

**Judiciary spokesman Announced Yesterday That Judge Gholamreza Mansouri Who Is Accused of Receiving Bribes Has Been Arrested in Romania by the International Criminal Police Organization, Known as Interpol**

# IRAN NEWS

**Managing Director of Iranian Investment Petrochemical Group (IIPG) Says Nearly 44 Trillion Rials (About \$1.04 Billion) Has Been Invested to Construct Four Petrochemical Parks Across the Country**

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## UN Report on Missiles Lacks Expertise, Knowledge

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran's ambassador to the United Nations strongly condemned a recent report by the UN claiming that missiles used to attack Saudi Arabia have been "of Iranian origin", saying it has been made under political pressure from the U.S.

Seems the U.S.—with its history of Iran-bashing—sits in the driver's seat to shape UN 'assessments'," Majid Takht Ravanchi tweeted on Saturday.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told the Security Council in a report seen by Reuters on Thursday that cruise missiles used in several attacks on oil facilities and an international airport in Saudi Arabia in November 2019 and February 2020 had been of "Iranian origin".

He also said the "items may have been transferred in a manner inconsistent" with Security Council Resolution 2231, which enshrines the international nuclear deal – officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) – signed between Iran and world powers in 2015.

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## Afghan Envoy Summoned Over Offensive Against Iran Diplomatic Sites

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has summoned Afghanistan's Ambassador to Tehran over recent offensive moves made against the Iranian diplomatic missions in Afghanistan.

The Ambassador of Afghanistan to Tehran went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Saturday morning to provide an explanation for a series of recent moves against the Iranian diplomatic missions in Afghanistan.

It came after the moves by a small group of certain political currents with a record of opposition to the Islamic Republic of Iran and to the good neighbourliness between Iran and Afghanistan.

The groups recently made a series of insulting moves and violated the Islamic Republic of Iran's Embassy and other missions in Afghanistan under the pretext that a number of Afghan nationals who had plans for illegal entry into Iran or had entered Iran illegally with the help of traffickers have died.

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# U.S. Sanctions Fail To Bring Iran Down



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - First Vice-President Eshaq Jahangiri says that the U.S. sanctions inflicted damages on Iranian economy, but, the US failed to achieve its goals as the country has stood strongly.

Sanctions could just harm the Iranian economy but failed to make it fall down, Jahangiri said at a ceremony held in Tehran Saturday on introducing the new head of foundation for martyrs and war veterans affairs.

The government is making efforts to undertake the pressures from the sanctions and shift it from shoulders of the people, Jahangiri added.

He said that the United States- old foe of Iran- has been trying in vain to make Iranian nation's progress stagnant. Concerning the regional developments, Jahangiri said that Saudis and Zionists in the region have joined hands and made plots against Iran in different periods.

Referring to the recent anti-Iran plot hatched by the United States which is no longer a member of the July 2015 nuclear deal as it withdrew unilaterally from the deal, Jahangiri said Iran can buy its arms needs or sell its indigenous products from next few months after arms embargo against Iran are lifted despite the US attempt to extend the embargo.

He touched on the critical conditions created across the world by coronavirus pandemic since Dec 2019, saying that the virus has put the world's greatest economies in danger.

He further described the U.S. sanctions as virus worse than COVID-19.

He stressed that coherence and unity inside the country as well as the Supreme Leader's guidelines can help the nation breeze through the difficulties.

Washington's so-called maximum pressure campaign against Tehran officially started when Republican President Donald Trump unilaterally pulled his country out of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in May 2018.

Tehran maintains that its nuclear program is merely peaceful as also asserted by other signatories of the JCPOA. Ever since withdrawing from the agreement, Washington has been trying to bring Iran to the negotiation table for a new deal.

## Trump's Approach to Kill JCPOA Will Do Irreparable Damage to UNSC

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - A new report has warned that the approach adopted by the administration of US President Donald Trump to kill off the 2015 Iran nuclear deal will not only lead to "serious consequences" for the multilateral agreement, but also "do irreparable damage" to the UN Security Council (UNSC).

The Foreign Policy reported on Friday that Washington is dialing up efforts to kill the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) completely through pushing the remaining parties to the agreement to extend a UN arms embargo on Tehran.

The U.S., it added, is also threatening to trigger the so-called snapback of all UN sanctions on Iran under the pretext of what it calls Iran's destabilizing activities.

However, such moves have placed Washington in "direct confrontation" with the JCPOA signatories, with Russia and China expressing their opposition to the US policy, and the Islamic Republic threatening to withdraw entirely from the JCPOA, as well as the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), if UN sanctions are re-imposed, the report said.

"The showdown threatens not just the viability of the Iran nuclear deal, which has been tottering for two years—but which the remaining participants still hope can be salvaged—but also the legitimacy of the UN Security Council," it noted.

China and Russia write to the UN, arguing strongly against a U.S. threat to force a return of all sanctions against Iran.

Ellie Geranmayeh, an Iran expert at the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), told the FP that the recent war of words between the US on one side and the remaining parties to the JCPOA on the other "has been brewing for several months, and now all the dirty laundry is coming into the public eye."

"Iran hawks want to kill any trace of the JCPOA before the term is up, burn down any diplomatic bridges with Iran," she pointed out.

The 2020 U.S. presidential election is scheduled for November 3, 2020. Trump's term will end on January 20, 2021 if he is not re-elected for second time.

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## Gov't to Return Pandemic-Related Limitations If Required

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Hassan Rouhani warned that limitations may return if people neglect the guidelines to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

"All lifting of restrictions is conditioned on our cooperation. If we are forced to do so, we will return those restrictions. If the peak of the outbreak returns to a province, we will have to return the restrictions of the first weeks. If people's health is endangered in a city or province, we have no choice but to restore limitations. If we want to reduce restrictions, we must follow all the principles," Rouhani said.

He made the remarks on Saturday's meeting of the National Coronavirus Combat and Prevention Headquarters and added, "our dear people know that facing the novel coronavirus global pandemic, also known as COVID-19, is an unprecedented issue in the country at least in the past 150 years."

The issue of Spanish influenza was put forward in the world in 1920 in a way that this deadly influenza claimed 50 million lives in this period, he said, adding, "the novel coronavirus started in Asia and then hit Europe, US and finally Africa respectively and nowadays, we can witness that all countries are now grappling with the pandemic."

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## Iran Pushing to Lower Barriers to Trade With Armenia

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's embassy in Yerevan said efforts are underway to remove the barriers to trade with Armenia and address the problems of Iranian expatriates caused by the outbreak of the novel coronavirus.

In a statement on Saturday, the Iranian embassy in Yerevan said the government of Armenia has extended a state of emergency by July 13 to curb the spread of the coronavirus, noting that the Caucasus country has defined a set of criteria to end the state of emergency, including the creation of an effective vaccine or introduction of a treatment for COVID-19.

The embassy said restrictions on the entry of foreign nationals into Armenia are still in place. It also noted that Iran's embassy is in constant contact with the Armenian officials and is pursuing efforts to lower and remove the barriers to trade between the two neighbors, settle the problems that Iranians may face in Armenia under the state of emergency, and urge the Armenian government to make arrangements for individuals and groups with special conditions.

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## Tehran Asks Paris To Read Black Boxes of Ukrainian Plane

TEHRAN (IP) - Iranian investigators have asked France's BEA air Accident Agency to read black boxes of a Ukrainian plane which was mistakenly shot down in January near Tehran.

"Iran's AAIB recently made a request to the BEA that the recorders should be taken by Iran to the BEA's premises in France to be read in the presence of representatives of other involved countries and ICAO if the BEA is in a position to accommodate this," Farhad Parvaresh, Iran's representative to the UN agency, told Reuters by telephone.

The BEA said it had not formally received the request and remained in discussions with Iran, Canada, and Ukraine on any involvement it may have.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for International and Legal Affairs, Mohsen Baharvand said on June 7 that Iran is ready to deliver the black box of the downed Ukrainian plane to a French or any other foreign company capable of decoding it.

"According to our investigations, Iran, Ukraine, and many other countries are not capable of decoding the black box due to the aircraft's modern technology," Mehr quoted Baharvand as saying.

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## Uzbekistan Congratulates Qalibaf On Election as New Speaker

TEHRAN (MNA) – Chairman of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan Nurdinjon Ismoilov congratulated Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf on his election as Iran's Parliament Speaker, underlining the role of parliaments in developing relations between Iran and Uzbekistan.

In a message on Friday, Ismoilov expressed hope that friendly relations between Uzbekistan and Iran would be further strengthened in the future. He also wished success for Ghalibaf and progress for Iranians.

## Tehran Urges Washington to End “Shameful Hostage-Taking”

**IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK**

**TEHRAN – Government spokesman has described as a good breakthrough the return home of a number of Iranian scientists incarcerated in the United States under “unreal pretexts,” urging the U.S. to release other Iranian inmates as well.**

Ali Rabiee noted that swapping prisoners between Iran and the US is part of the nation's policies “at the highest decision-making levels of the Establishment.”

“We have asked the U.S. regime to make arrangements to restore the legal rights of other innocent Iranian inmates and put an end to this shameful hostage-taking,” he said.

The spokesman noted the government will continue to support these Iranian citizens as well as other Iranian expats which run into trouble and are mired in unfavorable conditions in different countries due to discrimination and political matters.

“One of the basic duties that the government feels responsible, more than ever, to



fulfill is to support the dignity of all Iranian citizens, both inside and outside the country, whose daily lives have been disrupted as a result of the United States' inhumane and unfair sanctions,” he added.

