

**IRNEWS Expresses Its
Condolences to Its Shiite Readers
Over the Martyrdom Anniversary
Of Imam Jaafar Sadeq (A). The
Next Issue Will Be Out on Thursday**

IRAN NEWS

**The Volume of Iran's Foreign
Debts Drained by 3.3% Last Year
Compared to the Figure From
A Year Ago and Stood at \$9.031b,
According to the Latest Report by
The Central Bank of Iran (CBI)**


VOL. XXVI, No. 6970 TEHRAN Price 40,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

TUESDAY JUNE 16, 2020 - KHORDAD 27, 1399

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South Korea Not Allowed to Block Iran Assets

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Foreign Ministry Spokesman yesterday said that South Korea is not allowed to block Iran's assets in the country.

Speaking in his weekly press conference, Seyed Abbas Mousavi pointed to South Korea's blocking of Iranian assets under pressure from the U.S. which has imposed unilateral sanctions on Tehran since leaving the JCPOA in 2018.

Mousavi said Tehran has long been seeking to unblock the assets, adding Seoul "is not allowed" to retain them for an extended period under the pretext of toeing the line on Iran sanctions.

He called the sanctions "an arbitrary decision" by a country which is trying to exert pressure against Iran and its trade partners in a bullying manner, advising South Korea not to sacrifice its 50-year-old-plus relations with the Islamic Republic for the sake of the United States.

He also warned the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s Board of Governors against targeting Tehran under pressure from the United States and Israel. **See Page 7**

Iran's Coronavirus Fatalities at Highest Level Since Mid-April

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Health Ministry spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari said on Monday that some 113 more Iranians have died of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) over the past 24 hours bringing the total deaths to 8,950.

Lari said that, with the 113 new deaths, the country's total COVID-19 death toll mounted to 8,950.

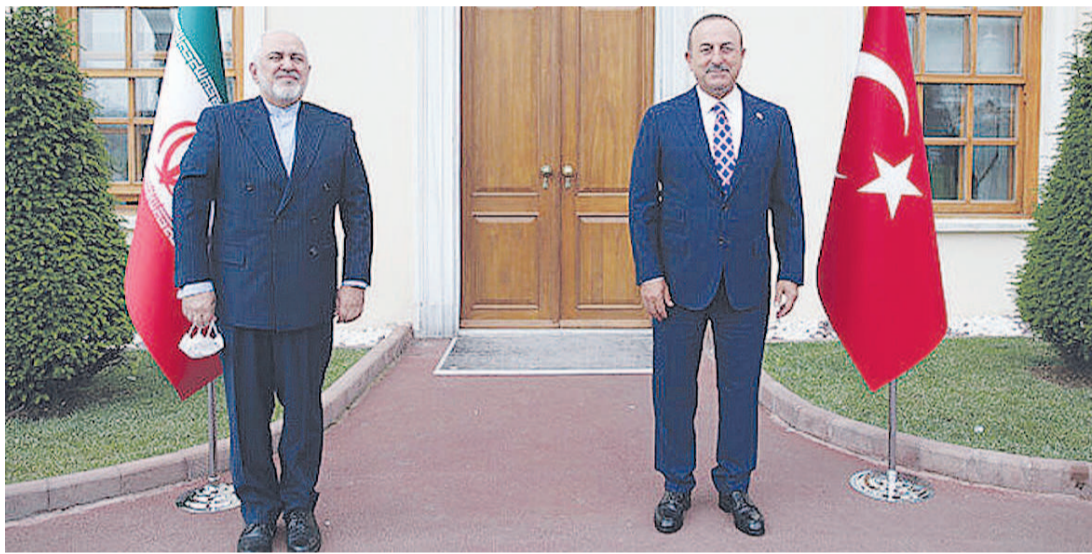
Some 2,449 new cases of infection with COVID-19 were found over the past 24 hours, some 824 of whom have been hospitalized, she added.

She noted that a total of 189,876 Iranians have been confirmed infected with the COVID-19, some 150,590 of whom have been discharged from hospital or recovered from the disease.

Some 2,765 other COVID-19 patients are in critical conditions and being treated in intensive care units, the spokeswoman said.

She added that 1,269,194 tests have so far been carried out in Iran.

Iran Urges Resumption of Gas Exports to Turkey



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has called for efforts to restart the export of natural gas to Turkey after carrying out necessary repairs to the pipeline transferring gas to the neighboring country.

In a meeting with his Turkish counterpart on Monday, Foreign Minister Zarif stressed the need to resume gas exports to Turkey and repair and reconstruct a section of the gas pipeline that has been damaged.

Natural gas exports from Iran to Turkey came to a halt in April after an explosion and fire at a pipeline on the Turkish side of the border.

The top Iranian diplomat, who is leading a delegation to Turkey, further expressed solidarity with and support for Turkey in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic and its consequences in the meeting.

Foreign Minister Zarif and his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu also weighed plans to make up for a decline in trade exchanges between Tehran and Ankara over the past four months due to restricting regulations in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

In two rounds of negotiations, the Iranian and Turkish foreign ministers agreed on holding a virtual meeting of the Astana Process Summit in the coming weeks before an actual summit in Tehran at the first possible moment, and also discussed the issues relating to Syria, Yemen, Libya, and the fight against terrorism.

Zarif expressed solidarity with Turkey in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

He said that Iranian and Turkish medical teams will stand together in fighting coronavirus.

Commenting on the war in Yemen, he said Turkey is after a peaceful solution for Yemen.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Iran's top diplomat referred to a virtual meeting on Syria, saying the event will be held aiming to materialize peace in Syria and in the framework of Astana agreement.

Cavusoglu, for his part, said stability in Iran is very important for Turkey. "The global pandemic in the world has taught Turkey and Iran to cooperate and trust each other more," the Turkish foreign minister added.

He also stressed that Turkey, as before, intends to cooperate with Iran in all spheres, including the settlement of conflicts in the Middle East.

According to reports, Tehran-Istanbul direct flights, halted under the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, are to be resumed as of July 21.

The flights will be carried out by an Iranian and a Turkish airline, the reports say.

Flights between Iran and Turkey were temporarily suspended as of nearly three months ago from the closure of borders.

IAEA Head Calls for More Access in Iran

BERLIN (Dispatches) - The head of the United Nations' atomic watchdog agency reiterated Monday that Iran must provide inspectors access to sites where the country is thought to have stored or used undeclared nuclear material.

International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Mariano Grossi told reporters after a meeting of the agency's board in Vienna that he had made his case with "Iranian authorities at higher levels."

"We need this cooperation," he said. "I regret that at this point we have this disagreement."

Grossi told the board that for more than four months "Iran has denied us access to two locations and that, for almost a year, it has not engaged in substantive discussions to clarify our questions related to possible undeclared nuclear material and nuclear-related activities."

Activities at all three sites are thought to have been from the early 2000s, before Iran signed the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, and Iran maintains the IAEA has no legal basis to inspect them.

Grossi's comments underlined the agency's concerns outlined in the agency's written report to members earlier this month about access to two of three locations it identified in March.

In the report, the IAEA said in its current report that it had determined that one site had undergone "extensive sanitization and leveling" in 2003 and 2004 and there would be no verification value in inspecting it. It said Iran has blocked access to the other two locations, one of which was partially demolished in 2004 and the other at which the agency observed activities "consistent with efforts to sanitize" the facility from July 2019 onward.

In other details from his wide-ranging address, Grossi announced the IAEA would be launching a new program meant to broaden global capabilities to detect viruses and other threats to human health in response to lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. He said the coronavirus pandemic had exposed insufficient detection capabilities in many countries, inadequate lab equipment in many developing countries and the need for better communications between global health institutions.

The IAEA has been helping countries with a nuclear-derived coronavirus detection technique known as RT-PCR, which is highly accurate and able to identify the virus in samples sent to labs in real time, and providing other assistance. **See Page 7**

President Blasts U.S. For Pressuring IMF

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Hassan Rouhani slammed the U.S. for putting pressure on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) not to grant a 5-billion-dollar loan to Iran.

