

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif Tweeted That “an Agreeable Solution Is Possible” For the United Nations Nuclear Watchdog’s Request for Access to Two Nuclear Sites in the Country

IRAN NEWS

Iran’s Health Ministry Spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari Said on Friday That Some 120 More Iranians Have Died of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Over the Past 24 Hours Bringing The Total Deaths to 9,392

VOL. XXVI, No. 6972 TEHRAN Price 40,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

SATURDAY JUNE 20, 2020 - KHORDAD 31, 1399

2 DOMESTIC

Tehran Unwavering in Its Support for Damascus



> SEE PAGE 2

3 DOMESTIC

Tehran, Baghdad Sign New Financial Accord



> SEE PAGE 3

4 INTERNATIONAL

India, Mexico, Norway, Ireland Elected to UNSC



> SEE PAGE 4

8 SPORTS

UEFA Opts to Keep 12-City Format for Delayed Euro 2020



> SEE PAGE 8

Iran Pushing on With Economic Plans Despite Coronavirus

TEHRAN (IFP) – President Hassan Rouhani says the outbreak of coronavirus has not brought economic activities in the country to a halt, describing the inauguration of new projects as a testimony to Iran’s unfaltering progress.

Addressing a ceremony held in Tehran on Thursday to inaugurate several national projects carried out by the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development, President Rouhani said economic activities are currently underway across the country despite the outbreak of the novel coronavirus.

The strict restrictions placed on businesses in February and March have been lifted, the president noted, but emphasized that all economic activities must fully comply with the health regulations to prevent any problem.

President Rouhani also noted that inauguration of new road and housing projects in a very tough year when Iran is struggling with severe sanctions and the COVID-19 pandemic at the same time has given the world the message that “the Iranian nation’s move towards honor and excellence does not stall and Iran keeps to the path to development.”

See Page 7

Iran Has Over \$62b In Net Foreign Assets

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran says net foreign assets have increased by over 27% year on year to top \$62 billion.

The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) says net foreign assets held by the bank and other Iranian non-bank financial institutions have surged by nearly a third over the year ending March 19.

A Thursday report by the official IRNA news agency cited CBI figures as showing that foreign reserves had increased by 27.4 percent over the past calendar year to reach a total of 11,680 trillion rials (over \$62 billion).

It said net foreign assets had more than doubled compared to 2016-2017, adding that assets held by Iranian commercial banks were excluded from the calculations.

The CBI said its own foreign reserves had also increased by 17.6 percent year on year in March to reach 5,470 trillion rials (more than \$29 billion).

It added that CBI assets in foreign banks had increased by less than a quarter compared to 2016, when Iran was relieved of international sanctions after signing a major nuclear agreement with world powers.

See Page 7

Iran Navy Successfully Test-Fires New-Generation Cruise Missiles



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran’s naval forces have successfully tested new-generation cruise missiles — designed and developed by experts at home — during military drills in the Sea of Oman and the northern Indian Ocean.

During the maneuvers on Thursday, the long-range and short-range missiles were successfully fired from the coast and from decks of ships, hitting the designated targets with high accuracy.

The long-range missiles destroyed their targets at a range of 280 kilometers.

The coast-to-sea and sea-to-sea missiles were produced by experts at Iran’s Ministry of Defense in cooperation with the Navy, according to the report.

At the end of the maneuvers, Deputy Chief of Army for Coordination Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari described the successful launch of new cruise missiles as a promising step toward further upliftment of the country’s defense and deterrence power.

He added that Iran will continue to march toward self-sufficiency and becoming needless of foreign military equipment despite brutal sanctions imposed on the country, adding that “successful test-firing of long-range missiles is a sign of remarkable progress in boosting synergy between the armed forces and defense industries.”

Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi also noted that production of new home-grown missiles by the Iranian experts will better equip the Islamic Republic to handle any threat against the Islamic establishment and the Iranian people while strengthening a sense of self-reliance in the Iranian Armed Forces.

The long-range naval cruise missiles hit the targets at a distance of 280 kilometers. The range of the new homegrown missiles may be extended.

A variety of coast-to-sea and sea-to-sea missiles with short and long ranges were fired simultaneously from the coastal launchers and the deck of naval vessels, and they could successfully detonate the targets with great accuracy.

The Thursday war game was held on the fortieth day after the martyrdom of a number of Navy forces in an incident involving the Konarak vessel.

Nineteen Navy servicemen were martyred and 15 others injured in the accident on May 10 when a number of vessels were carrying a naval training exercise off the coasts of Jask and Chabahar in the Sea of Oman.

Iran to Take Appropriate Action in Response to IAEA Resolution

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - In response to the adoption of the proposed resolution of the three European countries in the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Friday, Iran Ambassador stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran completely rejects the resolution of the Board of Governors, adding that It will take appropriate and necessary reaction to it.

Kazem Gharibabadi delivered a speech on the last day of the quarterly meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency’s Board of Governors and noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran has the highest level of cooperation and acceptance of IAEA inspections among member states. While more than 33 additional accesses are made annually from Iran, magnification of two IAEA access requests, and Iran has principled ambiguities and concerns in this regard, and talks are underway in this regard, and efforts to create an unnecessary crisis on the way to this cooperation are a completely non-constructive and political move.

The diplomat noted that therefore, the adoption of this resolution in the Board of Governors with the aim of requesting Iran’s cooperation with the IAEA and ignoring the existing cooperation, is deeply disappointing and unfortunate.

The ambassador of Iran stated that this resolution is nothing more than extravagance, and Iran completely rejects any extravagance on the part of any country or organization. The resolution has nothing to do with technical facts, but merely the result of a political and unprofessional agenda.

He stated that the Board of Governors was expected to identify these collaborations in order to maintain the context for continued cooperation between Iran and the IAEA.

Gharibabadi stated that we must stand united against those who want to destroy these collaborations and achievements because of their short-sighted political concessions. The responsibility for cooperation cannot be borne solely by Iran, and if this is compromised, everyone must bear the negative consequences.

See Page 7

ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

Asia’s Oil Market; Post-Coronavirus Era

BY: HAMID REZA NAGHASHIAN

World economy in the energy sector has a momentary look at the oil market and it actually knows it is impossible to stop this look in the short time. The Middle East and Asia are the center stage of reflection of this view as the U.S. sanctions on Venezuela have not been enough effective. Despite the U.S. unilateral sanctions against Venezuela, China shipped significant amount of crude oil to Venezuela in delicate ways in 2019. Before that, most of crude oil in Venezuela was produced by the American companies and it was bought by the American refineries.

In the first half of 2019, China imported 350,000 bpd of crude on average from Venezuela. With repeated threats of the U.S., the amount of crude extraction of oil in Venezuela by Chinese company CNPC gradually dropped and it was almost zeroed in the second half of 2019. But the international section of Rosneft Company, which has been registered in Switzerland, buys Venezuela’s crude oil and ships it to areas near China. Malaysia has been determined as the destination for shipment of Venezuela’s oil which is later taken to Shanghai Port in China. Some 48m tons of crude was taken to China through this method in May, 2020, which shows 20 percent growth comparing to the same period in 2019.