Rabiee said the U.S. regime has become so impudent with regards to breaching global values that it has threatened to slap sanctions on members of the International Court of Justice if they look into international crimes committed by American military troops and citizens.

He underlined the reason why Iran does not take US President Donald Trump offer of talks seriously is that the “unruly” regime seeks to tighten the noose around internationally known jurists to wreck justice and common human values.

He said Washington has left no option for Tehran other than standing up to bullying and calling on all nations to band together in the face of this “unbelievable revolt.”

### Iran Berates U.S. for Blocking ICC Inquiry Into U.S. War Crimes

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran on Saturday rebuked the US Administration for blocking inquiry into the war crimes perpetrated by the U.S. Army commanders in Afghanistan.

Head of Iran's Presidential Office Mahmoud Vaezi says the United States with the help of an unethical way of sanctions threaten members and judges of the international criminal court responsible for investigation into war crimes and the crimes against humanity.

Such threat shows anti-human rights and anti-justice spirit of the team working in the White House, Vaezi said through a twitter post on Saturday.

These are years that ineffectiveness of the sanctions have proved after Iranian nation's resistance, Vaezi wrote.

### Tokyo Discuss Fighting COVID-19

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and his Japanese counterpart Takeo Mori on Saturday reviewed cooperation on fighting coronavirus.

During the videoconference, both sides conferred on bilateral, regional and international issues.

Araqchii and Mori underlined taking advantage of capacities for maintaining cooperation.

Iranian and Japanese official held meeting at highest level last year.

Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe visited Iran on June 12, 2019.

The trip was made in the framework of traditional and longstanding relations and in line with developing bilateral ties and issues of mutual interest.

President Hassan Rouhani also visited Tokyo on December 20, 2019.

## CBI Governor Urged to Push S. Korea Release Assets

TEHRAN (MNA) – President Hassan Rouhani has called on Governor of the Central Bank of Iran Abdolnaser Hemmati to push South Korea to release billions of dollars of Iran's oil-export revenues.

In a phone conversation on Friday, Rouhani ordered Hemmati to take all the necessary actions in line with pushing South Korea to release Iran's oil-export revenues and assets.

The president urged the CBI governor to follow the case via holding political talks as well as taking legal measures through international bodies.

“South Korea's ban on Iran's use of central bank resources to buy basic goods, medicine and humanitarian items is never acceptable, and we expect the South Korean government to lift this restriction as soon as possible,” the president said.

Earlier this week, the top Iranian baker had called on South Korean banks to release Iran's oil money frozen under U.S. pressure, warning that the Islamic Republic reserves the right to take legal action under international law.

## Close Parliamentary Cooperation to Strengthen Tehran-Baku Relations

**IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK**

TEHRAN - In a congratulatory message to Iran's Parliament Speaker, the Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Azerbaijan described the closer cooperation between the parliaments of the two countries as a ground for strengthening relations between the two nations.

Congratulating Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf on his election as the Speaker of the 11th Majlis of Iran, the Speaker of the National Assembly of Azerbaijan Republic Sahiba Gafarova said in a message: “I am pleased to congratulate you on your election as the

Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran and I wish you all the best.”

Gafarova emphasized, “Deepening our political, economic, and cultural relations with the friendly country of the Islamic Republic of Iran is of great importance for us. Undoubtedly, closer cooperation between the parliaments of the two countries will further strengthen relations between the two nations of Iran and Azerbaijan.”

Gafarova further added, “I strongly believe that during your presidency, relations between the legislatures of the two countries will develop in all directions and our bilateral and multilateral parliamentary cooperation will expand.”

## U.S. Actions Have Negative Impact on Humanity

TEHRAN (IP)- Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's Permanent Envoy to the International Organizations in Vienna, has said that U.S. actions in cutting World Health Organization funds have a negative impact on humanity and the whole world.

Gharibabadi expressed his regret over the U.S. unilateral sanctions, the budget cuts of international organizations, and its devastating consequences of the global fight against COVID-19.

Speaking at a meeting of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Gharibabadi called for collective efforts of the world community to achieve a more inclusive, sustainable, and flexible economic recovery.

“Such actions should be condemned because they have a negative impact on humanity and the whole world,” Gharibabadi outlined.

U.S. President Donald Trump last month accused the World Health Organization of failing to act independently against China, threatening to cancel US membership in the global body.

In a letter to the head of the World Health Organization, he also threatened that his country might cut off funding to the international body altogether.

## Tehran-Moscow Ties Important for Keeping Both Nations' Interests

TEHRAN (IRNA) - First Vice-President Eshaq Jahangiri called Friday through a message to Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin for fostering bilateral cooperation in line with serving national interests.

Jahangiri's message was extended to Mishustin on the occasion of Russia Day on June 12.

June 12 is marked in Russia as the day which reminds declaration of State Sovereignty in 1990 that made Russia independent from the Soviet Union.

As Jahangiri wrote in his message, Tehran and Moscow have witnessed widening of cooperation in recent years, so the two sides should further bilateral ties in cultural, technical, scientific and economic fields more than before.

In a related development, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif offered congratulation message to his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov on the occasion, and underlined the importance of deepening bilateral relations.

## Ireland Seeks Iran Support For Membership to UNSC

**IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK**

TEHRAN - In a letter to the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Ireland's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Simon Coveney requested Iran to support his country's candidature as a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

Voting for the ten non-permanent members of the Security Council for the term 2021-2022 will take place next week.

“We believe that our values and principles, our consistent contributions to UN peacekeeping and our experience of peace-building on the island of Ireland will enable us to bring a uniquely independent voice to the work of the Security Council”, Coveney said.

He also promised that, if elected Ireland “will listen to the concerns of all UN member states” and will strive for more peace, stability, and equality in the world.

He also emphasized that Ireland would be fully involved in issues related to the Security Council, “paying special attention to the issues affecting the Middle East, including the question of Palestine, which has long been a priority for Ireland.”

It is worth noting that Ireland, along with other members of the European Union, had been involved in the process of reaching the comprehensive nuclear agreement - the JCPOA - in 2015 and has criticized the unilateral U.S. withdrawal from that agreement.

## Sanctions Stem From U.S. Desperation

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Spokesperson of Law Enforcement Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (NAJA) condemned the U.S. illegal and unwise sanctions against some police commanders, considering it a continuation of the so-called maximum pressure strategy on Iran.

Referring to the measure taken by the U.S. Treasury Department last month to impose a new round of sanctions against some Iranian authorities including Police Chief Brigadier General Hossein Ashtari, Second Brigadier General Ahmad Noorian said that this action clearly showed that the security of Iranian people has been targeted by the Americans.

The fruitless, repetitive and threadbare sanctions against Iran's Police Chief and other officials are a sign of the weakness, despair and confusion of the U.S. in reaction to its failures against the will of the Iranian government and people, he added.

Noorian stressed that the enemies should be aware that such sanctions will not undermine the people's serious determination to fight U.S. hostile policies, adding that the resistance will continue.

Referring to the large-scale confrontation of Iran's police with terrorists groups for many years, he said that the reason for imposing sanctions against NAJA is the fight of Iranian police with terrorists who are supported by arrogant governments led by the United States.

## Iran Exports 20% of Domestically-Produced Nano-Products

TEHRAN (IFP) - An official says export of a whole range of homegrown products makes up a fifth of Iran's nano-economy.

Saeid Sarkar said the Islamic Republic is now exporting nano-products to dozens of countries.

“We have managed to export nano-products to more than 50 countries around the world,” said Sarkar, the secretary of a special nanotechnology development committee of the Science and Technology Department of the Presidential Office.

He said the sales of these products fluctuates depending on what time of the year they are being exported.

“We may not sell any products to a country in one year, but the sales may increase tremendously the following year,” he noted.

“Selling nano-products is a little difficult due to sanctions and international issues,” he added.

Sarkar underlined due regard should be paid to the quality of products.

“The world is after products with high quality and low prices, and we should pay special attention to this issue in order to be able to make our presence felt on the international stage,” he said.

He said nano-exports include a whole range of products, including lab equipment, health equipment, anti-cancer drugs, construction materials and textiles.

## Iran, Germany Set Up Joint Museum

TEHRAN (ILNA) - Joint Iranian-German Museum will be open in near future, Director of Iran's Museums and Historical Properties Office Mohammad Reza Kargar said.

The Iranian official said that after the German archaeological experts visited Iran, it was decided the museum's projects are set to open. “Yazd Grand Museum is the first museum project that will be reopened jointly with the cooperation of foreign delegations,” he added.

Kargar confirmed that the German archaeological delegation was also interested in cooperating with us on museum projects; we offered them, and after studying they accepted it. Referring to coronavirus damage to Iran's museums, Mohammadreza Kargar said “Iranian museums and historical sites have taken 600 billion rials (about \$14.2 million) hit from the coronavirus outbreak over the previous months.” “Although the museums and other tourist sites have reopened their doors to the public gradually as restrictions over the coronavirus pandemic have been relaxed, they faced a huge loss due to the closure.”

However, the number of visitors during the past two weeks is not as much as we expected, he added.

Considering the fact that there are no foreign tourists in the country, the number of foreign tourists visiting museums is zero and the domestic visitors are only 20 percent of the number of the visitors in same period of time in the past year, he stated.

The country closed cultural heritage museums and historical sites in a preventive measure amid fears of coronavirus outbreak back in February.