The Americans are still trying to cause problems to this end, Rouhani said while expressing the hope that the IMF will not be influenced by the plots of the US.

He also voiced hope that the IMF would live up to its commitments regarding the countries worldwide.

The U.S. has not cooperated with international organizations; he said, adding that the government has hatched plots regarding international organizations but to no avail.

Governor of the Central Bank of Iran Abdolnasser Hemmati had earlier said that Iran has requested a 5-billion-dollar loan from the International Monetary Fund in the CORONA campaign package of Rapid Financial Instrument.

Hemmati wrote on his Instagram page that Managing Director of the IMF Kristalina Georgieva announced that the world community has wanted the IMF to help the world fight the coronavirus and the IMF were to offer 5-billion-dollar in emergency funding for countries hit by the virus. **See Page 7**

Iran Exports 50% of Domestically Made Ventilators

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - First vice president said that during the Corona outbreak, the country's technology and manufacturing sectors managed to bring the ventilator's production capacity to meet domestic demand, and also to export 50% of this product.

Eshaq Jahangiri in a meeting with senior officials of the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology on Monday said that Iran's universities and scientific centers have made great achievements and work to solve the problems ahead.

He added that the results of the research and studies of the universities give hope, joy, and encouragement to the people of Iran and make them optimistic and hopeful about the future of the country.

Jahangiri pointed to the reasons for Iran's success in the Coronavirus situation and said that capacities created in the technology sector alleviated much of the initial concern about providing equipment to fight the coronavirus. **See Page 7**

HIL India Supplies 25MT Malathion 95% ULV to Iran

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - HIL (India) Limited is also supplying Malathion 95% ULV to Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare Locust Control Program in the country. Image Credit: www.fao.org

HIL (India) Limited, a PSU under Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers and one of the leading manufacturer of insecticides in the country has supplied 25MT Malathion 95% ULV to Iran under Government-to-Government initiative for Locust Control Program

India had recently approached Iran and Pakistan for coordinated response to counter desert locust menace in the region. Iran has expressed its willingness to the proposal and accordingly, Ministry of External Affairs placed an order with HIL (India) Limited, to manufacture and supply 25 MT of Malathion 95% ULV to Iran. The consignment is expected to reach Iran by 16th June 2020.

As per the reports of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the hopper stage population of the locust is building up in Sistan-Baluchistan Region of Iran, which shall migrate to India in coming months leading to further crop devastation. Government of India has taken an initiative to counter the locust menace at its breeding ground itself and approached Iran for coordinated efforts. **See Page 7**

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Maritime Guards Seize 888 kg of Illicit Drugs

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Commander of Maritime Guards in Hormozgan province said that 888 kg of illicit drugs have been confiscated in Iran's southern Bandar Lengeh.

Commander of Maritime Guards of Hormozgan Hossein Dehaki made the announcement on Sunday, saying that following intelligence operations, maritime guards seized a consignment of illegal drugs in Bandar Lengeh.

The consignment consisted of 840 kg of opium and 48 kg of heroin, he added. A vessel along with a number ammunition have been seized, he said.

Politicization of Board Of Governors Will Result in Instability

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Government Spokesman Ali Rabiei in his presser on Board of Governors meeting and what are Iran's expectations, said, "We expect members of the Board of Governors to support the independence of this international body against American bullying."

He added, "We warn that the use of political criteria in handling cases in this international body will only result in global instability."

He further said that Iran had given the most access to the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect its nuclear facilities.

We have given access to IAEA's inspectors, on the basis of which we can claim that we have the most peaceful and transparent nuclear program while the countries of the region have not had the least transparency, Rabiei said.

He said, "We will provide the necessary and justified access for IAEA inspectors. From now on, we will act on the same basis, and our view is that technical inspections should not be politicized because this will not help solve the problems between Iran and IAEA." "And just as the IAEA has released positive reports in recent years, it will not allow political goals to be included in its report. We see and condemn the mischief of Israel and the United States," he reiterated.

Regarding the blocked assets of Iran and South Korea and where the problem is, the government spokesman added, "The reality is that these resources belong to the central bank (CBI) and are related to the export of oil and gas condensate. Although there is no problem using these assets to import basic goods such as medicine, for unknown reasons we feel that the government of South Korea is not cooperating. The money comes from oil exports licensed by the US government to South Korea."

He also warned of the consequences of South Korea's policy.



"The consequences of this statement are unacceptable to Tehran and will affect bilateral relations," Rabiei warned. Rabiei said about the United States and the presidential election in that country and its impact on Tehran-Washington relations: "The results of the U.S. election will not affect Iran's principled policies against the U.S."

We are not waiting for changes in the United States to take advantage of our diplomacy. Whenever the United States respects previous agreements and international law, Iran will be at the negotiating table," Rabiei noted.

"We urge the United States to listen to the voice of the international community and to put an end to bullying," he said. "There is no hope for negotiations until the United States does not return to international values," the official highlighted.

Asked if Iran would obstruct the re-reading of the black box of the downed Ukrainian plane, he said: "We have announced our cooperation to read the black box of the Ukrainian plane, but the investigation process must be transparent and we must have the necessary confidence."

"For this reason, after it was proved to us that it is not possible to read it in Iran, we announced our readiness to cooperate with others in this regard," he underscored.

He added, "We decided to send it abroad so that it could be done in the presence of Iranian representatives. We are ready to travel to Ukraine. If it is not possible to read in that country, the black box will be transferred to France," Spokesman added.

Violation of Human Rights Institutionalized in U.S.

TEHRAN (IP) - Iran's Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi called on the United States to adhere to human rights and sovereignty during a meeting on Monday.



During a meeting on "American Human Rights Reading and Disclosure Week" on Monday, Iran's Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi called on the United States to adhere to human rights and sovereignty.

He said, "The United States has extensively violated human rights in the areas of racial discrimination, terrorism, and sovereignty, and this human rights violation has become deeply-rooted, systematic, and institutionalized."

"Enemies talk about relationships but seek domination; they talk about economic relations, but they seek to plunder resources and they talk about human rights, but their behavior is contrary to this slogan," Alavi added.

In recent days the U.S. is facing extreme criticism by its own people due to the racist behavior of the U.S. police force in murdering of George Floyd.

Five Int'l Criminals to Be Extradited to Their Countries

TEHRAN (MNA) – Brigadier General Hadi Shirzad, Head of International Affairs of Police and Director General of Interpol in Iran, announced on Monday that the Islamic Republic is to extradite five international criminals to their home countries.

As he informed, the convicts have been arrested in the Iranian provinces of Tehran and Alborz.

All of them will be extradited to their home countries with the cooperation of the Interpol, he added.

There are essentially three ways in which criminals and suspects can be extradited when they flee the country.

The first way is to extradite a criminal through an international organization, such as International Police; this is when a 'Red Notice' is issued by Interpol and the extradition procedure is activated.

The second way of extraditing a criminal is through bilateral extradition treaties. For example, two countries may sign a bilateral extradition treaty and based on two-way interaction between the two countries, extradition of criminals occur.

The third way is through international conventions. Countries that are members of international conventions often have duties and obligations under these conventions. For example, if a country has signed a convention to combat corruption and financial fraud, then that country is required to extradite corrupt criminals and suspects who are living in its territory.

CIA Informant Not A Military Staffer

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – A man sentenced to death for spying for the CIA and Mossad on the whereabouts of Lt. General Qassem Soleimani had nothing to do with Iranian military units, but was a driver working in Syria, according to documents exclusively obtained by Tasnim.

Last week, Iran's Judiciary said Seyed Mahmood Mousavi Majd had been sentenced to death for spying for the CIA and Mossad and gathering intelligence on the Iranian security sphere and Armed Forces, including on the IRGC Quds Forces and on the whereabouts of Lt. General Soleimani.