The Chinese companies have stepped up imports of crude by taking advantage from rift among the OPEC member states, the rise in oil production by Saudi Arabia and the slump in the oil price. When we glance at the reports on transportation, we learn that the fare for shipping crude between the Persian Gulf ports and Chinese ports and chartering an oil tanker has jumped from average \$33,500 on March 6, 2020, to 285,000 in the following week and it indicates changes in the growth of transportation cost in the market. These reports also show that Saudi Arabia’s share from the global oil market has become more in these days.

While investment in developing and exploring the oil fields is declining day by day in the wake of Coronavirus pandemic and oil price is slumping, Saudi Arabia has enhanced its production capacity to have major share of the market. According to the American investment bank JP Morgan’s report and despite slump in the oil prices in recent months, it is predicted the price of Brent oil to bounce back and to reach \$60 per barrel.

See Page 7

Venezuela to Take U.S. Sanctions Case to Int’l Criminal Court

CARACAS (Dispatches) - The Venezuelan government has vowed to take the United States to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in response to new unilateral sanctions imposed by Washington on the Latin American country.

The administration in Washington introduced sanctions on Thursday that targeted Mexican companies and individuals for allegedly attempting to evade US restrictions on Venezuela’s oil sector.

“Washington continues to narrow the circle around Venezuela. They [the United States] believe that we cannot export oil and the Venezuelan people are left without food products, medicines, and petrol,” Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza wrote on his Twitter page later in the day.

“The UN multipolar system must respond. We will go the International Criminal Court over this case,” he added.

Iran, which is also under harsh U.S. sanctions, opened a case at the Hague-based court in 2018, calling on the organization to suspend unilateral economic sanctions imposed by Washington after U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from the 2015 international nuclear deal.

See Page 7

Sokhan Gostar Institute

IRAN NEWS

PRIVATE ENGLISH NEWSPAPER IN IRAN



Advertisement Department
021-44253335-39
www.irannewsdaily.com
info@irannewsdaily.com

@irannewsdaily @irannewsdaily

Iran Welcomes Election Of New UNSC Members

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iranian Foreign Ministry in a message welcomed election of new members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), saying Iran is ready to work with them. “#Iran welcomes the election of India, Ireland, Mexico & Norway as the new UNSC non-permanent members,” Iranian Foreign Ministry wrote on its Twitter account on Thursday. “Iran is ready to work w/the new members, as the key agenda for the term 2021-22

should be effective protection of multilateralism & intl law against vicious ideologies & states,” it added.

The United Nations Security Council is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, charged with ensuring international peace and security, recommending the admission of new UN members to the General Assembly, and approving any changes to the UN Charter.

Tehran Unwavering in Its Support for Damascus

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - First Vice President Eshaq Jahangiri reaffirms the Islamic Republic’s outright support for Syria and the regional resistance front in the face of foreign-backed scheming and violence.

Speaking in a phone conversation with Syria’s newly-appointed Prime Minister Hussein Arnous on Thursday, Jahangiri called Iran “Syria’s strategic partner,” which would changelessly stand by the Syrian people and government’s side.

“The unscrupulous assassination of Martyr Lieutenant General [Qassem] Soleimani has not effected any change in Iran’s policy of backing Syria and the resistance front,” Jahangiri added.

General Soleimani, former commander of the Quds Force of Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), proved a decisive element in the regional fight against foreign-backed militancy and Takfiri terrorism. He directed Iran’s military advisory support for Syria and Iraq during the height of Daesh’s campaign against the countries, a contribution that resulted in the Takfiri terrorist group’s defeat in late 2017.

“The Islamic Republic will not spare any effort to help reduce the [existing] pressures facing the Syrian people. By God’s grace, Syria will reclaim its power, calm, and stability,” Jahangiri noted.

The Iranian official hailed that the Syrian people, Armed Forces, and government had successfully withstood multiple adversities.



“Syria has attained good achievements,” Iran’s first vice president said, adding that among regional Arab states, Damascus’ “powerful performance” against terrorism indicates that the Syrian people “triumphed” against the evil phenomenon.

The victories, though, enraged the Israeli regime that reacted by resorting to military incursions into Syria, Jahangiri noted, saying the Islamic Republic condemns the aggression.

The Iranian vice president, meanwhile, urged the international community, especially the United Nations, to provide serious support for the Syrian people amid the outbreak of the new coronavirus, mainly by enabling transfer of medicine and staples to them.

The Syrian official, for his part, said the Islamic Republic’s supportive stance towards Syria “has turned into a strategy that serves to reinforce the countries’ ties against the enemies of the resistance front.”

He also voiced Damascus’ interest in further deepening of the relations, and expressed gratitude towards Tehran for its assisting the Syrian people and attempts at lessening the pressures that they are facing.

Zarif Warns IAEA Against Adopting Resolution for Intrusive Nuclear Inspections

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran has warned the International Atomic Energy Agency against any push for intrusive inspections of two nuclear sites in the country, saying adopting a new resolution would ruin any possible agreeable solution in the future.

Following the submission of a draft by France, Britain and Germany – all parties to Iran’s nuclear deal (JCPOA) – to the IAEA Board of Governors calling on Iran to allow access to the sites, Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif warned that pushing for any intrusive inspections would ruin the possibility of any agreeable solution.

“BoG should not allow JCPOA enemies to jeopardize Iran’s supreme interests. E3 should not be an accessory, after failing own JCPOA duties,” Zarif tweeted late Thursday.

“We’ve nothing to hide. More inspections in Iran over last 5 years than in IAEA history. An agreeable solution is possible, but Res will ruin it,” he added.

Bloomberg reported on Monday that the document urges the Islamic Republic to “fully cooperate” with the IAEA investigation of its nuclear facilities and “expresses serious concern that, for over four months, Iran has denied access to the agency under the Additional Protocol.”

The European resolution — which is reported to have firm backing from the US — could be passed by consensus or face a vote by the 35-member IAEA Board of Governors.

Iran says such a resolution is based on anti-Iran allegations raised by the Israeli regime and serves American goals.

President Inaugurates 2nd Line of Karaj-Qazvin Railway

KARAJ (IP) - The second line of the Karaj-Qazvin railway inaugurated by the Iranian President on Thursday via video conferencing.

Azizullah Shahbazi, the director-general of public relations and international affairs of Alborz governorate, said on Wednesday that the 103-kilometer-long project, with a credit of more than 574 billion toman, opened in Alborz province.

He said: “Considering the importance of Alborz and the need to develop the roads of this province due to the volume of traffic and national traffic load from transportation axes, special care and support has been provided for road and rail projects by the government.”

Part of the railways of the Islamic Republic of Iran is located in Alborz province.

Tehran Backs UNHRC Session Against Racism in U.S.

TEHRAN (MNA) – Seyed Abbas Mousavi, Iranian Foreign Ministry’s Spokesperson, said that Tehran supports holding a meeting of the UN Human Rights Council to address the racism in the United States.

In a statement on Wednesday, Mousavi welcomed urgent meetings of the Human Rights Council during June 17-18 to review the killing of George Floyd and the issue of racism in the US.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that UN capacities, resources, and mechanisms should concentrate on combating phenomena such as racism,” Mousavi said, noting that based on its religious, cultural and national teachings, Islamic Iran has always been a pioneer in countering and combating racism, and believes in systematic combat against racism in some parts of the world, especially in the U.S.