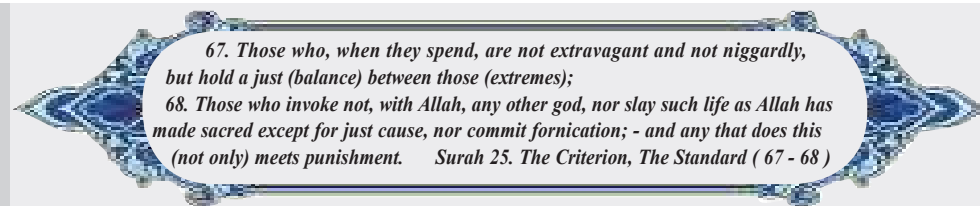
During the Iranian New Year (Noruz) holidays in late March, some museums and tourist sites arranged online visits and virtual tours for the people who were in-home quarantine.





## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:04
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:42
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:01
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	05:48



## Georgia's Cutting Trade With Iran "Politically-Motivated"

*IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK*

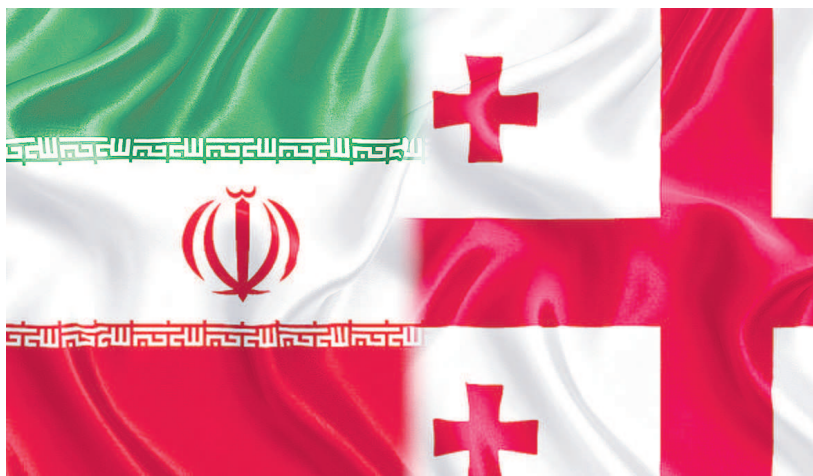
**TEHRAN – A member of Iran's Chamber of Commerce says Georgia's decision to close its borders to Iranian trucks has nothing to do with the outbreak of Coronavirus and it seems it is a politically motivated decision.**

Speaking to ILNA, Ali Shariati said since late May, Georgia without issuing any notice has closed its borders and it even unloaded Iranian trucks and the reason behind such a decision is unknown and it has worried Iranian traders.

Criticizing this unexpected move of Georgians, Shariati said that it seems Georgia has taken this decision in fight with Coronavirus pandemic but since the country has not officially announced the reason, the pretext of coronavirus is not acceptable for Iranians. He added that of course Georgian officials in compliance with the U.S. sanctions have been unkind to Iran and it seems their recent decision for closing borders is politically motivated because Georgia is more inclined towards Turkey.

Shariati added that if Georgia does not give any clear reason for its decision, Iran should summon Georgian Ambassador.

He claimed that Georgia is after launching trade corridor with Turkey by eliminating Baku route and Iranian trucks and it seems this is the reason behind severing trade ties with Iran



Meanwhile the head of the Iran-Georgia Chamber of Commerce told that Iran has not received a clear reason from Georgia why transit between two countries has been suspended.

Seyedeh Fatemeh Moghimi that unfortunately, this problem has been going on for the last two weeks and the joint chamber has not received a clear reason in this regard.

Wagonloads of Iranian goods have entered the Azerbaijan Republic via Astara and were scheduled to be transferred to Georgia. On May 27, Azeri officials refused entry to Iranian cargos.

Without prior notice, Georgia has stopped both trucks and freight trains heading from Iran via Red Bridge, the crossing point between Georgia and Azerbaijan on the Tbilisi-Ganja Road.

The chairwoman of Iran-Georgia Chamber of Commerce said "Therefore, there is still no exact date for sending the goods to Georgia and we can't export to this country."

"We have corresponded with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Iranian Chamber of Commerce and are still waiting for a response," she added.

The spokesperson of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration Rouhollah Latifi also said that some blame it on disagreements between Baku and Tbilisi about the mode of transportation.

## Iran Non-Oil Economic Growth at Positive Rate

TEHRAN (MNA) – The governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) announced on Saturday that the country's economic growth, without taking oil production into account, in the last Iranian calendar (ended on March 20, 2020) stood at a positive domain.

As Abdolnaser Hemmati announced on Instagram, official reports register a positive rate for Iran's non-oil economic growth in the last Iranian year 1398.

"In the said period, economic growth rate stood at +1.1% with +8.8% growth in agricultural sector, +2.3% growth in industrial and mining sector, and -0.2% decrease in services sector," Hemmati wrote.

He described the negative growth rate of the services sector as an inevitable impact of the coronavirus outbreak in the last two months of the preceding year.

Hemmati added that due to the sharp drop in Iran's oil revenues in the year before, oil income shrank -38.7%, pulling down Iran's economic growth to -6.5% in 1398.

The senior Iranian banker added that CBI will release further detail about Iran's economic proceedings and achievements in the last year within the upcoming days.

In mid-February, Hemmati announced that Iran's economy is getting out of recession, while major economic indices are experiencing stability.



## Turkey-Iran Trade Turnover Heavily Down In April



*IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK*

TEHRAN - The trade turnover between Turkey and Iran in April 2020 decreased by over \$638 million compared to the same month of last year, having made \$74.5 million, Turkish Trade Ministry said.

"In April 2020, Turkey's export to Iran amounted to \$55.1 million, and import from Iran - \$19.4 million," the ministry said.

At the same time, in the first 4 months of this year, trade turnover between Turkey and Iran declined by over \$2.1 billion compared to the same period of 2019, having stood at \$723.5 million.

"From January through April 2020, Turkey's export to Iran amounted to \$434.4 million, and import from Iran - \$289.1 million," the ministry said.

Turkey's foreign trade turnover in April 2020 amounted to over \$22.5 billion.

In the reporting month, Turkey's exports dropped by 41.4 percent compared to April 2019, having stood at \$8.9 billion.

Meanwhile the export of cars from Turkey to Iran decreased by 8.39 percent from January through April 2020, compared to the same period of 2019 and amounted to \$20.6 million.

In April 2020, the export of cars from Turkey to Iran dropped by 75.41 percent compared to April 2019 and amounted to \$1.5 million.

The export of cars from Turkey to the world markets decreased by 26.9 percent from January through April 2020 compared to the same period of last year and reached \$7.6 billion.

## SIMIDCO's Pelletizing Plant Inaugurated

*IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK*

TEHRAN – Martyr General Lieutenant Qassem Soleimani pelletizing unit of Sanabad Mineral and Industrial Company (SIMIDCO) was officially inaugurated on Thursday.

President Hassan Rouhani in a videoconference inaugurated the plant in presence of caretaker of industry ministry, head of IMIDRO, the CEO of Khouzestan Steel Company, the CEO of SIMIDCO and some officials of Sangan mineral and industrial region.

Addressing the ceremony, the caretaker of industry ministry Mr. Hossein Modarres Khiabani said in the year of surge in production and during the campaign for launching industrial and mineral projects, every week some projects will be inaugurated till end of September 2021.

He added that today two mineral projects were inaugurated in Khorasan Razavi Province that one of them is the first phase of the biggest concentrate-making plant with production capacity of 5m tons and the other is SIMIDCO's pelletizing plant with production capacity of 5.2m tons. The company is an affiliated company to Khouzestan Steel Company.

Modarres Khiabani reiterated that those plants are being launched while the country is under the heaviest sanctions and they have been launched by domestic experts.

He added that these mineral projects are in Sangan complex which is located in the eastern point of the country which will provide the country with the unique capacity.

Meanwhile the CEO of Khouzestan Steel Company, for his part, said that Martyr Soleimani pelletizing unit of SIMIDCO has been launched with production capacity of 5.2m tons by the domestic experts and today its first phase is being launched.



Mr. Ali Mohammadi noted that SIMIDCO is one of the affiliated companies of Khouzestan Steel Company which has been active with production capacity of 5.2m tons of concentrate and it now can produce 5.2m tons of pellet.

He reiterated that one of the special things about the newly launched unit is that it provides all its necessary raw materials from the plant.

He added that the project was launched with an investment of 115m euros and it can create 1500 direct and indirect jobs.

## MSC Managers, Staff Are Source of Pride for Revolution

*IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK*

TEHRAN – Commander of scientific and specialized institution of Law Enforcement Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran (NAJA) after visiting the production line at Mobarakeh Steel Company hailed the company and reiterated that honest managers and staff of the company are the source of pride for the establishment and the revolution.

Brigadier Fadaee said he praises God that after the victory of glorious Islamic Revolution such a plant has been set up in the country, adding that he is pleased that honest managers and staff of the company are source of pride for the country and establishment.

He added that health and security are two valuable blessings which have been emphasized by Almighty God, adding that undoubtedly, the law enforcement force will do its most for restoring peace and security for the citizens and creating ground for economic activities in order that staff of this mammoth mill can continue their activities without any concern.

He pointed to the significance of work and production in the economic boom in the country, adding that to achieve the best condition for economic activities, peace and security are two important factors that fortunately they have been provided because of close interaction between the law enforcement force and Mobarakeh Steel Company.

Meanwhile Head of public relations office of Mobarakeh Steel Company Mr. Iraj Torabi, for his part, said that law enforcement forces have always done their best for restoring peace and creating a safe climate for businesses and economic activities and Mobarakeh Steel Company is grateful for it.