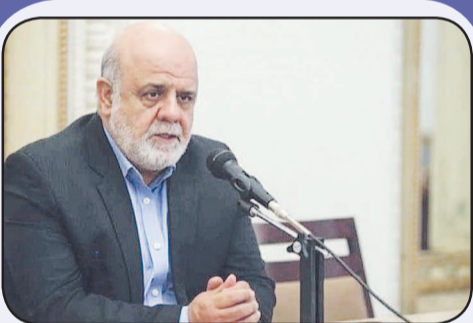
Tasnim has learned that contrary to foreign media speculations, the spy was neither a military staffer, nor a member of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), nor even a member of the Basij forces who go to Syria voluntarily for the fight against terrorism.

The convict had reportedly left Iran before the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 when he was a child, and grew up in Syria.

Mousavi Majd established connections with a number of Iranian military advisers in Syria and began a career as a driver.

Under the guise of a driver, the spy was gathering intelligence for the US and Israel and received a salary of \$5,000 a month from the CIA and Mossad.

Iran Keen on Friendly Ties With All Arab States



BAGHDAD (IRNA) - Iranian Ambassador to Baghdad Iraj Masjedi said on Monday that Iran is keen on friendly relations with all Arab countries.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with Iraqi media 'Al Iraqiya', Masjedi said Iran's approach toward new Iraqi government is to develop cooperation and synergy, adding that Iran is ready to support new Iraqi PM and government. He added that Iran and Iraq need each other and "our relations" will be wider during new Iraqi prime minister's term.

He referred to his meetings with Mustafa Al-Kadhimi and other Iraqi cabinet ministers on developing bilateral relations, saying there no major difference between the two countries.

Elaborating on Iran-Iraq economic relations, he said that good agreements were signed during Iranian energy minister's visit to Iraq.

Masjedi expressed hope that economic relations between the two countries, especially in the electricity sector, would be strengthened in the light of the Iranian Minister of Energy's visit to Baghdad and the signing of an agreement in this regard.

Iran supports any domestic production in Iraq and is even willing to invest in this filed, he added.

Referring to the recent visit of Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Esmail Ghaani to Iraq, Masjedi said that the US-Iraq dialogue is an internal matter, and the recent visit of General Ghaani to Iraq has nothing to do with this issue.

Yerevan Stresses Expansion of Centuries-Old Amicable Ties With Tehran

TEHRAN (MNA) – Armenian Parliament Speaker Ararat Mirzoyan has lauded the 'centuries-old' ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran, stressing the need to expand the amicable relations between the two neighbors in different spheres.

In a letter rendered this week, Mirzoyan congratulated Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf for his election as the new speaker of the Iranian Parliament, saying, "On behalf of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia and personally me, I warmly congratulate you on your election in the high and responsible post of the Speaker of Majlis of the Islamic Republic of Iran and wish you successes in the implementation of your mission."

"Having great contribution in the spheres of defense, the security of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as

of the government of Tehran, you will surely have prominent achievements in the post of the Head of the legislative power," Mirzoyan added.

The Armenian speaker noted that his country "highlights the centuries-old friendly ties and warm relations existing between the two countries, adding, "Today, the general agenda of our countries' relations involves a wide scope of contacts – from the cultural and inter-religious relations to economic cooperation."

"I am convinced that during your tenure the inter-parliamentary cooperation between Armenia and Iran will continue its upward path and will give new impetus to the cooperation existing between the two countries for the benefit of our states and for the welfare of the Armenian and Iranian friendly peoples," he concluded.

U.S. Keeps Violating Int'l Law

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman said while the U.S. government continues to violate international laws and norms, President Donald Trump is calling on American protesters to abide by "law and order".

"How in the world does the US regime being addicted to the infringement of international laws and norms expect ordinary Americans to believe the call for 'law and order'?" Seyed Abbas Mousavi tweeted late on Sunday.

He was apparently referring to statements by Trump in early May when he declared himself "your president of law and order" as peaceful protesters just outside the White House gates were dispersed with tear gas and flash bangs.

Since entering the Oval Office in 2016, Trump has abandoned many international pacts and treaties that previous administrations had authorized.

Israel, Saudi Arabia's Behavior Root Cause of Regional Insecurity

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The root cause of insecurities in the region should be found in Tel Aviv and Riyadh's behavior," Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

Special Advisor to Iran's Parliament Speaker for International Affairs Hossein Amir Abdollahian dismissed the UN allegations about the Iranian origin of missiles fired at Aramco installations, and further blamed Israel and Saudi Arabia for regional insecurities.

"The statement by the UN secretariat and claims about the Iranian origin of the fired missiles at Aramco

oil company is politically-driven and are completely baseless," Amir Abdollahian wrote on his twitter page.

"The root cause of insecurities in the region should be found in Tel Aviv and Riyadh's behavior," he added.

Amir Abdollahian underlined that Iran plays the most constructive role in the establishment of sustainable security in the region and the world.

In a statement on Friday, Iran's foreign ministry strongly dismissed the UN allegations that the cruise missiles used in several attacks on oil facilities and an international airport in Saudi Arabia last year were of Iranian origin.

Dogharoon Iran-Afghanistan Cross Border Gate Reopens

MASHHAD (IRNA) - Dogharoon cross border gate for lorries reopened between Iran and Afghanistan and there is no obstacle to the routine transit of goods, Director of Razavi Khorasan Industry, Mine and Trade Department Mohammad Reza Mes Foroush said on Monday.

Mes Foroush said that passenger transport has stopped in Dogharoon for precautionary protocols against spread of the pandemic and exchange of goods got underway.

He added that trucks carrying cement passed through the border post yesterday.

He urged both sides to regulate transit of goods through Dogharoon border gate.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Mes Foroush referred to closure of common border with Turkmenistan, saying the issue will be discussed in a videoconference by officials of Turkmenistan and Razavi Khorasan Province in the next few days.

Due to the fact that Turkmenistan is considered as Razavi Khorasan's gateway to Central Asia, the upcoming meeting will help develop trade between Iran and Turkmenistan.

According to Razavi Khorasan customs, 377,000 tons products worth \$172m were exported through customs of the province over the past two months of the current Iranian year (started on March 20)



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:05
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:43
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:01
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	05:48

71. And whoever repents and does good has truly turned to Allah with an (acceptable) conversion;-
72. Those who witness no falsehood, and, if they pass by futility, they pass by it with honourable (avoidance);
Surah 25. The Criterion, The Standard (71 - 72)

Iran Petchems Revenues to Hit \$34b In 5 Years

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Head of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC) in a press conference yesterday said that Iran's petrochemical production capacity will be increased to 130m tons by 2025 and the revenues of this industry will hit \$34b.

Speaking in a press conference, Mr. Behzad Mohammadi said that the outbreak of the Coronavirus has led to drastic changes in the economies worldwide, adding that according to the IMF report, global economy will shrink by 3 percent and Iran's economy is not an exception, either.

He said in Iran, petrochemical products play key role in earning forex for the country and it is actually the number one source of forex earning for the country.

Mohammadi further said that last year the price of petrochemical products dropped and the products of the upstream chain suffered the most and for this reason, the company should move towards completing and developing the chain of production.

He said the oil ministry's efforts are to have comprehensive, smart and wise development in the petrochemical industry. He further said the country has good output in exports of petrochemical products.

On the condition and performance of the petrochemical industry last year, Mohammadi said that the industry received 35m tons of feedstock which equaled to 800,000 barrels of oil crude and due to the rise in the number of projects in next year, the amount of oil and gas consumption will reach 1.5m barrels of crude.



He further said that the country is currently producing 339 polymeric and 42 chemical products and out of 66m tons of production capacity, only 31m tons of saleable products are produced and 23m tons of it is exported and 8m tons are used domestically.

Mohammadi note that 23m tons of exported petrochemical products earned the country \$10b and the industry earned some \$5b through its domestic sales and the total revenue stood at \$15.9b last year.