“Palestinian people have been a victim of discrimination and racism over the past few decades, and what we are witnessing today in the American society is the result of systematic racism and injustice in the foundations and structures of the US political system,” he added.

It is not just the American society and people who have been and are victims of racism and injustice of their governments, but other nations have also had a bitter experience of discriminatory behavior and practice, along with the oppression and injustice of the US governments, he added.

Photo: The head of a statue of Christopher Columbus was pulled off amid protests in the aftermath of the death in Minneapolis police custody of George Floyd, in Boston on June 10, 2020 [Brian Snyder/Reuters]

Tehran, Islamabad Stress Expansion of Economic Cooperation

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian and Pakistani officials explored on Thursday the avenues of broadening mutual economic ties amid the fight against the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Iranian Ambassador to Islamabad Mohammad Ali Hosseini and Adviser to Pakistani Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razzak Dawood met on Thursday discussing the ways to solve the problems between the two countries amid the pandemic.

The two sides stressed the need to develop economic relations and continue consultations to remove obstacles to bilateral cooperation.

Hosseini underlined the importance of barter as a way of doing business for the development of relations between the two neighbors, saying that the development of transit relations in the field of rail, land, and sea transport between the two countries is inevitable.

The Pakistani official, for his part, praised the consular services provided and the approval of the commercial documents of mango exporters to Iran.

Referring to the official announcement of the opening of the Taftan-Mirjaveh border crossing on a full-time basis, he stressed the need to develop bilateral trade relations in line with the neighborliness principle between the two friendly countries.

Afghanistan Mulls Cooperation With Iran on Border Security

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The presidential palace of Afghanistan played host to a meeting to weigh plans for closer cooperation with Iran in ensuring security along the common border and combatting smugglers and traffickers.

The meeting, chaired by Vice President of Afghanistan Amrullah Saleh, was held at the Arg, the presidential palace in Kabul.

It was attended by caretaker of the Foreign Ministry of Afghanistan Hanif Atmar, Chief of General Staff of the Afghan Armed Forces Lieutenant General Bismillah Waziri, Deputy Afghan Interior Minister Abdul Saboor Qanay, and Deputy of National Directorate of Security of Afghanistan Ebadullah Ebad.

According to a statement from the presidential palace, participants in the meeting discussed ways to promote cooperation with Iran to ensure the common border’s security, fight against the smugglers and traffickers, and promote collaboration between the border guards of the two neighbors.

Based on a decision made at the meeting, one of the topics that Hanif Atmar is going to discuss with the Iranian officials during his upcoming visit to Tehran will be the revision of an agreement on the border forces that the two countries have signed more than six decades ago. The caretaker of the Afghan Foreign Ministry is also scheduled to hold talks with Iran about the human trafficking victims arrested along the common border.

Iran Brings Strategic Titanium Mine Into Production

TEHRAN (PressTV) - A heavy mineral sands prospect in northwest Iran is now ready for production of titanium, marking another milestone in the country’s sourcing of strategic metals.

The Qara-Aghaj deposit near Urmia, estimated to hold 120 million tonnes of titanium-bearing ores, was brought into operation, pending the establishment of processing plants, provincial deputy head of the industry, mine and trade organization Parisa Abedpour told IRNA.

Qara-Aghaj is one of the largest known titanium ore deposits, containing 30 percent of Iran’s overall reserves. The other major

titanium prospect is Kahnij in Kerman, estimated to hold 150 million tons. The Fanuj mine in Iran’s Sistan and Baluchestan province is another base for titanium deposits.

Iran’s first titanium processing plant was brought online in 2016, with a capacity to produce 130,000 tons of titanium dioxide concentrate and 70,000 tons of titanium dioxide slag per year.

The operation of the Kahnij plant put Iran in the league of a few countries which produce titanium - the strategic metal of the century, named after the powerful Titan gods in Greek mythology.

U.S. Accuses Iran to Cover Up Its Crimes in Region

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Head of Presidential Office Mahmoud Vaezi in a message said the U.S. accuses Iran of threatening regional security and stability to cover up its crimes in the region.

The U.S. has accused Iran of posing a threat to stability and security in the region, supporting terrorism, and imposing on international criminal court (ICC) to cover up its crimes in the region and its direct and indirect involvement in crimes against Afghanistan, Iraq and Yemen.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif earlier in a message reacted to U.S. officials’ new decision to impose economic sanctions on members of the International Criminal Court and urged the international community to wake up to smell the consequences of appeasing the bully.

“International Criminal COURT now blackmailed by lawless gang posing as diplomats,” Zarif wrote on his Twitter account on June 11.

According to U.S. media ‘Fox News’ report, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Defense Secretary Mark Esper, and Attorney General William Barr announced Thursday that the US will authorize economic sanctions against members of the International Criminal Court who improperly target the US officials and American allies.

“The order follows a recent ICC decision to allow an investigation into US personnel in Afghanistan for alleged war crimes,” it added.

Iran Condemns U.S. Sanctions on Syria

TEHRAN (IFP) - Ministry of Foreign Affairs has condemned the new U.S. sanctions against Syria, pledging that Tehran will maintain and boost economic ties with Damascus.

In a statement, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Seyed Abbas Mousavi condemned the imposition of new U.S. sanctions under the so-called Caesar Act against Syria as a violation of the international law and humanitarian principles.

“While the world is gripped by the coronavirus pandemic, the imposition of such inhumane sanctions will only add to the sufferings and pains of Syrian people,” he noted.

“As already announced, the Islamic Republic of Iran does not give any credence to such cruel and unilateral sanctions that are passed and imposed on the basis of bullying, and deems them to be economic terrorism against the ordinary people of Syria and a continuation of the US attempts to destabilize that country (Syria),” Mousavi added.

“We will continue economic cooperation with the resisting nation and government of Syria like the past, and will strengthen our economic relations with Syria in spite of the sanctions,” he stated.

On Wednesday, the U.S. State Department and the Treasury said 39 Syrian individuals, including President Bashar al-Assad and his wife, had been designated for a load of new economic and travel sanctions.

The sanctions are the result of legislation known as the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act.

U.S. Use of Coercion Against Countries Rooted in Long History of Racism

TEHRAN (MNA) – An Iranian diplomat noted that Washington’s coercive measures against other nations can be traced back to the long history of racial superiority in the United States.

Esmacil Baghaei Hamaneh, Iran’s Permanent Representative to the UN office in Geneva, made the remarks in an urgent meeting of the Human Rights Council on the issue of systemic racism in the United States.

“Systemic racism has taken root & flourished by the doctrine & habits of racial superiority; it originates from feeling of privileged supremacy, impunity, and dates far back to colonial era and slavery,” he said according to the Twitter account of the Iranian mission to Geneva.

“The long history of racial superiority has paved the way for modern police brutality at home and aggressive belligerent policies and bullying abroad. Resorting to coercion of all sorts against other nations is the practical outcome of this inhumane attitude,” he added.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:06
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:44
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:02
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	05:49

75. Those are the ones who will be rewarded with the highest place in heaven, because of their patient constancy: therein shall they be met with salutations and peace,
76. Dwelling therein;- how beautiful an abode and place of rest!
Surah 25. The Criterion, The Standard (75 - 76)

Tehran, Baghdad Sign New Financial Accord

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), announced that under a newly penned financial framework between Tehran, Baghdad, Iran will use its financial resources in Iraq for purchasing basic goods and unsanctioned products.