He pointed to the importance of acquaintance of organs and organizations with different functions of Mobarakeh Steel Company and its role in the national economy. He added that if all officials get more familiar with the functions of plants like Mobarakeh Steel Company, they will get much better results, adding that today Mobarakeh Steel Company as a national asset has the production chain from ore to color fully in its own complex and it has its own effect in any part of Islamic Iran.

Torabi stipulated that today everybody sees that the company has had good co-operations with the law enforcement force in playing its role in social responsibilities.

## Officials Turn to ESCO for Providing Rails for Metro

*IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK*

ISFAHAN - Deputy Interior Minister for Urban and Rural Development Mehdi Jamalnejad paid a visit to Esfahan Steel Company (ESCO) and toured the national rail production line as well as Tarabgin Company of ESCO.

Jamalnejad, during his visit, was accompanied by governor of town of Lanjan Mr. Khodamorad Salehi, deputy governor on cultural and construction affairs Mr. Hoojatollah Gholami and director of governor general of the province on urban and municipality affairs Mr. Ali Asghar Zakeri.

During his touring the production line, Mr. Jamalnejad said mass production of national rails for developing the

transportation especially metro is very important for the country, adding that fortunately this year and last year significant amount of participation bonds has been earmarked for helping the rail network and urban trains infrastructures especially in the metropolitan cities, and provision of rail is one of the major prerequisites for developing urban trains.

He added that ESCO's presence in production of rail has helped the urban management a great deal and it is very important for the development of the country.

Jamalnejad reiterated due to prudence and measures of managers of ESCO, the company is currently the biggest producer of the rail in the country and it is the task of urban managers to shift their approaches to the domestic production especially to ESCO which is considered as a mother industry.

He noted that the production of national rail has been totally activated and boosted during the management of Eng. Yazdizadeh at ESCO, expressing hope the company which is acting well in rail production would support the development of rail transportation and it is an important act for the country by using domestic capabilities.

Meanwhile Mr. Yazdizadeh, for his part, termed Mr. Jamalnejad as one of the serious supporters of production of strategic production of rail especially for metro trains, adding that his support has helped ESCO to produce three types of rail which are needed in the country.

He reiterated that the company has no limitation for meeting the domestic needs of rail for metro trains.



## France Unveils Plan to Reopen Non-Schengen Borders

PARIS (Dispatches) - France will gradually reopen its borders to countries outside the Schengen zone from July 1, the interior and foreign ministers said in a joint statement on Friday.

The borders were shut in mid-March to stop the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, but the European Union recommended on Thursday that the bloc reopen to some countries in the Balkans from July 1.

Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said in their statement that France's reopening would be in harmony with the rest of the EU.



## Pompeo Plans to Meet Chinese Officials in Hawaii

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is planning to travel to Hawaii to meet with Chinese government officials, Politico reported on Friday, citing two unnamed sources.

Pompeo, who has been vocal in criticizing China on a range of issues from the origins of the coronavirus pandemic to its Hong Kong policy to the treatment of its ethnic and religious minorities, was planning the trip "quietly" and the arrangements were not finalized, Politico said.

The U.S. State Department and the Chinese embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to requests for comment.



## Brazil Now Second In Virus Deaths



PARIS (AFP) - Brazil on Friday claimed the unenviable position of having the second-highest coronavirus death toll worldwide behind the United States, where several states have posted record daily case totals, signaling the crisis is far from over.

U.S. and European stocks ended the week on an upswing after a rout sparked by the US data and fresh evidence of the economic damage caused by virus-related lockdowns, with British GDP shrinking by a record 20.4 percent in April.

Meanwhile, in several European countries, the focus shifted to the courts, and who might eventually be pinned with the blame for the global financial and health crisis.

Brazil's health ministry recorded 909 deaths in the past 24 hours, putting the total at 41,828 -- meaning the country of 212 million people has now surpassed Britain's death toll.

Experts warn the actual number of cases in Latin America's biggest economy could be many times higher than the confirmed figure of 828,810.

"Some areas are at a critical stage" in Brazil, with intensive care unit occupancy levels of more than 90 percent, World Health Organization emergencies director Mike Ryan told journalists in Geneva.

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, who threatened last week to quit the WHO over "ideological bias," has dismissed the virus as a "little flu," and berated state officials for imposing lockdowns.

Latin America is the latest epicenter in the world's battle with the novel coronavirus, which emerged in China late last year.

The region has recorded more than 1.5 million infections and 75,000 deaths, with no signs the virus is slowing.

In the U.S., which has confirmed the most COVID-19 deaths -- over 114,000 -- more than a dozen states, including two of the most populous, Texas and Florida, reported their highest-ever daily case totals this week.

"It's important that we remember that this situation is unprecedented. And that the pandemic has not ended," Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, told a media briefing on Friday.

Nevertheless, US President Donald Trump and many local officials remain determined to get the world's biggest economy back on track.

The virus and resulting lockdowns have caused a spike in US unemployment -- 44.2 million people have filed claims for jobless benefits since mid-March.

Worldwide, the pandemic has killed more than 424,000 people and infected more than 7.6 million.

In Italy, one of the countries hardest hit by the virus, prosecutors questioned Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte over his government's initial response.

In the country's northern Lombardy region, an investigation has been launched into why a quarantined "red zone" was not enforced around two towns sooner.

## Cash-Strapped Aid Projects Face Closure in Yemen

GENEVA (Reuters) - U.N. aid agencies said on Friday three quarters of the programs they back in Yemen will have to close in the next few weeks without more funding, even as both cholera and the novel coronavirus spread.

A five-year conflict between a Saudi-led coalition and the Iran-aligned Houthi group has left most Yemenis malnourished and reliant on aid.

International donors promised \$1.35 billion for Yemen at a conference on June 2 - but that was short of the U.N. target of \$2.4 billion needed to save the world's biggest aid operation from severe cutbacks.

"More than 30 of the 41 U.N.-supported programs in Yemen will close in the coming weeks if additional funds are not secured," U.N. human rights spokesman Rupert Colville told a U.N. briefing in Geneva.



## Trump Will Do Other Things If He Loses 2020 Election

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. President Donald Trump said he will go on to other things if he loses the Nov. 3 election, after Democratic opponent Joe Biden said the Republican might cheat and refuse to leave the White House.

"Certainly if I don't win, I don't win. I mean, you know, go on and do other things," Trump told Fox News Channel in a television interview broadcast on Friday.

As the race between Trump and Biden heats up ahead of the election, the two have increasingly asserted that the other side intends to cheat their way to victory.

Biden, who is leading Trump in most national polls, earlier this week said his greatest concern was that Trump would try to "steal" the election, though the former vice president did not elaborate on how he thought Trump might cheat. Biden said he is confident soldiers would escort Trump from the White House if he loses and does not recognize the result.

Trump's comment to Fox News suggested he could accept the election result but the president did not specifically say so. Trump campaign spokesman Tim Murtaugh on Thursday said Trump would accept the result.

Trump has accused Democrats of aiming to use an increase in mail-in voting as a venue for rigging the election, while Biden has pledged to deploy lawyers to polling stations across the country to look out for Republican efforts to suppress the vote.

Election experts and officials are bracing for a potentially tumultuous election night. A surge in mail-in voting is expected due to concerns over the coronavirus pandemic, and experts warn the process could be marred by chaos of the type already seen in primary elections held in states during the viral outbreak.

Large numbers of mail ballots not delivered in time to be cast or counted could lead to legal challenges over election results. Counting mail ballots also takes more time because a voter's identity must first be validated, raising the prospect that the election outcome will not be known well past Election Day, experts say.

## African Countries Call for Racism Debate at UN Rights Council

PARIS (AFP) - African countries called Friday on the UN Human Rights Council to urgently debate racism and police brutality amid the unrest in the US and beyond over George Floyd's death.

In a letter written on behalf of 54 African countries, Burkina Faso's ambassador to the UN in Geneva asked the UN's top rights body for an "urgent debate" on "racially inspired human rights violations, police brutality against people of African descent and the violence against the peaceful protests that call for these injustices to stop."

The letter, addressed to rights council president Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger of Austria, requested that this debate be held next week, when the council's 43rd session resumes, after it was interrupted in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The call came after Floyd's family, along with the families of other victims of police violence and over 600 NGOs this week called on the council to urgently address systemic racism and police impunity in the U.S.

For the council to consider such a request, it needs to have the backing of at least one country.

With the request now coming from a large group of states, "that increases the chances" it will take place, a council spokesman told AFP.

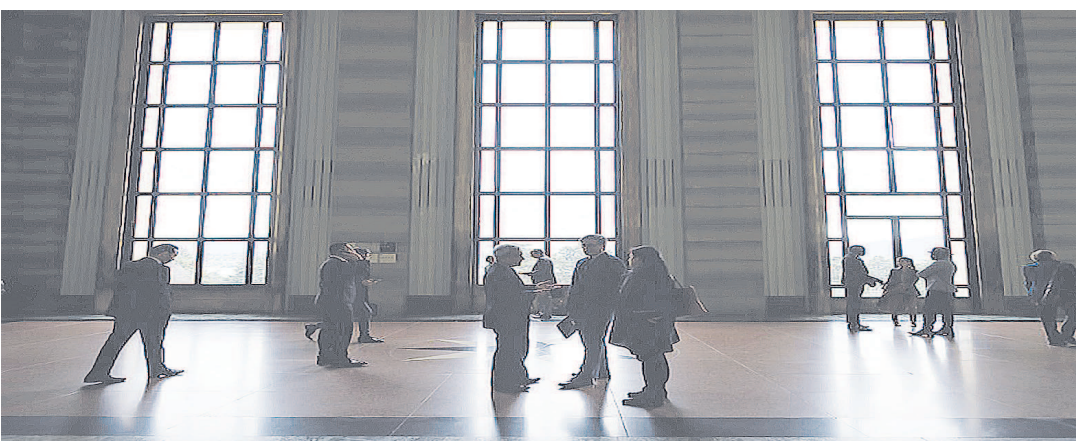
Friday's letter pointed to the case of George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man who died in police custody in Minneapolis on May 25 after a white officer, who has since been charged with murder, pressed his knee on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

His death, which was caught on video and has sparked massive protests across the United States and around the world, "is unfortunately not an isolated incident, with many previous cases of unarmed persons of African descent suffering the same fate due to unchecked police brutality," it said.