He said the petrochemical industry provides the downstream industries with 8m tons of products, adding that some 15,000 enterprises are active in this industry and 80,000 people are directly working in the industry and totally 980,000 people are involved in the industry.

He then pointed to the long and mid-term developmental plans in the petrochemical industry for achieving the second and third leaps, saying that those goals are carried out for operationalizing 27 projects and the production capacity will increase from 66m tons to 100m tons by March 2021 and the target set in the Six Development Plan will be materialized and the earning of the industry will jump from \$15b to \$25b.

Mohammadi reiterated that in the third leap till 2025, 27 projects will be added to the current ones and the production capacity will reach 130m tons and the revenues of the industry will touch \$34b.

CBI Cuts Interest Rates To Stem Inflation

TEHRAN (IRNA) -Iran's Central Bank said on Monday that cutting interest rates aims to channel liquidity to the manufacturing sector and stem inflation adding that it has adopted appropriate measures for management of market liquidity envisaged at 2,472 trillion tomans by the end of the Iranian year (March 2020).

CBI released an excerpt of Iran's economic figures on Monday in which it said market liquidity pertaining to the Iranian year 1398 (March 2019-March 2020) increased by 31.3 percent compared to the previous year and the plan to channel the financial resources to the industrial sector to stem inflation and create jobs.

The statistics also indicated that Iran's market liquidity in 1397 (March 2018-March 2019) amounted to 1,882 trillion tomans, up by 23.1 percent in comparison to the previous year.

CBI had previously said that the growth in last year's liquidity was due to oil sanctions pressure on the governmental budget and the increase in the Bank's external assets net value caused by purchasing 12 percent of National Development Fund's currencies.

In order to contain liquidity, CBI has adopted stricter policies, including preventing interest rate race among financial institutes, launching open market operation and reforming CBI's relationship with the Government's income/expenditure.

Insurance Companies Can Guarantee Economic Activities in FTZs

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Secretary of Iran's High Council of Free and Special Economic Zones Morteza Bank during meeting with the board of directors of Iran Moein Insurance Company (specialized insurance in free trade zones) said insurance companies can guarantee economic activities in Iran's free trade zones.



During the meeting, Mr. Bank pointed to the background of activities of Iran Insurance Company in the country, adding that presence of Iran Moein Insurance Company in the free trade-industrial zones has provided this opportunity for the presence of other insurance companies in the zones. He reiterated that the rise in effective services for users and insurers is the most important factor in the insurance activities.

Mr. Bank added that Iran Insurance enjoys having good specialized capacities and it can offer more effective and complete services for insurers in the free trade zones. He further said an investor in the free trade zone expects in the emergency and during the accidents to feel support of the insurance company in his economic activities.

Meanwhile the CEO of Iran Moein Insurance Company Mr. Daryush Mohammadi said that the company is to open branches in five special economic zones by the yearend. He added that Iran Moein is in charge of almost 50 percent of insurance affairs in the zones and it is the biggest insurance company among the four active companies in the free zones.

Iran Chamber of Commerce in Syria To Open Soon

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's Chamber of Commerce will be launched in Syria soon, told the head of Iran Export Confederation Mohammad Lahoti.

Speaking to ILNA, the Iranian official said "Iran Chamber of Commerce has purchased an office in Syria and is seeking to renovate and prepare it."

He went on to explain that Syria's goal is joint investment, and Iran's aim is to export goods to this country; adding "we can expand exports and investment in Syria by opening the Chamber of Commerce in this country."

Referring to coronavirus outbreaks in Iran, the economic activist said that Iran's exports have been affected by the coronavirus pandemic but due to the 80% reopening of the borders, Iranian exports will increase in June.

Iran and Syria agreed on establishing a joint chamber of commerce in business forum in October 2018 to expand their mutual cooperation in different economic fields. Iran-Syria joint chamber is put on the ICCIMA's agenda and all interested companies can hand in the required documents to be assessed in order for registration.

The two sides also agreed on the optimal benefit from the potentials provided by the Free Trade Agreement signed between the two countries in 2011 with the aim of developing and upgrading the level of trade exchange between Syria and Iran.

Iranian private sector has repeatedly expressed readiness to cooperate with Syria in various areas including construction, transportation, power plants, renewable energy, infrastructure and etc.

Concerns Over Decline in Investments

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Deputy Industry, Mine and Trade Minister says the decline in investment in production sector and productivity of capital is the major concern in the industry and mine sector.

Speaking in a videoconference with his deputies in provinces, Mr. Saeed Zarandi said the decline in investment and lack of major mega industrial projects can create problems for the country in the future and the country should direct capitals towards production in the provinces.

He noted that productivity of capital is the major

concern of the ministry, adding that there are several unfinished projects in the country where billions of tomans have been invested and all should work to complete them.

He emphasized there is no reason why an investor should start activity from scratch while there are several unfinished projects in the country.

Zarandi added that provincial organizations should guide new investors towards the unfinished and shelved projects.

He said in the current year, the ministry is determined to encourage production units to step into capital market and to issue bonds and other tools for boosting production.

Iran Stands at the Top of Global List of Blood Donation

TEHRAN (IP) - Iran is among the top countries in blood donation across the world with 0.025 indexes of blood donation compared with the average global index of 0.015, the head of Iran's Blood Transfusion Organization (BTO) said.

Attending a press conference on the occasion of World Blood Donor Day, Peyman Eshqi responded to Iran Press question about Iran's position in the world, noting that with regard to blood safety, Iranian is among the tops donors in the world due to total screening.

Eshqi went on to say that considering the donation index in the world, Iran's index is 25 in 1,000 while the average number is 15 in 1000 population in the world.

The head of BTO pointed to the effects of plasma-therapy on the coronavirus patients' treatment and said that it could decrease the duration of hospitalization to 30% and the death toll to 50%.

According to the latest statistics, so far, 187,427 people in Iran have been infected with the coronavirus, and 148,674 of total infected people have recovered.

Blood Transfusion Organization is ready to receive plasma from recovered coronavirus patients in 22 bases, he added. Iran before coronavirus stands at 0.027 indexes.

Iran now stands in the first place among 21 countries in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the whole blood donation rate is an indicator of the general availability of blood in a country.

The median blood donation rate in high-income countries is 32.1 donations per 1,000 people.

Efficient Water Consumption Through Transparency

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

ISFAHAN - The head of public relations office of Isfahan Province Water and Wastewater Company during his interview with a radio program hailed the program regarding reform in the culture of water consumption in the society, adding that the company has built the public trust regarding efficient water consumption through transparency.

Speaking to Jari-e Hayat (Flow of the Life) radio program, Mr. Seyed Akbar Bani Taba said that since 2013, the company has had good interaction with Isfahan's broadcasting and the radio program of "Jari-e Hayat" was launched with an approach on managing the water consumption and since then, the program has produced various items in order to direct the efficient water consumption among the layers of the society and it has been successful in encouraging people for efficient water consumption. He added many people participate in a competition which is held by the program on ways of efficient water consumption.



Bani Taba noted that the public relations of the company has not only used properly the capacity of the national broadcasting to encourage people to consume water efficiently but also it has used other mediums like digital and printed media and social network. He added that the best proof for his claim is that the water consumption per capita is currently 150 liters per day while the figure was 189 liters per day in 2007.

On how the company could win the public trust, he said by making the grounds transparent, the company could build the public trust, adding that transparency and building public trust has had huge impact on the correct way of water consumption and by producing good and creative programs, the company could induce the value of water in the society and people now are careful in water consumption.

Bani Taba also urged the people to manage their water consumptions during the summer in order to avoid and outage in water supply.

He added that the public relations office of the company has won several accolades in several festivals and it is one of the top public relations in the national water and electricity companies.

MSC Wins Organizational Excellence Award

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Mobarakeh Steel Company won the golden organizational excellence award in the construction and production category among big enterprises during the 17th Iranian National Productivity and Excellence Award.

