'm proud to officially share the news that the #AdriaTour will be held across the #Balkans 13 June - 5 July kicking off with a tournament in Belgrade," Djokovic, who turned 33 on Friday, said in a Twitter post. "Very grateful we could make this happen to play and support humanitarian projects across the region."

World number three Dominic Thiem of Austria and Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov, who is ranked 19, have confirmed their participation in the eight-man event which will end with Djokovic's exhibition match against Bosnian Damir Dzumhur in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



## Kenin, Andreescu To Be Part of Team Event In Charleston

**N**EW YORK (Reuters) - Sofia Kenin and Bianca Andreescu will be among 16 women's players to compete in Charleston next month in the largest event held since the season was derailed in mid-March by the COVID-19 crisis, the Tennis Channel said.

American Kenin, who won this year's Australian Open, and Canada's Andreescu, the 2019 U.S. Open champion, will take part in the Credit One Bank Invitational, which will be aired on the Tennis Channel and begin on June 23.

It will be held without fans in an effort to stem the spread of the novel coronavirus.

The 16 players will be divided into two teams with Americans Madison Keys and Bethanie Mattek-Sands serving as captains. The tournament will feature 16 singles matches and eight doubles contests.

"Let's Do This!!!" Mattek-Sands wrote on Twitter on Friday.

Other players slated to participate include former world number one Victoria Azarenka, 2017 U.S. Open champion Sloane Stephens and 2016 Olympic gold medallist Monica Puig.

The field will be completed by Americans Amanda Anisimova, Jennifer Brady, Danielle Collins, Emma Navarro, Alison Riske and Shelby Rogers as well as Canadians Eugenie Bouchard and Leylah Fernandez and Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic.

## Setien Keen on Neymar Barca Return

**M**ADRID (Dispatches) - Barcelona boss Quique Setien says he would love to coach Neymar and would be "delighted" if the Brazilian returns to the club from Paris Saint-Germain.

Barca tried to re-sign Neymar last year but were unable to agree a deal with French champions PSG, whom he joined for a world-record fee of 222 million euros (\$264 million at the time) in 2017.

An agreement may even harder to strike this summer given the financial implications of the coronavirus pandemic, although reportedly Barcelona could offer players in exchange.

## La Liga Can Resume Week of June 8

**M**ADRID (AFP) - Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez announced on Saturday that La Liga can resume from its coronavirus lockdown in the week of June 8.

"The resumption of major professional sporting competitions and in particular La Liga will be allowed from the week of June 8," Sanchez told a press conference.

La Liga president Javier Tebas has said the preferred date for games to resume is Friday, June 12 and Sanchez's announcement means that plan has been given the green light from the government.

"We are very happy with the decision. It is the result of the great work of clubs, players, coaches," wrote Tebas on Twitter.

"But it is very important to follow the health protocol and respect the trajectory of the pandemic. We cannot lower our guard."

More than two months after the COVID-19 pandemic halted the season in Spain, players have begun training in small groups as they aim to be as ready as possible for the planned reboot next month.

Barcelona sit top of the table, two points ahead of Real Madrid.

Clubs have 11 games left to play to finish the season, with the proposed final round to be completed by the end of July.

The Andalusian derby between Real Betis and Sevilla is likely to be the first game back.



## Alonso Is a Virtual Winner at Indianapolis

**N**EW YORK (Reuters) - Fernando Alonso won at Indianapolis, in the virtual world at least, on Saturday in a field featuring 80-year-old U.S. great Mario Andretti and a cast of Indy 500 winners and Formula One champions.

The Spaniard, who will return to the Indianapolis oval for real in August to try to win the 500 and become only the second driver to seal the 'Triple Crown of Motorsport', beat Jenson Button by 0.037 seconds.

The two times Le Mans 24 Hours winner, who has a Monaco Grand Prix victory and two F1 titles on his resume, also took the later reverse grid race from 21st on the grid.

"Mega fun JB!!! Now you come to the real 500," Alonso tweeted to 2009 Formula One champion Button. An early incident after qualifying 19th of 26 in the first race.

"I had a blast," said Andretti, the 1978 Formula One champion and 1969 Indy 500 winner.

"Obviously it seemed like I was part of every situation that was happening out there but other than that I thoroughly enjoyed it.

"It was not natural," he said of simulated racing around The Brickyard. "It's so different... you drive it differently, obviously. The lines are a little different. "You have to understand just what that rig wants, what the sim likes, how aggressive you can get and all of that. There's a definite learning curve, no question about it."

## Two More Positive Coronavirus Tests In Premier League

**L**ONDON (Reuters) - Two people from two Premier League clubs have tested positive for the coronavirus after a second batch of testing, the Premier League said on Saturday.

Since the players returned to limited group training on Tuesday, eight positive tests for the virus have been confirmed from England's top-flight clubs.

"The Premier League can today confirm that on Tuesday 19 May, Thursday 21 May and Friday 22 May, 996 players and club staff were tested for COVID-19. Of these, two have tested positive from two clubs," the statement said.

"The Premier League is providing this aggregated information for the purposes of competition integrity and transparency.

"Players or club staff who have tested positive will now self-isolate for a period of seven days."

The Premier League said it would not be providing details of the identities of the two new positive tests. A total of 748 tests of players and club staff made up the initial round of testing on May 17-18. Watford's Adrian Mariappa and two members of the club's non-playing staff and Burnley assistant manager Ian Woan were among six positive tests.

They are all still in their seven-day isolation period. Two other Watford players are also self-isolating after coming into close contact with people who tested positive, according to manager Nigel Pearson.