"Sadly, the fates of many other victims attracted no attention, as they were not captured on social media for all to see," Ambassador Dieudonne Desire Sougouri wrote on behalf of the African Group at the council.

While the letter called for a debate on racism around the globe, it in particular highlighted the situation in the United States.

"The protests the world is witnessing are a rejection of the fundamental racial inequality and discrimination that characterise life in the United States for black people, and other people of colour," it said.



## Putin Appeals to Russians' Core Values as Vote on Extending Term Looms

MOSCOW (Reuters) - President Vladimir Putin appealed to what he termed Russians' core values on Friday, the country's national day, as he sought to rally support for a vote on constitutional reforms that could potentially keep him in office until 2036.

The plebiscite will run from June 25-July 1 and, if approved, includes a change that would allow 67-year-old Putin, in power since 1999, to serve two more six-year terms in the Kremlin after 2024, when he would under current laws be obliged to step down.

"We have a common historical code, moral foundations... Respect for parents and family (and) love for our soil," Putin said at a flag-raising ceremony in Moscow to mark Russia Day.

"As you'd expect, there have been frequent requests to include these fundamental, core principals into the Russian constitution. I'm sure that the absolute majority of our citizens share and support such a position."

With coronavirus curbs limiting his appearances, it was Putin's second public outing in just over a month. He attended a slimmed down Victory Day military parade on May 9.

The Kremlin has consistently cast the constitutional vote as a broad legislative exercise covering a range of issues that include defining marriage as between a man and a woman and enshrining the rouble as Russia's only legal currency.

Months of public television, online and poster advertisements have failed to highlight the fact that the amendments would also allow Putin to run again for president.





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## German Gov't Has No Reason to Change Its Growth Forecast

BERLIN (Reuters) - The German government has no reason currently to change its forecast for growth in Europe's largest economy, Economy Minister Peter Altmaier said on Friday.

In April, the government cut its estimate for gross domestic product growth in 2020 to -6.3% from +1.1% predicted in January. Many institutes have made more pessimistic predictions.

Altmaier pointed to the volatility of the pandemic and uncertainty about the economy in other countries and said the government should not keep changing its forecast, adding that Berlin would present its next forecast in the autumn as planned.



## Lebanon to Inject Dollars as Currency Plunge Revives Protests

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Lebanon's government Friday pledged to inject dollars into the market, after a night of angry protests triggered by the currency plumbing new black market lows and the worst recession in decades.

An economic downturn since last autumn has seen widespread layoffs and swingeing pay cuts that mean 45 percent of the population is now in poverty. After a crisis meeting on Friday, President Michel Aoun announced that the central bank will from Monday begin to execute measures including "feeding dollars into the market" to bolster the currency, which is trading on the black market at a 70 percent discount to the official rate.

The worst economic turmoil since the country's 1975-1990 civil war has sparked an unprecedented months-long street movement against a political class deemed corrupt and incompetent. Protesters took to the streets after sundown on Thursday, setting tyres on fire and blocking roads including in the capital Beirut.

Demonstrators rallied against a government that has been unable to arrest the economic decline, as well as against the governor of the central bank, Riad Salame.

Lebanese media reported that the exchange rate had touched 6,000 pounds per dollar on the black market on Friday, compared to the official peg of 1,507 in place since 1997.

Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, who attended the meeting with the president alongside Prime Minister Hassan Diab, said the government's measures aimed to bring the exchange rate to stronger than 4,000 pounds to the dollar. Tensions have grown recently between the government and the central bank's governor.

Experts say the cabinet would like to see Salame removed from the position he has held since 1993. Protesters accuse him of having encouraged state borrowing over the decades that they say benefited only the banking and political elite.

Anger against banks has risen in recent months, after they banned all transfers abroad and gradually restricted dollar withdrawals, forcing those in need to buy the greenback at unattractive rates on the black market.

"Several currents taking part in the protests want to topple the central bank governor and hold him accountable for the financial" crisis, among them Hezbollah, Lebanese American University professor Imad Salamey told AFP. Hezbollah supporters joined the demonstrations late Thursday, despite usually being against the protest movement that began in October. "Riad Salame, game over," read the front page of the Al-Akhbar newspaper close to the Shiite movement on Friday morning. Some protesters continued to block vital roads on Friday.

The previous government stepped down under street pressure just weeks into the demonstrations that began in October, and Diab's cabinet began work earlier this year. Analyst Hilal Khashan said citizens had recently returned to the streets because they feel nothing has changed.

## U.S. Can't Shut Economy Even If Virus Resurges

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the U.S. shouldn't shut down the economy again even if there is another surge in coronavirus cases.

"We've learned that if you shut down the economy, you're gonna create more damage — medical problems that get put on hold," Mnuchin said June 11 on CNBC. "We can't shut down the economy again."

Mnuchin added that he believes President Donald Trump made the right decision to urge states to ease social distancing rules that have crippled the U.S. economy. He said that in the event of a resurgence, it will not be necessary to impose restrictions again because COVID-19 testing and contact tracing are improving, and officials understand more about how to contain outbreaks.

U.S. stocks tumbled the most in almost six weeks June 11 as evidence mounted that a second wave of coronavirus cases was coming. More than 2 million people in the U.S. have been infected so far. At 4 p.m., the Dow Jones Industrial Average had fallen more than 1,800 points on the day.

Mnuchin echoed an argument advanced by Trump and Health Secretary Alex Azar: The health costs of the shutdown may exceed the toll of the virus or already have. The White House has offered no data to support that assertion and has declined requests to do so.

While the U.S. has seen a decline in some services, such as cancer screenings and childhood vaccinations, during the lockdown, health experts have warned that it's a false choice to weigh those directly against the pandemic. The U.S. continues to see around 20,000 new cases and 1,000 deaths per day from the virus, with rising case totals in states including Georgia, Arizona and Texas.

## Saudi Oil Market Share Set to Hit Highest Since 1980s

LONDON (Dispatches) - Saudi Arabia's share of the oil market is set to rise this decade to its highest since the 1980s as investment in production elsewhere dries up in the wake of the coronavirus crisis, J.P. Morgan said in a report.

Oil prices have plunged more than 40 percent this year after an unprecedented collapse in demand, prompting oil and gas companies to announce spending cuts that will total \$625 billion by the end of the decade, according to the Wall Street bank.

The investment crunch will lead to a loss of output that is set to push benchmark Brent oil prices to \$60 a barrel within two years, J.P. Morgan analyst Christyan Malek said.

Brent fell as low as \$16 a barrel in April as the pandemic forced economies around the world to lock down and it is currently trading near \$40 a barrel.

The US bank expects global oil demand to average 91 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2020, 9 million lower than earlier estimates, with consumption only recovering to pre-pandemic levels of 100 million bpd in November 2021.

But changes in consumption patterns will lead to a permanent demand loss of 3 million bpd this decade compared with previous forecasts, J.P. Morgan forecasts.

Oil supply, meanwhile, is set to fall by 5 million bpd due to a lack of investment in new output and the closure of some fields. With the lowest production costs and biggest capacity, Saudi Arabia is best placed to take up the slack, the bank said.

"Saudi Arabia will come out on top in the fight for market share as non-OPEC and US production fades," Malek said.

US shale oil production, which grew sharply throughout the 2010s, will barely rise this decade, climbing only to 11 million bpd by 2030 from 10.9 million this year, the bank forecast.

Before the slide in oil prices, shale output was expected to reach 17 million bpd by the end of this decade.

As a result, J.P. Morgan expects members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting countries (OPEC) to fill the supply gap, once oil prices reach \$60 a barrel, which is the price OPEC countries need on average to balance their budgets.

While OPEC's market share fell from a peak of 39 percent of total oil supply in 2016 to 33 percent in 2020-21, the bank expects the group to regain a market share of about 40 percent by 2025.

Saudi Arabia's market share is set to grow from 11.6 percent in 2020 to 15 percent over the period, a level not seen since the 1980s, Malek said.

## Britain's GDP Falls by Record 20.4% in April

LONDON (Dispatches) - Britain's economy shrank by a record 20.4% in April as the first full month of the coronavirus lockdown triggered an economic crash three times greater than the 2008 financial crisis.

Revealing the scale of the downturn, the official figures for gross domestic product (GDP) from the Office for National Statistics showed no area of the economy was left unscathed as the government imposed tight controls on business and social life to limit the spread of the disease.

The decline was the largest since comparable monthly records began in 1997 and was more than triple the previous record fall of 5.8% in March, when the lockdown was imposed late in the month.

The ONS said the monthly decline in April broke records across the board with all the main drivers of economic growth plunging into reverse, as people were told to stay at home to save lives, businesses were forced to close and millions of workers placed on furlough.

The country's dominant services sector shrank by almost a fifth, fuelled by the closure of non-essential shops on the high street, pubs, restaurants and hotels, and evaporating car sales.