According to reports, in the 17th Organizational Excellence Conference and 17th Productivity and Excellence Award, which were held at Industrial Management Institute in presence of Head of IDRO Mr. Amir Bayat Tork and during the award ceremony, Mobarakeh Steel Company won the organizational excellence award in the construction and production category among the big enterprises.

Specialized Parent Company MIDCO and MAPNA won the silver excellence award in the same category. The award ceremony is held every year to announce the best enterprises in the organizational excellence and it is held by Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) in collaboration with the Industrial Management Institute.

The award is one of the oldest and most prestigious awards in the excellence and productivity field which is bestowed in the country. The award is presented to the best after the performance of the qualified enterprises is evaluated by the jury.

In the 17th edition of the wards, 15 organizations and companies competed in the top level for the golden statues and Mobarakeh Steel Company was the winner.

Russia, Turkey Put Off Talks on Syria, Libya

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russia and Turkey have postponed ministerial-level talks that were expected to focus on Libya and Syria, where the two countries support opposing sides in long-standing conflicts.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov decided to put off the talks during a phone call on Sunday, the Turkish Foreign Ministry said.

"The two countries' deputy ministers will continue contacts and talks in the period ahead. Minister-level talks will be held at a later date," the ministry said in a statement.



Pope Appeals for End To Libyan Civil War

VATICAN CITY (Reuters) - Pope Francis appealed on Sunday for both sides in the Libyan civil war to seek peace, urging the international community to facilitate talks and protect refugees and migrants he said were victims of cruelty.

In an impassioned plea during his noon address in St. Peter's Square, Francis said he was pained by the situation in Libya, which has had no stable central authority since dictator Muammar Gaddafi was overthrown by NATO-backed rebels in 2011. For more than five years Libya has had rival parliaments and governments in the east and the west, with streets often controlled by armed groups and sporadic fighting.



France Not to Take Down Statues, Erase History



PARIS (Dispatches) - French President Emmanuel Macron vowed Sunday to stand firm against racism but also praised police and insisted that France wouldn't take down statues of controversial, colonial-era figures.

It was the first time Macron has spoken on the issues since George Floyd's death in the United States unleashed protests around the world, including several in France, where demonstrators have expressed anger at racial injustice and police brutality, particularly toward minorities from France's former colonies in Africa.

Unusually for a French leader, Macron acknowledged that someone's "address, name, color of skin" can reduce their chances at succeeding in French society, and called for a fight to ensure that everyone can "find their place" regardless of ethnic origin or religion. He promised to be "uncompromising in the face of racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination."

However, he insisted that France will not take down statues of controversial, colonial-era figures as has happened in some other countries in recent weeks.

Amid calls for taking down statues tied to France's slave trade or colonial wrongs, Macron said "the republic will not erase any trace, or any name, from its history ... it will not take down any statue."

"We should look at all of our history together" including relations with Africa, with a goal of "truth" instead of "denying who we are," Macron said.

Macron also said that the fight against racism became distorted when it became exploited by what he described as "separatists."

"It is necessary to unite around Republican patriotism. We are a nation where everyone—whatever their origin and religion—can find their place," he said.

He didn't address accusations of police violence but said forces of order deserve "the nation's recognition."

Like many governments around the world, Macron's is facing growing pressure to confront racism and police violence.

At least 15,000 people demonstrated in Paris on Saturday, the latest in a string of French protests galvanized by George Floyd's death in the United States and the Black Lives Matter movement, but increasingly focused on France's own tensions between police and minorities.

In response, the government banned police chokeholds and vowed to stamp out racism among police — but that has now angered police unions, who say they're being unfairly painted as white supremacists and staged protests of their own.

Calls are also mounting to reassess France's colonial legacy, causing division within Macron's own camp.

Over the past two days, the culture minister denounced the decision to cancel a Paris showing of "Gone With the Wind" — a film long criticized as romanticizing slavery — as contrary to freedom of expression. And he firmly condemned activists who tried to take a piece of African art from a Paris museum dedicated to artwork from former colonies.

India on China: National Pride Won't Be Compromised

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India's defense minister on Sunday said that talks on its border dispute with China are underway but India will never compromise on its "national pride."

Addressing a virtual rally for the disputed area of Jammu and Kashmir, Rajnath Singh asserted that India is no longer a "weak" country, and that its security capabilities have increased.

"Talks are underway with China at the diplomatic and military level. China too expressed wish to resolve this issue via talks. I'd like to inform the opposition that our government won't keep anyone in the dark," he said.

Skirmishes between India and China over their shared border in the Ladakh region started on May 5, and have led to the camping of soldiers on both sides along the Line of Actual Control, a demarcation that separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory.



Russia Will Be Able to Counter Hypersonic Weapons

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia will soon be in a position to counter hypersonic arms deployed by other countries, President Vladimir Putin said on Sunday, adding that Moscow was ahead of the United States in developing new types of weapons.

Hypersonic glide vehicles can steer an unpredictable course and manoeuvre sharply as they approach impact. They also follow a much flatter and lower trajectory than ballistic missiles.

Washington and Moscow have been expanding their defence capabilities as some Cold War-era arms control agreements collapsed during worsening of Russia's ties with the West.

Last year Russia deployed its first hypersonic nuclear-capable missiles, while the Pentagon has a goal of fielding hypersonic capabilities in the early to mid-2020s.

"It's very likely that we will have means to combat hypersonic weapons by the time the world's leading countries have such weapons," Putin was quoted as saying by the RIA news agency.



While Russia and the United States had broadly the same number of nuclear weapons, Putin said Moscow was ahead in advanced arms development.

Border tensions between the two countries have existed for over seven decades. The disputed border also led to the Sino-Indian War in 1962.

Meanwhile, Singh claimed scrapping the special status of the disputed Jammu and Kashmir state has led to all round development.

New Delhi, he added, will carry out so much development in the region that the people of Pakistani Kashmir will want to be a part of India.

Kashmir is claimed in full but ruled in part by both India and Pakistan. A small sliver of the region is controlled by China as well.

Last August, the Indian nationalist government revoked Article 370 and related provisions from the Constitution, scrapping the country's only Muslim-majority state with its autonomy. It was later split into two federally administered territories.

Authorities also locked the region down, detaining thousands of people, imposing restrictions on movement, and enforcing a communications blackout.

Taliban Killed, Wounded Over 400 Afghan Forces in One Week

KABUL (Dispatches) - Afghanistan's interior ministry accuses the Taliban of carrying out 222 attacks against security forces in past week.

The Taliban has killed or wounded more than 400 Afghan security personnel over the past week, the interior ministry said, accusing the group of increasing attacks in the run-up to expected peace talks.

Violence dropped across much of Afghanistan since the Taliban announced a three-day ceasefire on May 24 to mark the Muslim Eid al-Fitr celebration, but officials have accused the group of stepping up attacks in recent days.

"In the past one week, the Taliban carried out 222 attacks against the Afghan security forces, resulting in the death and injury of 422" personnel, interior ministry spokesman Tariq Arian said at a news conference on Sunday.

He also accused the Taliban of targeting religious scholars in a bid to put "psychological pressure" on the Afghan government.

Bomb attacks on Kabul mosques that killed two prayer leaders this month were the work of the

Taliban, Arian claimed.

"This has been the goal of the Taliban to target religious scholars, especially in the past two weeks," he said, accusing the armed fighters of being an "umbrella group for other terrorist networks".

Four people, including a prayer leader, were killed when a blast ripped through a mosque in Kabul during weekly Friday prayers.

No group claimed responsibility for the attack which came just over a week after an ISIL (or ISIS) attack at a mosque on the edge of Kabul's heavily fortified Green Zone killed a prominent prayer leader.

The Taliban condemned both attacks.

After initially reporting a drop in overall violence following the ceasefire, National Security Council spokesman Javid Faisal on Sunday said the Taliban "have not reduced, but rather increased their attacks across the country".

The council on Saturday also charged that the group had killed 89 civilians and wounded 150 in the last two weeks.