Abdolnasser Hemmati made the remarks in Baghdad, where he had a meeting with his Iraqi counterpart.

“Iran will use its huge financial resources in Iraq for doing the purchases under the framework of this agreement,” Hemmati said.

The Iraqi governor Ali Mohsen Al-Alaq, for his part, explained that Iran’s resources in Iraq are the revenues of the country earned from exports of gas and electricity to Iraq.

“From now on, the resources will be used to export basic goods to Iran,” he said.

Answering a question about the possibility of foreign influence on the agreement, he said the financial mechanism accord has been signed after agreement of all sides was gained and it is a transparent accord.

He added that the agreement has been internationally approved.

Meanwhile heads of the central banks of Iran and Iraq have agreed to introduce schemes that could accelerate settlement of payments related to the supply of basic goods to Iran.

A Wednesday report on the website of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) said that new



agreements had been reached between two neighboring countries on how they could speed up payments related to the trade.

The report quoted CBI Governor Hemmati, who is in the Iraqi capital Baghdad for an official visit, as saying that Iran and Iraq had built on the a deal signed last year to secure payments between the two despite a series of American sanctions that target financial transactions involving Iran.

“Based on previous agreement ... it had been expected that we use the resources we have in Iraq for purchase of non-sanction and basic goods,” said Hemmati, adding, “We reached some good agreements during this trip too.”

The report said Hemmati and his Iraqi counterpart Ali Mohsen Al-Alaq had agreed to implement the terms of the agreement reached last year to accelerate the payments.

A later report on the CBI website said Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi had also ensured Hemmati during a Wednesday meeting that he had personally pursued the case of payments owed to Iran.

The new agreement comes despite growing American pressure on Iraq to stop settling payments related to imports from Iran.

Iran is a main supplier of energy to Iraq as it provides the Arab country with a bulk of electricity needs as well as the natural gas consumed in power plants in Iraq.

Pakistan Agrees to Open Border With Iran To Facilitate Trade

ISLAMABAD (IRNA) - The government of Pakistan on Thursday agreed to open border with Islamic Republic of Iran for entire week to facilitate bilateral trade.

According to a notification issued by Pakistan’s Interior ministry, Taftan border shall remain open seven days a week for trade only while ensuring proper SOPs and guidelines. Earlier an official statement said that on the intervention of the Speaker of National Assembly and the Special Committee on Agricultural Products various issues faced by Mango exporters and farmers have been resolved.

“The Iran Border will remain open for entire week and extended time to export mango; PIA (Pakistan International Airlines) Freight Charges for mango export drastically reduced and Provincial Agricultural Departments Convened to devise mechanism for subsidy disbursement,” it said.

This was decided in a meeting of the National Assembly Special Committee on Agricultural Products presided by the Speaker of National Assembly today at Parliament House. The statement said that the Committee in its previous meeting recommended that the Ministry of Interior should take appropriate and urgent trade-facilitative measures for opening and operation of Taftan border throughout the week during the mango season with extended timings to facilitate mango exports to Iran.

The Speaker of National Assembly also wrote a letter to the Prime Minister urging him to take cognizance of the matter and direct the concerned ministries to facilitate the mango exporters.

The Ministry of Interior assured that the decision pertaining to Taftan border opening throughout the week will be immediately notified. Asad Qaiser added that that mango was a perishable commodity and procedural delays or logistical hurdles cost million to national exchequer. He added that no delay in border opening and trade facilitation will be tolerated.

The Committee in the last meeting urged CEO PIA to reduce the freight charges for mango export to facilitate the farmers and exporters.

Syrian PM Discusses Economic Cooperation With Iranian Delegation

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Syrian Prime Minister Hussein Amous on Wednesday reviewed economic cooperation with Tehran in a meeting with an Iranian delegation visiting the country.

Iran-Syria economic collaboration still continues in line with the guidelines of the leaders of the two countries, he said.

Syria has a comprehensive plan to develop the agricultural and food industries to increase the stability of the Syrian people in the face of sanctions.

Head of Headquarters for Developing Iran’s Economic Cooperation with Iraq and Syria Hassan Danaeifar who is heading the visiting Iranian delegation, for his part, reiterated that his country is standing alongside Syria to counter economic punishments.

NICICO on Course of Progress, Development

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Majlis lawmaker Mohammad Reza Pour Ebrahimi believes the performance of National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) last year was in accordance with the target which had been set by Dr. Ardeshtir Saad Mohammadi when he began his job as the new manager of the company and fortunately most of the programs and targets of the company have been materialized.



Pour Ebrahimi, representative of Kerman and Ravar Constituencies to Majlis, said that the production has been the major concern of Majlis which has fortunately been increased in the company. He further said he expects by increasing the investment capacity which is underway, the company could operationalize some new parts of investment capacity in new mining sector for producing copper and cathode products.

He reiterated that the measures which have been taken by the company are undoubtedly appreciable, adding that the progress course should continue with the same climate in order that we could witness records, which had been set last year in production, exports and investments, to continue in the coming years.

Pour Ebrahimi added that the trend for growth of copper production was unsatisfactory, adding that fortunately by the move which began last year, some of backwardness of the company in the past years has been compensated as his expectation from Dr. Saad Mohammadi is beyond all managers , it means he sees these happenings positively and he expects NICICO to strengthen its position in the region and the world and set more records for copper production.

He also hailed the company for observing its social responsibilities especially during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Chadormalu Official Warns Over Decrease of Iron Ore Reserves

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The CEO Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company has warned over the downtrend in the existing iron ore reserves in the country and called for immediate issuance of necessary licenses for exploiting the identified reserves.

In the first rotating meeting of the councils of managers in Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Complex, Eng. Naser Taghizadeh, after the manager of the complex briefed the participants of the current condition of sales and production in the company and called for removing hurdles in way of development in production, said that that if the company is after development and materializing the slogan of surge in production, there is no way but to have access to the new raw materials.

He also complained the current bureaucracy and decisions of some decision-makers which have hindered immediate exploitation of the identified reserves and warned if no immediate measure is not taken regarding the extraction from the identified



considered as a valuable commodity in the world and it is unknown for how many years it remains so. So all should take advantage of this opportunity with the best and efficient exploitation in this industry, he noted.

He underscored that Chadormalu Company has readiness to protect its valuable role in the national steel industry by investing in new mines and to take practical steps for development.

reserves and new explorations of iron ore mines, most of current steel-making units in the country will face closure or decline in production.

Mr. Taghizadeh reiterated that for producers, officials and custodians in the country it is an assignment to materialize all-out development in the country by taking proper and effective measures.

He reiterated that replacement of oil with mines cannot be materialized with just slogans and it needs a strong determination and efficient and courageous managers.

The CEO of Chadormalu further said that today steel is considered as a valuable commodity in the world and it is unknown for how many years it remains so. So all should take advantage of this opportunity with the best and efficient exploitation in this industry, he noted.

He underscored that Chadormalu Company has readiness to protect its valuable role in the national steel industry by investing in new mines and to take practical steps for development.

decreased to 8.3 percent.

He further referred to the measures taken to create jobs in the province, including implementation of oil projects in the south of the province, such as NGL Dehloran and removing barriers to the production.