Air transport shrank by 92.8% in the biggest fall of any sector as flights were grounded across Britain and other countries. After the closure of hotels, pubs, bars and restaurants, the accommodation and food services sector shrank by 88% on the month. Faced with disruption to international supply chains and the need to protect workers, shutdowns in production at many factories and reduced hours at others led manufacturing output to fall by a quarter.

The ONS said a 20.3% decline in production — which includes factory output as well as energy and mining — was more than double the collapse recorded during the miners' strikes and Winter of Discontent of the 1970s, in the biggest slump since records began in 1968. With cranes and diggers across the country falling idle as the virus spread, construction output plunged by 40%.

Jonathan Athow, deputy national statistician for economic statistics at the ONS, said: "April's fall in GDP is the biggest the UK has ever seen, more than three times larger than last month and almost 10 times larger than the steepest pre-Covid-19 fall."

Although some lockdown measures are now being eased as Boris Johnson's government attempts to gradually reopen the economy, the snapshot from the ONS showed Britain's economy at the onset of the deepest recession in living memory.

Over the wider three-month period to the end of April, GDP fell by 10.4%, as government restrictions on movement dramatically reduced economic activity. This was the sharpest decline on records dating back to 1955, in a collapse surpassing the industrial strife of the 1970s, recessions of the 80s and 90s, and the 2008 financial crisis.

## China, U.S. Urged to Resume Timely Communication on Trade

BEIJING (Reuters) - China and the United States should resume timely communication on trade and other issues, an adviser to the Chinese cabinet said, stressing that the world's two biggest economies are too intertwined to be decoupled.



The coronavirus pandemic has worsened already poor relations between Beijing and Washington, with accusations from the Trump administration of a Chinese cover-up and delayed release of information about the outbreak. "China and the United States should communicate on key issues, and the scope of communication should go back to normal, not just on trade issues," Zhu Guangyao, a cabinet adviser and former vice finance minister, told a briefing in Beijing. "We should resume strategic communication at various levels, including politics, diplomacy and economy."

Liu Huan, another cabinet adviser, said he expected China's economy to rebound sharply in the third quarter of this year. Liu told reporters after the briefing that he believed China's economic growth could be about 5% in the third quarter, and 3-4% in the whole of 2020.

The economy contracted 6.8% in the first quarter from a year earlier, shrinking for the first time in decades, as the coronavirus outbreak paralysed production and hit spending. Reflecting the uncertain outlook, China set no annual growth target this year for the first time since 2002 and pledged more government spending. But expectations of a global recession are compounding the challenges.

The government has set a 2020 budget deficit of at least 3.6% of GDP, up from last year's 2.8%.

It has also fixed the quota on local government special bond issuance at 3.75 trillion yuan (£418.65 billion), up from 2.15 trillion yuan. The government will also issue 1 trillion yuan in special treasury bonds this year.

Liu said China may need to raise the budget deficit ratio beyond 3.6% if economic pressures increase.

China's net fiscal stimulus could be just over 4 trillion yuan, Liu said, in line with Reuters' calculations based on the fiscal measures announced, while Zhu estimated total fiscal funds could be 6.2 trillion yuan.

The room for China to support the economy through fiscal and monetary policies is "very big," said Wang Zhaoxing, a third cabinet adviser at the briefing.

Wang said China should prepare for a long battle to prevent and resolve financial risks and control shadow banking and financing to the property sector.

## Euro Zone April Industrial Output Plunges Worst on Record

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - Euro zone industrial output fell the most on record in April as coronavirus lockdowns halted activity across the region, data showed on Friday, marking the low point of the pandemic-induced contraction.

The European Union's statistics office, Eurostat, said industrial output in the 19 countries sharing the euro fell 17.1% month-on-month for a 28.0% year-on-year drop, the steepest declines since records began in 1991.

Economists polled by Reuters had expected a 20.0% monthly and 29.5% annual decline.

"We see this as the bottom of this crisis, with industrial production standing 73% below February values. May should see a strong bounce, but the pace of recovery after that is more uncertain," said Jacob Nell, economist at Morgan Stanley bank.

The sectors that suffered most were durable consumer goods, where output plunged 28.9% month-on-month for a 47.7% year-on-year drop and capital goods, with a 26.6% monthly and 40.9% annual decline.

The euro zone's biggest economy, Germany, saw a 30.2% fall in industrial output year-on-year. The second and third

biggest, France and Italy, showed production shrinking even more - 34.9% and 42.5% respectively. The fourth biggest economy, Spain, had a 34.3% fall.

The hardest hit was the smallest euro zone economy, Luxembourg, with a 43.9% reduction in output. Ireland was the only country in the 27-nation European Union to show a year-on-year increase in production, of 5.5%.

"As lingering concerns like a new trade war and Brexit continue to be risks to the recovery phase in the months ahead, it could be a long road ahead before industry reaches output seen at the start of 2020," said Bert Colijn, economist at ING.

"So plenty of risks surrounding industry at the moment, but the recent easing of lockdowns means that activity in April almost certainly marked the bottom," he said.





## Top Military Commander to Attend Majlis Closed Session

TEHRAN (MNA) – Major General Mohammad Hossein Bagheri will go to the Parliament to discuss security issues, according to a member of the Parliament’s Presiding Board.

Alireza Salimi said on Saturday that the Chief of Staff of Iran’s Armed Forces will attend the closed session of the Parliament on Tuesday to discuss regional security issues.

Last Tuesday, June 9, Parliament held another closed session with Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi and Oil Minister Zanganeh in attendance.



## Italy GDP May Shrink Slightly More Than 8% in 2020

ROME (Reuters) - Italian Economy Minister Roberto Gualtieri said on Friday that the country’s economic contraction this year may be slightly worse than the 8% decline currently forecast by the government.

The Bank of Italy has forecast Italian gross domestic product to fall by 9.2% and the European Commission projects -9.5%, as the economy buckles under the impact of the coronavirus.

Speaking at a forum organized by Goldman Sachs, Gualtieri said in a video link-up that even though data for April and May had been broadly as the government anticipated and a recovery was now expected, some sectors, such as tourism, would struggle for longer.

“That is the reason why we think our forecast may be slightly revised to the downside”, he said.

Asked about the sustainability of Italy’s huge public debt, targeted to rise to 155.7% of GDP this year, Gualtieri said the government intended to focus on improving the country’s growth potential while reducing borrowing from next year.

“We want to significantly boost public and private investment... growth enhancing policies and fiscal sustainability, that is the core of our strategy,” he said.

Gualtieri, from the centre-left Democratic Party, said Italy’s debt would come down next year and decline “substantially” in future years when the country would return to running a budget surplus net of interest spending.

This year’s overall deficit is targeted to jump to 10.4% of GDP as the government ramps up borrowing to try to soften the economic impact of one of the world’s worst COVID-19 epidemics.

A wealth tax to raise resources for extra spending or bring down the debt was not in the government’s program, Gualtieri said.



Despite the recession tax revenues were holding up much better than expected, he said, thanks to the government’s fight against tax evasion which was bearing fruit before the virus outbreak.

These efforts will continue to recoup some of the estimated 100-120 billion euros of lost revenue every year, Gualtieri said, adding that wanted Italy to become a world leader in terms of digital payments and creating a “cashless society.”

## Turkey Urged to Restore Credibility to Win Foreign Funds



ANKARA (Reuters) - Turkey must restore its economic credibility if it hopes to secure needed foreign funding and return to growth, said President Tayyip Erdogan’s former economy czar who recently broke away and founded his own party.

Ali Babacan, a 53-year-old former deputy prime minister, resigned from Erdogan’s AK Party last July over “deep differences” about the direction of the party he helped found. In March he formed the Deva (Remedy) Party.

Babacan said in an interview with Reuters that Turkey risks another slump in the lira unless it can access fresh sources of foreign exchange, after the currency fell to a record low last month, but that trust in its economic institutions had eroded.

Erdogan last year sacked the central bank’s chief for not cutting interest rates. The bank has since slashed rates well below inflation, stoking concerns over its independence. It has also used billions in foreign exchange reserves to defend the lira, prompting Ankara to seek foreign funding.

“Turkey must find that forex soon” but it needs to “reinstate the reputation and confidence in its economy management first,” Babacan said.

“The institutions had already lost their credibility,” he added. “You can dictate onion prices...but you cannot dictate the foreign exchange price, that’s not how the international markets work.”

Babacan, well regarded by foreign investors, served as economy and then foreign minister before becoming deputy prime minister from 2009 to 2015.

Opinion polls currently show his party with just 1% or 2% support. Yet even incremental gains for Deva could spell trouble for Erdogan, who faces another election by 2023 at the latest. Babacan said it was unlikely Erdogan’s government would last until 2023, adding he expected an election next year or in 2022.

The lira has been hit by fallout from the coronavirus pandemic and investor concerns over depleted net FX reserves and the country’s relatively high foreign debt obligations. Ankara won some support when Qatar tripled an existing currency swap line to \$15 billion last month.

Investors and bankers say Turkey would adopt capital controls, such as limits on transfers or withdrawals, only in a worst-case scenario. But Babacan said Ankara was already heading in that direction. “Capital controls is not a black and white area, it consists of shades of grey. Turkey is going towards a darker grey,” he said.

The European Central Bank could extend a swap line in order to protect a key trade partner, he said. “If the Turkish economy collapses today, this would harm the economies of Europe. The ECB must be seeing this, and they must play an active role.”

## S. Korea Central Bank Chief Vows to Keep Policy Loose Until Economy Heals

SEOUL (Reuters) - South Korea’s central bank chief said on Friday it will keep pumping stimulus into the trade-reliant economy until some strong signs of recovery are on the horizon.