Venezuela Demands Release of Businessman Connected to Maduro

CARACAS (Dispatches) - Venezuela has demanded the release of a government-connected businessman who was detained in Cape Verde on U.S. corruption charges, calling his arrest an illegal act of aggression aimed at piling new hardships on the crisis-wracked oil nation.

Alex Saab's arrest on Friday en route to Iran was a major blow to President Nicolas Maduro's government. U.S. officials believe he holds many secrets about how the socialist leader, his family and top aides allegedly siphoned off millions of dollars in government contracts amid widespread hunger in the oil-rich nation.

It was unclear how American authorities, who had been targeting the Colombian businessman for years, finally caught up with him. The Justice Department declined to comment as did Saab's American lawyer, Maria Dominguez.

A person familiar with the situation said the 48-year-old Saab was arrested in the Atlantic Ocean archipelago when his San Marino-registered jet made a refuelling stop on a flight to Tehran, where he was believed to be negotiating deals to exchange Venezuelan gold for Iranian gasoline.

Flight tracking data shows the aircraft, which the once globe-trotting Saab had used in the past, departed on Friday from Venezuela's capital, Caracas.

A private jet belonging to Presidential Aviation, a U.S. government contractor formerly owned by the Blackwater private security firm, was ready for a chartered flight from Cape Verde to Miami's private Opa Locka airport on Sunday.

Venezuela's government protested against the arrest, saying that Saab was travelling on a Venezuelan passport and was on a "humanitarian mission" to buy food and medical supplies. In a statement issued on Saturday night, the government said an Interpol arrest notice for Saab was not issued until a day after his detention, violating international norms and disregarding the diplomatic immunity he enjoys as an "agent of a sovereign government".

It said it would initiate all legal and diplomatic actions to secure his release. But coronavirus restrictions frustrated an attempt by Maduro's nearest ambassador, in Senegal, to travel to Cape Verde.



Kamranieh (\$3200)
220sq.m, 3bdrs
S/p, Sauna
J, balcony
marble fl
fireplace
pkg, & F.F

Shanon (adviser)

Zaferanieh Villa (\$8000)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
Sauna, J
green yard
Fully Furn

Parsian

Kamranieh Apt (\$3000)
260sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, F.F

Darrous Apt (\$2700)
300sq.m, 4bdrs
S/pool, S, J, pkg
Fully Furn

Jordan (\$1800)
3bdrs, S/p, S, J, F.F

Feresachteh bldg (\$6000)
4storey, 15bdrs
enough pkg lots
Semi Furn

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Spain Plans 3.7b Euro Auto Sector Aid Package

MADRID (Reuters) - Spain plans a 3.7 billion euro (3.3 billion pounds) aid package for its automobile sector, hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, to promote investment and the purchase of vehicles, specially electric models, Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said on Sunday.

Sanchez said details of the plan, which will also include fiscal and research measures, would be announced on Monday for a sector that accounts for a tenth of Spain's national output and close to a fifth of its exports.

The lockdown, imposed to curb the spread of the new coronavirus, has battered car sales in Spain.



Islamic Economy Can Lead out of Crisis

ISTANBUL (Dispatches) - Islamic tools offer a "key" to get out of the economic woes the world is now facing, Turkey's president said on Sunday.

"Over-financing has created a bloated economic model, which acts only over concern about unearned income, without considering social and human costs," Recep Tayyip Erdogan told the 12th International Conference on Islamic Economics and Finance via a video link.

Though addressing long-term developments, his remarks took place against the backdrop of economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic.

"To finance long-term large infrastructure investments, the use of products such as sukuk should be expanded," Erdogan added, referring to Islamic bonds.

"Contrary to what has been promised, the distribution of income and wealth is gradually deteriorating all over the world, and the gap between the countries widened," he also said.

"Every crisis that started in the financial sector quickly spreads to the real sector and creates an army of the new unemployed," he warned.

Earlier this year, credit rating agency Moody's announced that Turkey's Islamic banking assets are set to double within a decade, as government initiatives drive growth in the sector.

Turkey has positioned itself to be a hub for participation banking and Islamic finance.

Erdogan said that Turkey is among the countries that is getting over the pandemic period with the least damage.

"In addition to meeting the needs of our own people, we have provided medical assistance to 125 countries around the world," he said.

Pointing out the country's first-quarter growth of 4.5%, Erdogan said that Turkey has shown that it distinguished itself positively from other countries not only in the health sector but also in the economy.

"With the realization of the normalization calendar, production, trade, and tourism [sectors] have started to revive," Erdogan added.

As of Saturday, Turkey confirmed almost 176,700 coronavirus cases while recoveries surpassed 150,000. The virus killed nearly 4,800 people in the country.

Since originating in China last December, the pandemic has claimed over 430,500 lives in 188 countries and regions.

The U.S., Brazil, and Russia are currently the world's worst-hit countries.

Some 7.81 million cases have been reported worldwide, while some 3.72 million people have recovered so far, according to figures compiled by the US' Johns Hopkins University.

France Has Millions of Unsold Face Masks After Virus Crisis

PARIS (Dispatches) - The French praised the altruism of their prized textile and luxury goods companies when production facilities got diverted from churning out the latest fashions to making cloth masks designed to protect the general public from the coronavirus.

Now, the companies that helped France avoid a feared shortage of virus-filtering face wear for everyday use say they need help unloading a surplus of 20 million masks. They asked the French government for assistance promoting and finding buyers for the unsold output of the industry's national effort.

Hundreds of textile and clothing manufacturers answered the government's call for millions of masks superior to homemade versions. President Emmanuel Macron last month sported a military-tested model embroidered with the tri-color national flag to advertise the "Made in France" masks.

Yet within weeks, demand dried up for the domestically produced masks that sold for a few euros at supermarkets and pharmacies or were available in bulk for free distribution by businesses and local governments. Manufacturers and the government acknowledged that many suppliers and consumers still opted for cheaper disposable face masks from Asia.

"We are faced with a lot of competition" from countries with lower labor costs, said Thomas Delise, owner of Chanteclair, the knitwear manufacturer behind the mask Macron wore during a school visit last month.

In an interview with The Associated Press at his factory southeast of Paris, he called for trade barriers to large imports, and coordination within Europe to buy Europe-made masks.



Guillaume Gibault, founder of trendy underwear brand Le Slip Francais (The French Brief), sees the slump as a marketing and distribution problem. The washable, specially engineered masks produced by his company and others saw "a very strong and immediate demand" before the excess accessories piled up in warehouses and factories.

"Not everyone necessarily knew about what was available around them, and the public didn't necessarily know where or what to buy," he told French public radio service RFI.

Some textile companies complained that the French government was slow to validate their masks as effective in filtering out small particles, which slowed their ability to get to market before people were allowed to start emerging from their homes and needed masks in stores or on public transportation.

S. Korea Urged to Ease Reliance on Trade With U.S., China, and Japan

SEOUL (Dispatches) - An economic policy body urged South Korea to ease its reliance on major partners due to

uncertainties brought by the trade between the U.S. and China and export restrictions from Japan.

The U.S. and China accounted for nearly 40 percent of South Korea's exports last year.

Instead, Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP) suggested that the country eye more partnerships with developing nations on a long-term perspective.

South Korea aims to conclude the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) for creating an economic bloc that would account for a third of the world's gross domestic product by the end of this year. The RCEP would be composed of South Korea, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, China, and the ASEAN. There is also a joint feasibility study on an FTA to be undertaken by South Korea and Cambodia.

In 2019, South Korea implemented 16 FTAs that cover 57 trade partners.

South Korea's exports slipped 23.7 percent in May, which is the third consecutive month that it dropped. In contrast, South Korea's shipments to 52 free-trade agreement (FTA) partners more than doubled from 2004 to 2018, increasing from \$170 to US\$438.6 billion, according to the KIEP.

During that period, imports from the nations also more than doubled, which jumped from \$121.7 billion to \$334.6 billion. The foreign direct investment of the said countries in South Korea also increased from \$61.9 billion posted in 2005 to \$211.9 billion in 2017, based on the KIEP report.