Referring the use of local forces in the province’s oil and gas projects, he said that Cheshmeh Khosh Dehloran oil fields, Ilam petrochemical company, gas refinery and Azar and Changoleh oil fields in the province can play an important role in employment of local forces.

Iran Looks to Replace Foreigners With Domestic Labor

TEHRAN (FNA) - One of Iran’s policies is to expel illegal foreign labor from the country and replace these people with domestic workers, Iran’s Deputy Minister of Labor, Cooperatives and Social Welfare Ahmad Khan Mohammadian said.

“Structural problems in economy, lack of optimal performance of the labor market in recent years, dependence on production to import and the shortcomings in labor market laws, are among the market challenges in Iran,” Mohammadian said.

“The most important measures to reduce

unemployment is to reform the country’s economic policies on a large scale and focus on the issue of unemployment in the provinces,” the official said.

Referring to the ways to attract foreign investment to the provinces in order to create new jobs, he said that establishing secured environment for investments and active interaction with other countries can help bring in investments into the province.

Referring to the Ilam Province’s unemployment rate, Mohammadian said the unemployment rate in the province in 2019 was 11.1 percent, which has



TEHRAN – Deputy Industry Minister and Head of Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) says the organization is to implement the latest global models of digital excellences in the domestic enterprises by the yearend via the Industrial Management Institute, and evaluation of organizational excellence of the enterprises in the country will be based on the latest global methodology.

Addressing the 17th Excellence Forum in Tehran, Mr. Amir Bayat pointed to the latest acceleration in digital world developments and changes in global business factors under the new technologies, emphasizing that IDRO as a leading developmental organization and in line with conforming the business environment in the country with international standards, it has put on its agenda evaluation of organizational excellence in enterprises based on the latest digital excellence model.

He further said necessities for the Coronavirus era or the post-Coronavirus era have doubled the necessities and inevitability of agility, flexibility, upgrading and innovation in the enterprises, adding that so IDRO as a supportive and back-up organization for software facilitation to help the flexibility in the enterprises and to conform it with the inside and outside environments with quality for competing globally.

Bayat pointed to almost six decades of accumulated experience and knowledge in the education and consultation in the Industrial Management Institute, and called it a national asset with a useful capacity for all enterprises to take advantage especially in the year of surge in production.

During the forum, the 17th productivity and excellence Award was held and seven enterprises won organizational excellence awards.

Former Kazakhstan President Tests Positive for COVID-19

ALMATY (Reuters) - Kazakhstan said on Thursday it would tighten coronavirus-related restrictions during the coming weekend and an aide said former President Nursultan Nazarbayev had tested positive for COVID-19.

Shopping malls, markets and parks will be closed in big cities on June 20-21 and additional hospital beds will be made available for COVID-19 patients, the government said, citing a worsening of the outbreak in the Central Asian country.

It also ordered all provinces to broaden testing for the respiratory disease caused by the novel coronavirus.



Burundi's Swears In Incoming President

NAIROBI (Reuters) - Burundi's incoming president Evariste Ndayishimiye, was sworn in on Thursday following the sudden death of his predecessor Pierre Nkurunziza, a live broadcast on state-run television showed.

Ndayishimiye, 52, a retired army general, won last month's presidential election for the ruling party, defeating the opposition's Agathon Rwasa and five others. Before Nkurunziza died earlier this month, he had been due to be sworn in to office in August.



India, Mexico, Norway, Ireland Elected to UNSC



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - The UN General Assembly elected on Wednesday four new members of the Security Council for 2021 and 2022, with Canada losing out again and the battle for the African seat going to a second round.

India, Mexico, Norway and Ireland were chosen as non-permanent members, while Djibouti and Kenya -- both of which failed to receive the two-thirds vote majority required to win -- will go to a second round of voting on Thursday. Canada was beaten once again for one of the Western seats, by Ireland and Norway, despite a long and star-studded campaign, a result likely to be a blow to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

In the Asia-Pacific region, India -- which has been trying unsuccessfully to win a permanent seat in an expanded Security Council -- ran unopposed to win 184 votes out of the 192 countries that participated in the election.

The result means that India will now have a seat at the same table as China, just days after the two nations disputed their Himalayan border, trading blame for a brawl that left at least 20 Indian soldiers dead.

Mexico, which also ran unopposed, earned 187 votes. African nations have in the past picked their own candidate but were unable to put forward a single country this time. Kenya received 113 votes against Djibouti, which got 78.

Kenya boasts of enjoying the support of the African Union, but Djibouti says it should have the seat due to Nairobi's past participation on the Security Council and the principle of rotation.

French-speaking Djibouti and English-speaking Kenya are both highlighting their roles in seeking peace on the Horn of Africa, as well as their contributions to UN peacekeeping options.

Kenya has pointed to its welcome to refugees from Somalia and South Sudan, as well as to its support to the two countries' fragile governments.

Djibouti, in turn, notes its strategic location and unusual role as a defense base for diverse countries -- France, the United States, China and Japan -- as well as its contributions in Somalia.

For Europe and the Western seats, the competition was more customary.

Canada -- already stung by a defeat in 2010 during its last bid for the Security Council, when the General Assembly chose Portugal instead -- was dominated by Norway, with 130 votes, and Ireland, which had 128, the minimum number required to win.

Trudeau had invested heavily in the latest Security Council effort, with the defeat potentially causing him political embarrassment at home.

"As we move forward, we remain committed to the goals and principles that we laid out during this campaign," Trudeau said in a statement, adding that Canada would "continue to play a vital role in advancing global cooperation and building a more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable world."

Indians Hold Funerals for Soldiers, Portraits of Chinese President

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - Indians burned portraits of Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday as families cremated the remains of some of the 20 soldiers killed in brutal hand-to-hand fighting with Chinese troops in a disputed mountainous border region.

Troops remained on alert at the Galwan Valley in the Ladakh region of the western Himalayas three days after the clashes, in which India said China had also suffered casualties. China has not given details of any deaths or injuries among its troops.

Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar spoke to senior Chinese diplomat Wang Yi on Wednesday and the two sides agreed not to take any steps to escalate matters and instead ensure peace and stability on the contested frontier. An Indian official said senior military officers from both sides were holding talks on Thursday to defuse tensions. The talks were ongoing, the official said.

But both Jaishankar and Wang Yi traded blame for the deadliest border clash since 1967 and called for the other side to rein in their troops.

Trump Unfit to Be U.S. president

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Donald Trump came under attack from both sides of the American political spectrum on Thursday as liberal Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi and former White House aide and conservative hawk John Bolton both declared him unfit to lead the country.

"President Trump is clearly ethically unfit and intellectually unprepared to be the president of the United States," Pelosi, the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, told a news briefing.

In a new book, Bolton, Trump's former national security adviser, has accused the Republican president of sweeping misdeeds, including explicitly seeking Chinese President Xi Jinping's aid to win re-election in November.

"I don't think he's fit for office," Bolton told ABC News in part of an interview aired on Thursday. "There really isn't any guiding principle that I was able to discern other than what's good for Donald Trump's re-election."

Pelosi told a weekly news conference she was consulting with her fellow Democrats on whether to subpoena Bolton about the allegations in the book, which has not yet been distributed.