“There is a need to keep monetary policy accommodative until we can project that the economy would heal from the coronavirus crisis,” Bank of Korea (BOK)

Governor Lee Ju-yeol said, according to an advance written copy of a speech prepared for the bank’s 70th anniversary.

Lee also said the BOK would deploy policy tools other than interest rates if needed to make sure credit flows through the economy, without elaborating further.

In May, the BOK trimmed its forecast for economic growth this year to -0.2%, from its earlier projection of 2.1% growth, and cut interest rates to 0.50%, the lowest since the bank adopted the current system in 1999.

Lee’s vow to keep pushing stimulus into the economy came



with a warning, however.

“In the mid- to long-term horizon, we should be on guard about the possibility of accumulating financial imbalances,” he said.

“We have repeatedly seen cumulative increases in financial imbalances, such as excessive expansion of credit or asset price bubbles, leading to crisis,” Lee said, adding the bank should plan to “normalize exceptional

steps” taken to fight the fallout from the pandemic.

The bank’s already easy money policy has been blamed for propelling household debt to all-time highs in Asia’s fourth largest economy. The median price for an apartment in smart parts of Seoul has surged by 50% since President Moon Jae-in took office in 2017, according to data from KB Bank.

As of Thursday, the total number of coronavirus infections was 11,947 in South Korea, with 276 deaths, according to government data.

## Oman Is Desperate for Help As Economy Crumbles

LONDON (Oil Price) - Non-OPEC oil producer Oman has been talking to other countries in the Gulf about potentially receiving financial aid to help its economy and fiscal position which are hit by the low oil prices and the measures to curb the spread of COVID-19, Bloomberg reported on Thursday, quoting officials from the region and a U.S. official with knowledge of the matter.

Oman, the top oil exporter from the Persian Gulf that is not a member of OPEC, had already suffered economically even before the oil price crash in early March. A day before oil collapsed, Moody’s downgraded its rating for Oman due to rising government debt and lower fiscal buffers. The rating agency put the rating under review for downgrade in late March because of Oman’s heightened vulnerability to oil price shocks.

According to Moody’s, the most vulnerable oil producers in terms of credit profiles are led by the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) members Oman and Bahrain. Fitch Ratings also placed Oman among the oil producers “where weaker balance sheets and policy buffers will limit governments’ capacity to respond to the oil price slump without putting pressure on their ratings.”

Oman’s break-even price—the oil price required to balance the government budget, all else being equal—is \$82 per barrel for Brent Crude, according to Fitch Ratings.

Fitch also downgraded Oman in March to “reflect the continued erosion of Oman’s fiscal and external balance sheets, which could accelerate in an environment of lower oil prices despite prospects for faster implementation of fiscal consolidation measures.”

According to Bloomberg, it is vital for other Gulf countries to see Oman’s economy and political climate stable because of Oman’s role as a regional mediator between the rival states in the region.

The ongoing OPEC+ cuts, in which Oman participates as part of the non-OPEC group of nations, will deepen the deficits in the PGCC and stall growth, Fitch Ratings said last month. Oman’s non-oil sector is set to slip into a recession of 5 percent this year, Fitch said, noting that “In lower-rated Oman and Bahrain, (further) support from the rest of the PGCC may be necessary for the sustainability of their currencies and debt levels.”

## Trump's Approach to...

FROM PAGE 1

“If we are in a situation where there is such a fundamental clash between the United States and other permanent members [of the Security Council], they are going to have a much more difficult time pushing through resolutions on areas where the United States may have previously been able to persuade Russia and China to come aboard,” Geranmayeh said. “It could really do irreparable damage to the UN Security Council framework.”

The FP said the Trump administration is hell-bent on employing a “scorched-earth policy” and ensure that, whatever happens in the November election, “Barack Obama’s Iran deal” is a cadaver.

It said Washington’s effort to invoke UN arms sanctions on Iran—against the wishes of all the parties to the deal—would be a way to eliminate any hope of revival of the landmark deal.

Iran signed the JCPOA with six world states — namely the US, Germany, France, Britain, Russia and China — in 2015.

The UNSC endorsed the deal under Resolution 2231, after which the 15-member body agreed to lift a UN embargo on the sales of conventional weapons to Iran on October 18, 2020.

## UN Report...

FROM PAGE 1

Guterres said in his report that the United Nations had examined the debris of weapons used in the attacks on an oil facility in Afif in May, the Abha international airport in June and August, and the Aramco oil facilities in Khurais and Abqaiq in September. Iran’s Foreign Ministry in a statement also reacted to the report, saying that “Iran denies allegations by the UN Secretariat that appear to have been made under political pressure from the US and Saudi regimes”.

“Interestingly, the ... report comes at a time when the United States is working to draft a dangerous resolution to extend an arms embargo against Iran,” the statement said.

## Afghan...

FROM PAGE 1

In the Saturday meeting in Tehran, Director General of West Asia of the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed concern about the impact of the wrong measures by that small group on the neighbourly relations between Iran and Afghanistan. Meanwhile Iranian Diplomatic mission in Afghanistan on Saturday condemned the terrorist attack on Shir Shah-E-Suri Mosque, western Kabul which caused four deaths and 10 more people were wounded.

In its statement, the Iranian embassy described the attack as a terrorist and criminal act. There is no doubt that assassination and physical elimination of moderate ulema aimed to promote violence and extremism are considered as a project which will have dangerous social and cultural consequences, the statement said.

Iranian embassy urged all Afghan and regional people to be aware of the future of this process. It also sympathized with victims of the terrorist attack and wished immediate recovery for the injured. A bomb that had been placed in Shir Shah-E-Suri Mosque on Friday was detonated.

## Gov’t to Return...

FROM PAGE 1

Since a proven vaccine and medicine has not yet been discovered for the disease, health protocols should be strictly observed, he emphasized.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Rouhani stressed the increase of hospital beds, medical equipment and protective facilities for doctors and hospitals after the spread of the disease and added, “the government makes its utmost effort to contain the disease in the country.”

“We have urged the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade to provide all walks of life in the country with low-price face masks,” President Rouhani stressed. He called on people to observe health protocols and guidelines in line with uprooting the pandemic in the country.

Turning to the considerable growth in export of non-oil goods, he said, “it is a matter of happiness that the country is moving towards exports growth in a way that Iran’s borders with other neighboring countries were closed due to the outbreak of pandemic but its borders have been reopened in the recent two weeks with western, eastern, southern and northern borders.” He further noted that Iran’s export of non-oil commodities has also been increased.

Head of Executive Branch noted that productions in the country registered a 10 to 12 percent growth in the first two months of the current year [from March 21 to May 20, 2020] as compared to the last year’s corresponding period.

## Iran Pushing...

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan told reporters that The relations between Armenia and Iran are very inclusive, and our dialogue is very active.

“We have very clear plans for the development of bilateral relations at all levels. In this period, the permanent dialogue between Armenia’s Prime Minister and the President of Iran continues, there has been a very clear conversation in terms of advancing our programs. At the level of foreign ministers, a very clear dialogue has been maintained,” Minister Mnatsakanyan stated.

“Our diplomatic mission is working very actively; the Iranian diplomatic mission is working actively. Our agenda is extensive, and we are going to continue our work,” the Foreign Minister stated. As for other issues, he said “Armenia has its own interests, which is should pursue.”

“Armenia has never pursued and is not going to pursue a policy with one partner at the expense of another. We have more than a handful of examples of how Armenia combines its policies with various partners, its key partners, while also pursuing its own interests and not harming the various developments that affect our national security,” Zohrab Mnatsakanyan stated.

## Tehran Asks Paris...

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“Iran can deliver it to a French or any other foreign company capable of decoding it but we have to make sure that there are no risks of abuse of the black box,” he added.

He stated that talks with Ukraine on transferring the black box to its intended destination for decryption are underway but not finalized.

According to Baharvand, technical investigations in Iran are on their final stages and the Islamic Republic is well informed of the details of the incident.



## India Cancel Tour to Zimbabwe Due to Coronavirus Concerns

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - India will not travel to Zimbabwe for a one-day international series in August due to the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah said on Friday. The move follows the BCCI's decision on Thursday to postpone India's limited-overs tour to Sri Lanka, which was originally scheduled for later this month. India, who last visited Zimbabwe for a bilateral series in 2016, were due to play a three-match ODI series. The BCCI has not confirmed rescheduled dates for either of the tours.

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## Lisbon Set to Host Final Stages of Champions League

BERLIN (AFP) - The final stages of this season's interrupted Champions League will be played in Lisbon, with the final on August 22 or 23, German newspaper Bild reported on Friday. The assertion by Bild follows reports by several other European media in recent days. An official announcement is expected when UEFA's Executive Committee meets by videoconference next Wednesday, June 17. Bild also reported that the closing stages of the Europa League are set to be moved to Germany, with matches being played in the region around Cologne, in the west of the country.