Meanwhile the number of unemployed South Koreans hit a record high in May as the COVID-19 pandemic has hammered the job market, data showed on Sunday.

The number of unemployed people who had been seeking to find jobs for less than three months reached 735,000 in May, up 107,000 from the previous year, according to Statistics Korea. The tally marked the largest figure for the month of May since the agency began to compile data in June 1999, reports Yonhap News Agency.

The monthly growth also marked the largest since January 2019, when such people increased by 173,000.

The sharp rise came after the country switched to distancing in everyday life in early May, prompting some non-economically active people to seek to find jobs.

When non-economically active people or those who have no willingness to work try to find jobs, they are calculated as jobless people. After nearly six weeks of tighter social distancing, the government eased the guideline on May 6 to enable citizens to carry out social and economic activities amid quarantine rules.

South Korea's unemployment rate stood at 4.5 per cent in May, the highest level in 10 years, according to government data.

The number of employed people fell by 392,000 to 26.93 million in May, marking the third consecutive monthly decline.

Malaysia's Economic Recovery Unaffected by Covid-19 Developments

TAMPIN (Dispatches) - Current developments related to the Covid-19 pandemic do not affect the country's economic recovery during the recovery movement control order (RMCO) period, says Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed.

He said the spread of Covid-19 has however affected the psychological wellbeing of the public, a factor that could slow down the economic recovery process.

"We are grateful that after June 10 there have been some relaxations, small hotels have started taking reservations, hotels are gradually reopening while airlines have resumed domestic flights, small and medium enterprises have resumed operations, and we see that the government's desire to revive the economy has succeeded partially, though not completely.

"But the psychological effect on the public, making them fearful of carrying out normal daily activities like going on holiday, going out shopping or to school and the like, is the main stumbling block to economic recovery," he said at a media conference here today.

Mustapa, who was speaking after a working visit to the Bukit Rokan Felda settlement near here, said the main priority for the government now is to tackle the public health challenges brought by Covid-19.

"We can say it has been successful, and some of the way we handle the crisis has become an example for the world, and both developing and developed countries are emulating our methods.

"If handling the health issue is the first phase, the second phase is reviving the economy, and PENJANA (the short-term economic recovery plan announced on June 5) is being closely monitored," he said.

He added that an estimated 90 per cent of Malaysians have returned to work, a sign that the economy is recovering.

"The focus of the government now includes explaining the standard operating procedures (SOPs). There should be more meetings between the relevant quarters and the government, and this is happening. I feel that if the SOPs can be explained further, we will be able to see several economic sectors reopening and operating smoothly," he said.

Austria Plans Investment Subsidy, Tax Breaks for Coronavirus-Hit Firms

ZURICH (Reuters) - Austria plans extra investment subsidies and tax breaks to help companies hit by the coronavirus pandemic,

Economy Minister Margarete Schramboeck said on Sunday.

Companies that commit to investments in the next six months could get 14% of it back as a subsidy, she told broadcaster ORF ahead of a two-day cabinet meeting on more stimulus measures.

This could comprise a basic subsidy of 7% and additional support for spending on things like digitalisation, the life sciences and health care, she said, adding a 20% subsidy in cash would be "ideal".

Leaders of the conservative-Greens coalition said on Saturday they plan one-off payments to jobless people and more help for families with children.

The Oesterreich newspaper said the measures were worth 2.6 billion euros (\$2.9 billion), on top of the aid package of up to 38 billion euros the government announced in May.

Schramboeck said firms should get an extra six months of aid to cover fixed costs and be allowed to offset losses they incur this year against profits over the past two years to win rebates.

The government said on Friday that Austria, which has had more than 17,000 confirmed coronavirus cases and 677 reported deaths, plans to cut value-added tax for restaurants and the culture sector to 5% until the end of the year to help them cope.

Austrian economic output will shrink by 7.2% this year if there is no second coronavirus wave in the autumn, but even a milder resurgence would deepen that to 9.2%, the country's central bank estimates.

UN Allots \$2m for Indonesia's COVID-19 Response



JAKARTA (Dispatches) - The United Nations is set to contribute \$2 million to support Indonesia's COVID-19 response under its COVID-19 Multi-Partner Trust Fund (COVID-19 MPTF).

The funds would be disbursed through the Protecting People project, which aims to protect the most vulnerable people, particularly women and children of marginalized groups, from the social and economic blows of the pandemic.

"The Indonesian fund allocation aims to ensure that, in these times of socioeconomic crisis, no one, particularly children and women, is left behind. It is our priority to support the government in protecting progress made to date in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)." UN interim resident coordinator for Indonesia Niels Scott said in a statement on Thursday.

He added that the UN thanked the governments of several countries—the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and Denmark – for providing first contributions to launch the fund. "[It] will help support Indonesia's response to the pandemic and its impacts on human lives and livelihoods," Scott went on to say.

According to the body's estimation, around 150 million Indonesians have fallen into poverty because of the economic impact of the pandemic. Moreover, more face income loss, food insecurity and malnutrition.

The funding package would support the vulnerable groups through social and economic protection mechanisms by scaling up cash transfers, broadening social safety nets and providing educational support and food security for children. Additionally, the funds would support digital innovation that could boost employment and strengthen social services and healthcare provision.

The support would be provided for the government and key partners – civil societies, the private sector and faith-based groups – in three categories: the inclusivity of social protection system, the governance of social protection response to COVID-19 and innovation for more efficient and effective social protection.

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P.O. Box: 15875-8551
Address: No 13, Pajouhesh St.,
Golestan II St, Golestan St.Marzadaran
Blvd., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Printed by:Honar Sarzmin Sabz
Distributed by:
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Chelsea Warm up for Premier League Restart With Big Win

LONDON (Reuters) - Chelsea midfielders Ruben Loftus-Cheek and Billy Gilmour scored twice each in a 7-1 friendly win over Queens Park Rangers on Sunday as Frank Lampard's side stepped up their preparations for the Premier League restart.

Mason Mount, Willian and Olivier Giroud also got on the scoresheet as Chelsea improved on a 1-0 victory over Reading in a similar warm-up friendly last week.

Kyrie Irving Against Orlando Plan

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Brooklyn Nets star Kyrie Irving was among NBA players on a conference call who raised doubts about resuming the season as planned in a Florida quarantine, according to multiple reports.

ESPN and The Athletic, citing unnamed sources, reported that racial justice issues and the chance to impact the ongoing discussion were among the topics touched upon in the Friday night session of nearly 100 players.

Thiem Wins Belgrade Final of Adria Tour

BELGRADE (Dispatches) - Austria's Dominic Thiem won the final in the first weekend of the Adria Tour, beating Filip Krajinovic 4-3(2), 2-4, 4-2.

Thiem took the first-set tie-break 6-2 to take an early lead - but Krajinovic got the first break of the match in Thiem's second service game of the second set.

The Serbian took a medical time-out in the middle of the second set for some treatment on his right arm - but it did not affect him too much, with Thiem double-faulting on set point to level matters up. The world number three gathered himself, though, and held serve to love twice in the deciding set.

Krajinovic clung on to his own serve - and forced Thiem to serve out to love to win the match. He got to match point in style, as well, hitting a fabulous tweener, much to everyone's delight - except perhaps Krajinovic.

The world number 32 was a surprise finalist, progressing on the percentage of games won - and pipping tournament creator Novak Djokovic to the occasion.

This was the first weekend of the Adria Tour, with the matches hosted at the tennis centre in Belgrade that bears the world number one's name.

Meanwhile on Sunday, an emotional Novak Djokovic could not hold back the tears while hosting a charity event at his tennis complex by the Danube River.

Although the world number one missed out on Sunday's Adria Tour final, in which Dominic Thiem beat Serbian Filip Krajinovic 4-3 2-4 4-2, the event revived a lot of fond memories for the 17-time Grand Slam champion who staged the exhibition while international tennis remains suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I was very emotional on the court today. Childhood memories started flooding back, including those of growing up on these



courts and playing here as a young boy," the 33-year-old told reporters after being cheered on by a 4,000-strong capacity crowd.