If Bolton testifies before Congress, it could revive the issue of Trump's competence as he faces a stiff challenge on Nov. 3 from Joe Biden, the Democrats' presumptive presidential nominee, and fends off criticism over his handling of the coronavirus pandemic and protests over racial injustice and police brutality.

Bolton refused to testify in the House's impeachment probe last year and threatened to sue if subpoenaed. He offered to testify in the subsequent trial in the Senate, but the Republican-controlled chamber did not take him up on the offer.

Republican senators on Thursday rejected criticism that they should have called Bolton to testify, and declined to talk about Bolton's allegations.

House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy, a staunch Trump ally, said Bolton was making "sensational" claims to sell books. "Money drives a lot of people to say a lot of things," he said.

U.S. Slaps Sanctions on Mexican Firms, Individuals Linked to Venezuelan Oil Trade

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The United States on Thursday blacklisted Mexico's Libre Abordo and a related company, accusing them of helping Caracas evade U.S. sanctions in the first formal action by the U.S. Treasury Department against Mexican firms involved in trading Venezuelan oil.

The Treasury said in a statement it imposed sanctions on three individuals, eight entities and two vessels for activities related to a network attempting to skirt U.S. sanctions on Venezuela aimed at ousting President Nicolas Maduro.

Mexico's peso slumped 2% after the U.S. action.

Among those blacklisted were Mexico-based Libre Abordo and related Schlager Business Group, as well as their co-owners, Olga Maria Zepeda and Veronica Esparza.

The Treasury also targeted Mexican Joaquin Leal Jimenez, accusing him of having worked with Alex Saab, recently arrested in Cape Verde, Libre Abordo and Schlager for brokering the resale of millions of barrels of Venezuelan crude.

"Leal is the critical conduit between Libre Abordo, Schlager Business Group, and their owners, and PDVSA and Saab. Leal has been coordinating the purchase and sale of Venezuelan-origin crude oil from PDVSA," Treasury said.

Leal did not reply to a request for comment.

A Maduro ally who has previously helped the government buy food, Saab was sanctioned in 2019 and charged with money laundering and conspiracy in a U.S. court in relation to a food program managed by Maduro's administration. The government has denied any wrongdoing in connection with the program.

Libre Abordo said its lawyers will evaluate the Treasury's decision, which it said wrongly linked the firm to unrelated entities.

"Our exchange of humanitarian aid with Venezuela should not be subject of sanctions," Libre Abordo told Reuters in a statement.

The sanctions freeze any U.S. assets of the individuals and entities and generally prohibit Americans from dealing with them.



Iraq Demands Turkey Stop Bombardment

BAGHDAD (AFP) - Baghdad

on Thursday demanded Ankara immediately halt its assault in northern Iraq, where Turkish special forces and helicopters have been targeting Kurdish rebel hideouts.

Turkey early Wednesday launched a cross-border operation into the mountainous regions of northern Iraq where the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), considered by Ankara to be a "terrorist" group, is thought to be hiding out.

Iraq's foreign ministry summoned Turkish ambassador Fatih Yildiz on Thursday and handed him a "strongly-worded memorandum calling for a halt to such provocative actions".

"We stress that Turkey must stop its bombardment and withdraw its attacking forces from Iraqi territory," the ministry said in a statement.

"We affirm our categorical rejection of these violations," it added.

It was the second time in a week that Baghdad summoned Yildiz, who was also called to the foreign ministry on Tuesday following Turkish bombardment in northern Iraq, also against PKK hideouts.

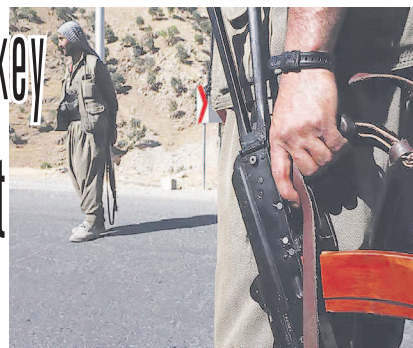
After that meeting, Yildiz said he had told Iraqi officials that if Baghdad did not take action against the rebels, Ankara would continue to "fight the PKK wherever it is".

The PKK has fought an insurgency against the Turkish state since 1984, using the rugged mountains of neighbouring northern Iraq as a rear base.

It has a tense relationship with the semi-autonomous Kurdish government in Iraq's north (KRG), which see the PKK as a rival but have been unable to uproot it from the area.

Analysts say the Turkish operation, dubbed "Claw-Tiger", could not have taken place without the KRG's tacit approval.

There has been no comment from Iraq's new Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein, himself a Kurd who is close to top KRG authorities.





Zaferanieh (\$2600)
240sq.m, 3bdrs
S/pool, Sauna
J, balcony
marble fl
Fully Furn

Shanon (adviser)

Tajeish Villa (\$5000)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
S, J, balcony
marble floor
Fully Furn

Parsian

Farmanieh (\$2400)
230sq.m, 3bdrs, S/pool
Sauna, Jacuzzi, pkg
marble floor, & F.F

Velenjak bldg (\$8000)
5storey, 20bdrs, S/p
S, J, pkg lots, storages
pkg lots, & brand new

Jordan Apts
140sq.m, 2bdrs (\$1300)
200sq.m, 3bdrs (\$1900)

Cell: +989121907875
Shanon_tari@yahoo.com
Tel : 88510081
Fax : 88506474

Commercial office
Vanak (\$30 per sq.m)
300sq.m, 4bdrs, pkgs



IRAN NEWS ADVERTISING
44253401

Don't Waste Your Time

Visit our website to choose your desired rental Properties

www.DeltaHOME.ir
The Most Specialized Website for Foreigners

HOME
Real Estate
Member of **DELTA** Real Estate Group
(021) 88888865



IRAN NEWS
PUBLISHER OF NEWSPAPERS
ADVERTISING

TEL: 44253448-50
FAX: 44253234
ADIRANNEWS@GMAIL.COM

British Oil Major BP Raises \$12b in Debt

LONDON (Reuters) - British oil major BP Plc raised \$12 billion (9.56 billion pounds) of debt with equity-like features, taking advantage of low interest rates to fortify its balance sheet, the Financial Times (FT) reported on Wednesday.

The report of the fundraising comes days after BP decided to write off up to \$17.5 billion from the value

of its assets, betting the COVID-19 crisis would pressure energy demand and accelerate a shift away from fossil fuels.

The oil company raised \$5 billion, 4.75 billion euros (4.25 billion pounds) and 1.25 billion pounds, the FT said, adding that BP locked in annual interest rates as low as 3.25% on some of its new euro notes.



Merkel Urges EU to Agree on €750b Recovery Plan by End of July

BERLIN (Dispatches) - German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Thursday urged the European Union to reach an agreement on a recovery plan worth €750 billion (\$843 billion) by the end of July to kickstart an economy battered by the coronavirus pandemic.

"It would be best if we could reach an agreement before the summer break," Merkel said, calling for compromise from member states to enable the deal to be ratified by the end of the year.

"We must act quickly and decisively," she said.

European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen proposed the huge fund to help the EU out of its deepest-ever recession, but the plan was immediately met with fierce opposition from fiscally conservative member states including Austria and the Netherlands.

The proposed package consists of €500 billion in grants and €250 billion in loans, but requires unanimous EU approval.