8 IRAN NEWS

SPORTS

SUNDAY JUNE 14, 2020

# Thiem, Zverev, Dimitrov Cast Doubt on U.S. Open

BELGRADE (Dispatches) - Dominic Thiem, Alexander Zverev and Grigor Dimitrov on Friday joined world number one Novak Djokovic in expressing their reluctance over playing at the US Open under current conditions while the coronavirus pandemic is still active. "All of these circumstances are pretty tough," world number three Thiem told a press conference in Belgrade. "So I think some circumstances will have to change (for it to) make sense to go there," the 26-year-old Austrian said. Germany's Zverev, the world number seven, echoed that view. "It's great if we get the opportunity to play, but under these circumstances I don't think a lot of players will feel comfortable in the environment there," he said. "So that's my opinion. But it's not really up to us players in that way, in a way the U.S. Open decides." Like Djokovic recently, Zverev cited notably the obligatory 14-day quarantine for players arriving in the U.S., housing in airport hotels near the tournament and not allowing them to be accompanied by more than one member of the team. Thiem stressed that a "Grand Slam can be pretty demanding physically and you'll have to choose your coach or your physio". But both Thiem and Bulgaria's Dimitrov said they would wait until a decision on the US Open -- widely expected to be announced on Monday -- before taking a final position.

## Two-Thirds of Sponsors Unsure About 2021 Olympics

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Two-thirds of Tokyo 2020's corporate sponsors are undecided on whether to continue supporting the Games now the event has been pushed to 2021, according to a new survey. In the poll published late Thursday by Japanese public broadcaster NHK, 65 percent of the sponsors surveyed said they had not made up their minds about whether to extend their financial backing for another year. According to NHK, some companies voiced concerns that their promotional activities around the Games could be curtailed due to crowd-reduction measures imposed against the coronavirus. They were also worried the Games could be scrapped altogether, with several senior Olympic officials saying the Tokyo Olympics must take place next year or not at all.

Many also said they had not decided whether to extend their sponsorship because they had not yet opened negotiations with the organisers -- suggesting they may be open to persuasion. Tokyo CEO Toshiro Muto revealed later Friday that the organising committee had not contacted the sponsors due to the coronavirus state of emergency that was declared in Japan just after the Games were postponed in late March. However, he sought to ease their concerns that the Games would not take place. "I don't think there is anyone who can really promise that the Olympics and Paralympics will be held in 2021 for sure -- 100 percent in any circumstance," he admitted. But he stressed that the sponsors should be assured of the "commitment and dedication" from the organising committee to "somehow holding the Olympics." More than two-thirds (68 percent) of respondents said coronavirus had taken a toll on their own financial situation, as Olympic organisers face having to fund the unprecedented postponement of the Games.



The three players arrived in Belgrade for a charity tournament hosted by Djokovic, which was to kick off yesterday. The Adria Tour will be held until July 5 in Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro and Bosnia. Djokovic, also the ATP players' council president, suggested on Wednesday that his season might resume on clay ahead of the French Open rather than at the U.S. Open as he repeated concerns about playing in North America. The Serbian, a three-time champion in New York, stressed that U.S. Open organisers had to relax their "extreme conditions" or players would wait for the European tournaments. Last week world number two, and reigning US Open champion, Rafael Nadal expressed similar reservations.

Women's world number one Ashleigh Barty has also voiced caution about resuming tennis too soon, saying she needed more information before committing to the tournament. The tennis season has been on hold since mid-March because of the pandemic, with Roland Garros pushed back to September-October and Wimbledon cancelled. Meanwhile, former US Open semi-finalist Richard Gasquet of France said Friday he was also struggling to see how this year's tournament could be played. "I find it hard to see for the U.S. Open, everything is unclear. Nobody knows, it's difficult to imagine the U.S. Open being held," Gasquet told AFP ahead of the start of the Ultimate Tennis Showdown, taking place close to Nice. The ATP held a video conference with players on Wednesday to discuss tentative plans for the second half of a season that has been suspended until at least the end of July. "Nothing came out of it," said Gasquet, who reached the last four at Flushing Meadows in 2013.

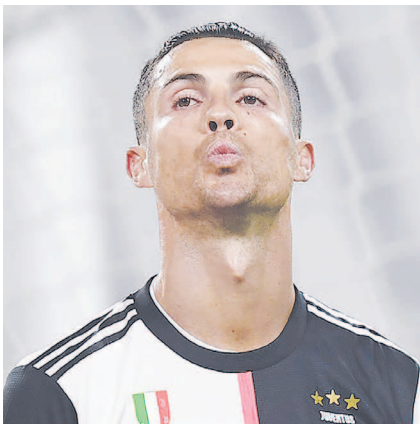


## Djokovic Relishing Fan Influx At Charity Tournament

BELGRADE (Reuters) - World number one Novak Djokovic is looking forward to returning to action in front of fans at the Serb's charity tennis tournament in Belgrade this weekend. The first leg of Djokovic's Adria Tour is being held at his tennis complex by the Danube River, with Germany's Alexander Zverev, Austrian Dominic Thiem and Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov arriving for the event. Fans will be able to attend despite the COVID-19 pandemic after the government lifted its ban on outdoor public gatherings. "We have different circumstances and measures (to other countries) so it's very difficult to think of international standards (regarding the pandemic)," Djokovic told a news conference. "We've had better numbers compared to some other countries. Of course, lives have been lost and that's horrible to see, in the region and worldwide. But life goes on and we as athletes are looking forward to competing. "You can also criticise us and say this is maybe dangerous but it's not up to me to make the calls what is right or wrong health-wise. We are doing what the Serbian government is telling us and hopefully we soon will get back on tour collectively." Serbia, with 12,175 registered COVID-19 cases and 252 deaths, has lifted the ban on outdoor public gatherings. Some 25,000 fans turned up at Belgrade's soccer derby on Wednesday. Djokovic said last week that proposed safety protocols at the U.S. Open, scheduled to begin on Aug. 31, were so extreme it would be impossible to participate and world number seven Zverev backed up his concerns.

## Juve Squeeze Past Milan to Reach Cup Final

TURIN (Dispatches) - Juventus reached the Italian Cup final on Friday after a goalless draw with 10-man AC Milan in the semi-final, second leg in Turin on the day football returned to Italy after three months away. Serie A champions Juve advanced on away goals to Wednesday's final in Rome thanks to February's 1-1 first-leg draw at the San Siro, despite an under-par display against a Milan side who played 74 minutes with a man less and which featured a missed Cristiano Ronaldo penalty. At the capital's Stadio Olimpico, Maurizio Sarri's side will face either Napoli or Inter Milan, the last side Juve faced before football entered into its coronavirus-enforced hiatus in March. Napoli take on Antonio Conte's Inter at Naples' Stadio San Paolo with a 1-0 lead from the first leg. A feisty start belied the two teams' long absence from the pitch, with Juve -- missing the likes of Giorgio Chiellini and Gonzalo Higuain -- roaring out of the blocks and Milan putting in some questionable challenges to try to stop themselves from being overrun. Juve should have been ahead in with just 15 minutes on the clock when Andrea Conti clipped the ball in the penalty area with his elbow and conceded a penalty after a VAR check. Ronaldo hit the woodwork with the resulting spot-kick, but while that should have been a reprieve for the away side, they found themselves a man down seconds later when Ante Rebic kicked Danilo in the head.



## F1 Cancels Azerbaijan, Singapore And Japan Races

LONDON (Reuters) - Azerbaijan, Singapore and Japan joined the list of Formula One grands prix cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic on Friday but organisers said they were still aiming for a reduced season of 15-18 races. The sport had already cancelled four races, including the showcase Monaco Grand Prix in May, with a revised and shortened provisional European schedule set to start in Austria without spectators on July 5. "As a result of the ongoing challenges presented by COVID-19, we and our promoters in Azerbaijan, Singapore and Japan have taken the decision to cancel their races for the 2020 season," Formula One said in a statement. The announcement, widely expected, blew a hole in the long-haul part of the season, with questions about the schedule after Italy's Monza on Sept. 6. Races in Canada, Mexico, Texas and Brazil are uncertain due to the pandemic while Vietnam, also a street circuit, and China remain possibilities and Russia could host two races at Sochi. The championship is due to end in Abu Dhabi in December after visiting Bahrain, which could host two races around different layouts. Singapore and Azerbaijan GP organisers said the long lead times needed to build street circuits had made hosting impossible.



## Mueller-Wohlfahrt To Quit Bayern

MUNICH (AFP) - Dr Hans-Wilhelm Mueller-Wohlfahrt, who remains a maverick in medical circles but whose former patients are a "who's who" of sports stars, is to bring an end to a decades-long link with Bayern Munich, the Bundesliga club announced Friday. Mueller-Wohlfahrt, an orthopaedic and sports medicine specialist, has been Bayern's club medic for more than 40 years, with a short interruption after a fall-out with then-coach Pep Guardiola. The 77-year-old is hailed as a medical genius by his legion of high-profile fans in elite sport, but his detractors remain dubious of his unusual techniques. Mueller-Wohlfahrt built up his reputation by working with Bayern Munich stars, like Franz Beckenbauer, in the 1970s. Having treated Germany's top footballers for the last few decades, he was also team doctor for the German international side between 1995-2018. Athletics legends Usain Bolt, Paula Radcliffe and Maurice Greene are some of the big names outside football who overcame career-threatening injuries after being treated in Munich by Mueller-Wohlfahrt.

Bolt was first treated by the German as a 16-year-old and the Jamaican crucially sought help from the man he called a "second father" for a calf injury ahead of the Rio Olympics where he went on to win three gold medals. "What I find particularly impressive is that he makes the correct diagnosis after the very first examination, without needing scans or x-rays," Germany head coach Joachim Loew has said. "He does it with his hands, which must have some magic in them, his experience and his intuition." Mueller-Wohlfahrt has argued his techniques rely more on experience than "magic". "I 'see' with my fingers, I can tell if the muscle is injured just through the tension in it," he wrote in his autobiography. "I have diagnosed 35,000 muscle injuries in my life and acquired these abilities through daily exercise, like a pianist or a violinist." Mueller-Wohlfahrt's methods are not to everyone's taste.