"I was overwhelmed and those were tears of joy after the match.

"I try to give back to where I come from and be conscious of my childhood and my upbringing. This tennis was an epicentre of people from my childhood days getting together for this tournament, including my former coaches. They were all here."

Djokovic beat Germany's Alexander Zverev on Sunday in his last round robin match but failed to secure his place in the final after both players and Krajinovic ended up with 2-1 win-loss records and an identical 5-3 set difference in their section.

Krajinovic, who stunned Djokovic on Saturday, squeezed through on the basis of having the best games differential among the three.

However, he was powerless to stop Thiem in the final.

"This tournament was for a good cause and we all gave our best," Thiem said after finishing off the weekend with a 100% winning record.

"Many high quality matches in a great atmosphere, in front of a full crowd, so it was a perfect weekend.

"A very big thank you to everyone including Novak and his team, you all made my first trip to Serbia a very special one."

Taking Pay Cut to Help FA a No-Brainer

LONDON (Reuters) - England manager Gareth Southgate has said it was an easy decision to accept a 30% wage cut to help the Football Association (FA) mitigate the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Football was suspended in March due to the coronavirus outbreak and England's friendlies against Italy, Denmark, Romania and Austria were cancelled. Euro 2020 was also pushed back by a year.

The FA said the lack of international matches and domestic cup games would cost it 100 million pounds (\$125.42 million) and Southgate was among the senior figures to take wage cuts for three months starting in April.

"Firstly, I can't fulfil the whole part of my job at the moment," the 49-year-old told the Times. "Although I have taken up other responsibilities in this period that didn't feel quite right.

"The second part is we are different to a club - I would be the highest earner in the organisation and when the organisation is in financial difficulty ... it didn't feel right to me that I wasn't contributing to the bigger picture.

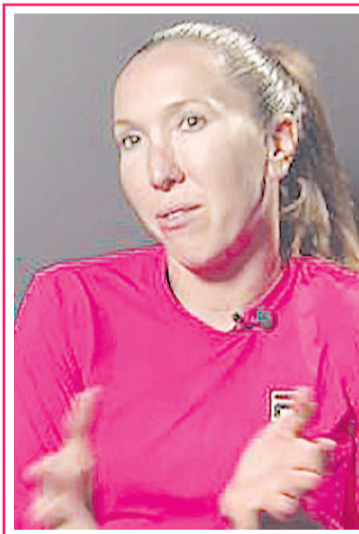
"We have a lot of people who do brilliant work in different areas and they are not as fortunate to earn what I earn.

Slick Return Bodes Well For Barca Title Bid

MALLORCA (Reuters) - Barcelona coach Quique Setien said his side's 4-0 win over Real Mallorca after a three-month hiatus was the ideal launchpad for their title bid after they provisionally opened up a five-point lead over Real Madrid.

Soccer Football - La Liga Santander - RCD Mallorca v FC Barcelona - Iberostar Stadium, Palma, Spain - June 13, 2020 Barcelona coach Quique Setien before the match, as play resumes behind closed doors following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) REUTERS/Albert Gera

The champions got off to a perfect start in their first match since the season was halted by the COVID-19 pandemic and there was good news all round as Arturo Vidal headed them in front after 65 seconds and Martin Braithwaite scored his first goal for the club.



Jankovic Undecided on Future

BELGRADE (Reuters) - Former world number one Jelena Jankovic is still unsure whether she would resume her tennis career after playing for the first time in nearly three years at fellow Serb Novak Djokovic's charity tournament.

Jankovic, who ended the 2008 season at the top of the WTA rankings but had not played since her first-round defeat by Czech Petra Kvitova at the 2017 US Open, acknowledged she spent the last three years in tennis wilderness.

"This is the first time I've held a tennis racket in a very long time and I was as overjoyed as a child in a candy shop," the 35-year-old told a news conference.

"It felt like the very first time. I was sidelined by a back injury which not only hampered my tennis career, it was so bad I couldn't walk properly or sleep.

"I've made a full recovery but I don't know if this is a comeback. The door is open, I never officially retired but I am living a different life now."

Jankovic teamed up with men's world number one Djokovic at his tennis complex in Serbia's capital and beat the duo of Serbia's Davis Cup captain Nenad Zimonjic and 19-year-old prospect Olga Danilovic 7-6 in a mixed doubles contest.

Marcelo Takes Knee as Madrid Return With Win

MADRID (Dispatches) - Marcelo celebrated by taking a knee as Real Madrid returned from three months away following the coronavirus suspension by beating Eibar 3-1 on Sunday.

After scoring Madrid's third goal in the 37th minute, Marcelo dropped onto his left knee and raised his clinched right fist into the air, apparently in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Madrid's win may have come at a cost as Eden Hazard and Sergio Ramos were both substituted early in the second half and were seen with ice packs strapped to them while sitting in the stands.

Hazard was making his first start since February and his ice pack appeared to be around his troublesome right ankle, which he injured in November and February, before undergoing surgery in March.

"We knew Eden would lack a bit of rhythm playing the whole game," coach Zinedine Zidane said. "He played well for an hour, he took a knock which was a scare but at half-time he said he was fine. He is happy with what he has done and we are happy with him."

Madrid's win means they reduce the gap behind league leaders Barcelona back to two points after the Catalans thrashed Real Mallorca 4-0 on Saturday.



Wenger Wants Players Pay Lowered to Tackle Virus Fallout

LONDON (Dispatches) - Arsene Wenger said football needs to tackle inflated player pay if it is to bounce back from the ravages of the coronavirus pandemic, saying "thousands" of clubs across Europe risk extinction.

Former Arsenal coach Wenger warned a reduction in wages was needed in the wake of the billions set to be lost due to the COVID-19 crisis, which forced the game into a months-long hiatus.

"We calculate it here that overall football will lose 20 percent of its income. Football makes, say, 45 billion turnover in the world - the loss will be 10 to 14 billion," Wenger told beIN Sports.

"If you look at the wages structure in most of the clubs it's between 60 and 80 percent of the turnover. That means only the players wages can sort that problem out."

Wenger added the outbreak has made "the weak clubs weaker and the strong clubs stronger" and exposed how football "focussed on grouping the elite".

He said the sport would lose "thousands" of clubs "because there's too many clubs in trouble, and there's not enough money there to help them enough to survive". Speaking about England, where he managed the Gunners for over two decades, Wenger said: "The Premier League will survive. I don't worry for the Premier League. "Of 92 (professional league) clubs, you have 65 clubs who lose money and behind closed doors they open the stadium - they lose money to play the game.



Thiago Silva And Cavani To Leave PSG

PARIS (Dispatches) - Paris Saint-Germain sporting director Leonardo has confirmed that veteran duo Thiago Silva and Edinson Cavani will not stay with the French champions with their contracts due to expire at the end of this month.

"Yes, we are coming to the end," Leonardo said in an interview with newspaper Le Journal du Dimanche.

"It has been a very difficult decision to reach. These are players who have marked the history of the club and you wonder if you should carry on a little longer together or if it's best to avoid staying a year too long.

"We needed to make the right decision, including in economic terms and in terms of the next generation of players coming through."

It was widely reported earlier this week that Brazilian centre-back Silva, the PSG captain who turns 36 later this year, would not be kept on at the Parc des Princes, where he arrived from AC Milan in 2012.

Silva's contract is due to expire at the end of this month, as is that of Uruguayan striker Cavani.

Now 33, Cavani joined PSG from Napoli for 64 million euros in 2013 and has gone on to become the club's all-time top scorer with 200 goals.

However, his place in the side came under threat following the arrival of Mauro Icardi on loan from Inter Milan at the start of the season.

Silva and Cavani have played a major role in establishing PSG as the unrivalled force in French football, but their time at the club will also be remembered for disappointing results in Europe.