"The starting position is far from easy but I hope that all member states will act in a spirit of compromise in the face of this unprecedented situation," Merkel said.

"Cohesion and solidarity have never been more important than today. The crisis can only be overcome if we act for and with each other," she said.

The European Council is due to hold a video summit on June 19 on the controversial stimulus package, the EU's largest to date.

However, a decision is not expected until the leaders have met in person, said Merkel, whose country assumes the EU presidency in July.

The German chancellor had in late May stunned observers by proposing along with French President Emmanuel Macron the plan for €500 billion in grants to help the hardest hit EU members to get their economies back on track.

That proposal, now making up the bulk of von der Leyen's package, shattered a long-standing German taboo as it included taking on shared debt, a dramatic U-turn after years of obstinate German opposition to joint borrowing.

U.S. Weekly Jobless Claims Remain High

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - A second wave of layoffs amid weak demand and fractured supply chains is likely keeping new U.S. applications for unemployment benefits elevated, supporting views that the economy faces a long and difficult recovery from the COVID-19 recession.

The Labor Department's weekly jobless claims report on Thursday, the most timely data on the economy's health, is expected to sketch a picture of continued labor market distress even though employers hired a record 2.5 million workers in May as businesses reopened after shuttering in mid-March to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Millions are still collecting unemployment checks. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell told lawmakers this week that "significant uncertainty remains about the timing and strength of the recovery." The economy fell into recession in February.

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits likely totaled a seasonally adjusted 1.3 million for the week ended June 13, down from 1.542 million in the prior week, according to a Reuters survey of economists.

The 11th straight weekly drop would push claims further away from a record 6.867 million in late March. Still, claims would be roughly double their peak during the 2007-09 Great Recession.

"People will say claims are coming down, but for an economy that is reopening, that is a huge number," said Steven Blitz, chief U.S. economist at TS Lombard in New York.

"The economy is losing workers and employment beyond the initial impact tied to businesses that shut down. There are a lot of industries that are getting hurt and that's starting to cascade down, that is what those numbers are showing."

From manufacturing, retail, information technology and oil and gas production, companies have announced job cuts. State and local governments, whose budgets have been shattered by the COVID-19 fight, are also cutting jobs.

Economists expect an acceleration in layoffs when the government's Paycheck Protection Program, part of a historic fiscal package worth nearly \$3 trillion, giving businesses loans that can be partially forgiven if used for wages, runs out.

They attributed to the PPP a drop in the number of people receiving benefits after an initial week of aid from a record 24.912 million in early May. But these so-called continued claims, which are reported with a one-week lag, appear to have since stalled. According to the Reuters survey, continuing claims probably dipped to 19.8 million during the week ending June 6 from the 20.929 million in the prior week.

"There are continued layoffs across industrial sectors with some risk to white collar jobs as we move past this tranche of government aid," said Joe Brusuelas, chief economist at RSM in New York. "There are concerns of bankruptcies, which will force firms to reduce head count."

Initial claims will cover the week during which the government surveyed establishments for the nonfarm payrolls component of June's employment report. But economists cautioned that claims were no longer a good predictor of job growth.

OPEC Points to 2020 Oil Surplus Even as Demand Gradually recovers

LONDON (Reuters) - The world faces an oil surplus in 2020 even as demand gradually recovers and record supply cuts by producers help rebalance the market, according to OPEC forecasts on Wednesday.

The latest monthly report from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries potentially increases pressure on the group and its allies, known as OPEC+, to curb more supply.

OPEC said demand would decline by 6.4 million barrels per day (bpd) in the second half of 2020, less than the drop of 11.9 million bpd in the first six months of the year, with a "gradual recovery" seen until the end of the year.

Oil prices have collapsed as lockdowns to limit the spread of the coronavirus have curtailed travel and economic activity. While some places in Europe and Asia have eased restrictions, concern over new outbreaks has kept a lid on prices.

To tackle the drop in demand, OPEC+ - which includes Russia - agreed to a record supply cut that started on May 1, while the United States and other nations said they would pump less.

OPEC said these curbs were already helping.

"The oil market was strongly supported by a reduction of the global crude oil surplus, thanks mainly to the historic voluntary production adjustment agreement," it said. Despite the cuts made already, OPEC still pointed to a surplus in the market this year, in part because it now expects supply from outside the group to be about 300,000 bpd higher than previously thought.

A technical committee of OPEC+ and a ministerial panel are meeting on Wednesday and Thursday to review the supply cut's impact and seek better compliance from those yet to deliver their share in

full, such as Iraq and Nigeria. Brent crude LCOc1 was trading above \$40 a barrel after the report's release and is up from a 21-year low below \$16 reached in April.

In the report, OPEC did not further reduce its forecast for world oil demand in 2020, after steep cuts in earlier months. Still, downside risks remain for consumption in top consumer the United States, according to the group.

The supply pact agreed in April involves OPEC+ cutting output by 9.7 million bpd in May and June. OPEC+ agreed on June 6 to extend the cut for another month, a decision OPEC said the market had taken well.

In its report, OPEC said it had cut supply in May by 6.3 million bpd to 24.2 million bpd. That amounts to 84% compliance with the pledges, according to a Reuters calculation - higher than some estimates.

Overall OPEC+ compliance stood at 87% in May, a source said on Wednesday.

China Pledges Continued Economic Support



SHANGHAI (Reuters) - China will maintain ample financial system liquidity in the second half of the year as the economy recovers from the coronavirus but will need to consider withdrawing that support at some point, its central bank governor warned on Thursday.

The comments signal policymakers' concerns that the monetary stimulus unleashed in recent months to help firms through the pandemic could add to debt risks in the world's second-largest economy.

"The financial support during the epidemic response period is (being) phased, we should pay attention to the hangover of the policy," People's Bank of China Governor Yi Gang told a financial forum in Shanghai.

"We should consider the timely withdrawal of policy tools in advance."

Yi said China's economic fundamentals remain sound, its financial markets are broadly stable and that the central bank has guided financing costs lower this year.

The pledge on continued support helped China's stocks rally against a broader decline in global markets on Thursday.

Yi said new loans are likely to hit a record of nearly 20 trillion yuan (£2.25 trillion) this year, up from 16.81 trillion yuan in 2019, and total social financing could increase by more than 30 trillion yuan.

On Wednesday, China's cabinet pledged to cut the reserve requirement ratio (RRR) - the amount of cash lenders must hold as reserves - and push financial institutions to sacrifice 1.5 trillion yuan in profit this year to support firms. The PBOC has already rolled out a raft of easing steps since early February, including RRR cuts and targeted lending support for virus-hit firms.

The economy is gradually emerging from a 6.8% economic decline in the first quarter, its first contraction on record.

While analysts see the central bank easing policy further to support the economy, policymaker have stressed the need for restraint in the amount of stimulus.

Russia Plans Cash Injection for Aeroflot Via New Share Issue

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia has drafted a support plan for Aeroflot (AFLT.MM) where the government and state bank VTB would buy into a new share issue by the country's biggest airline, which has been hit by the coronavirus crisis, two sources with direct knowledge of the plan told Reuters.

The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) may take part in that share issue along with the state and VTB, one of the sources said, adding that under the plan, Aeroflot

would be issuing new shares worth 80 billion roubles (\$1.15 billion).

Russia is following the example of Lufthansa, where the German government will take a 20% stake as a part of a 9-billion-euro bailout, the source added.

The state plans to buy shares worth 50 billion roubles, with VTB and RDIF buying shares worth 15 billion roubles each, he added. The second source said that the new share issue was expected to be "significant."

An RDIF spokesman told Reuters that the fund, along with some international partners, was considering investing in Aeroflot, without providing details. "We don't have such information," Aeroflot said in emailed reply to a Reuters request for comment. A government spokesman and VTB did not reply to requests for comment.

Both sources said that VTB planned to sell its stake in Aeroflot later. They did not give a shareholding breakdown after the planned new share issue, or say when the bank may sell out of Aeroflot.

Aeroflot, 51.2% state-owned, was hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, as countries shut down borders, while Russians were in lockdown for two months from late March.

In March alone, the carrier's passenger traffic slumped more than a third from a year ago and was down 12.3% for the quarter, based on Aeroflot data published in April.

Aeroflot Group, which includes Russian flag carrier Aeroflot as well as Rossiya, Aurora and low-cost airline Pobeda, has a Russian market share of almost 50% based on 2019 data.

Qatar Airways Says No New Planes in 2020 or 2021

DOHA (AFP) - Qatar Airways has said it will not take any new aircraft in 2020 or 2021, deferring orders with Boeing and Airbus as demand diminishes amid the coronavirus crisis.

The Persian Gulf airline, which flew to more than 170 destinations with 234 aircraft as of March, has been hit by airport closures and travel bans imposed to contain the spread of COVID-19.

The International Air Transport Association warned in April that air traffic in the Middle East and North Africa would plummet by more than half this year.

"Quite a lot of (deliveries) will be deferred," Qatar Airways chief executive Akbar al-Baker told Britain's Sky News on Wednesday.

"We have already notified both Boeing and Airbus that we will not be taking any aeroplanes this year or next year.



"And all the other aircraft that we have on order, that were supposed to be delivered to us within the next two or three years, will now be pushed back to as long as nearly eight to 10 years."

If traffic increased to levels above expectation, the delayed aircraft could be brought forward, he said.

The airline says it is currently serving around 40 key destinations.

It has previously warned staff that they face redundancies and salary reductions as it attempts to defy the headwinds of the global aviation downturn.

Qatar Airways was already battling financial turbulence, having posted a \$639 million loss for the year to March 2019.

Shojaei Selected as Asia Greatest Player in La Liga

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iranian football player Masoud Shojaei was selected by the Asian Football Confederation as the greatest player in the Spanish league 'La Liga'.

Asian Football Confederation started a poll in which Masoud Shojaei and Javad Nekounam from Iran, John Aloisi from Australia, Wu Lei from China, Takashi Inui from Japan and Paulino Alcantara from Philippines participated.

Shojaei with 54,838 votes and background of playing in CA Osasuna ranked first and was selected as the greatest player in Spanish League. Nekounam and Lei stood on the second and third places respectively.



Over One Percent of Humanity Displaced

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Nearly 80 million people have been forced to flee their homes due to violence and persecution, marking a near-doubling of global displacement in a decade, the UN said Thursday.

By the end of 2019, one out of every 97 people in the world was living uprooted and displaced, according to a fresh report by the United Nations refugee agency, highlighting swelling displacement from conflicts in places like Syria and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

"One percent of the world population cannot go back to their homes because there are wars, persecution, human rights violations, and other forms of violence," UN refugee chief Filippo Grandi told AFP in an interview.

The UNHCR agency found that by the end of last year, a record 79.5 million people were living either as refugees, asylum seekers or in so-called internal displacement within their own countries, marking a dramatic increase of nearly nine million from a year earlier.

"This is a trend that has been going on since 2012: the figures are higher than the year before," Grandi said, pointing out that this meant "there has been more conflict, there has been more violence that has pushed people away from their homes."

It also means, he said, "that there have been insufficient political solutions" to the conflicts and crises that would allow people to return home.

Grandi pointed out that 10 years ago, the number of people living in displacement around the globe stood at around 40 million.

"So it has basically doubled. And we don't see this trend diminishing," he said.

"With the international community so divided, so unable, so incapable of making peace, unfortunately the situation won't stop growing, and I am very worried that next year it will be even worse than this year." Thursday's report showed that at the end of 2019, nearly 46 million of those displaced remained inside their own country, while 26 million had fled across borders as refugees.

Another 4.2 million people were asylum seekers, while 3.6 million Venezuelans displaced abroad were tallied separately.

Last year, some 11 million people were newly displaced, many in a handful of conflict-racked countries and regions, the report showed.

They include Syria, which after more than nine years of civil war counts 13.2 million people displaced either inside or outside the country -- a full sixth of the global total.

In fact, Grandi pointed out, a full 68 percent of the world's refugees come from just five countries: Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar.

This, he stressed, "means that if the international community found the unity, the political will and the resources to help these countries get out of crisis and rebuild, most likely we would have solved well over half of the world (refugee) problem."

The report did not address the evolving displacement situation since the global



coronavirus pandemic struck.

Grandi said it was clear the crisis was complicating the situation for the displaced at a time when everyone is being told that "being on the move is a liability for yourself and for others."

But he pointed out that the poor and middle-income countries that host around 85 percent of the world's refugees had so far been relatively spared the worst health impacts of the pandemic.

However, he warned, the economic impacts were taking a dire toll.

"What we have really seen escalating dramatically is poverty," he said, pointing out that lockdowns in many countries had eliminated any chance most displaced people have of making an income.

Without significant support for displaced people and their host communities, this could spark "further population movements", he warned.

Grandi also reiterated that countries must continue granting asylum to those in need, despite border closures and lockdown measures.

"One activity that doesn't seem to have been discouraged by the pandemic is war, or conflict or violence," he said.

"Unfortunately people continue to flee their homes, because pandemic or not, they are at risk... and they need to continue to be given refuge, protection, asylum."

Banks Borrow Record €1.31 Trillion From ECB



FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Euro zone banks borrowed a record 1.31 trillion euros (£1.18 trillion) from the European Central Bank on Thursday, taking advantage of negative interest rates to meet growing demand for credit from companies hit by the deepest recession in living memory.

Launched six years ago, the ECB's targeted-longer term refinancing operations (TLTROs) were redesigned earlier this year to help the economy cope with the coronavirus crisis and banks will get the cash for a rate as low as minus 1%.

At 1.31 trillion euros, take up is above expectations with most analysts predicting a figure just over 1 trillion euros for the three-year loans. Forecasts were generally in the 900 billion to 1.4 trillion euro range.

Although borrowing was more than twice as big as in any previous ECB facility, the net take is smaller as banks likely rolled over around 750 billion euros worth of earlier ECB funding to take advantage of record low rates.

The negative interest rate means banks that tapped the auction will earn 0.50% for one year with no strings attached and 1% if they simply refrain from shrinking their loan book.

The interest rates for the remainder of the loan's duration will be as low as the ECB's deposit facility, currently minus 0.5%.

The take-up increases the ECB's balance sheet and bolsters its hopes that banks will continue to lend even as the economy shrinks by almost a tenth, helping firms survive until Europe is ready to fully reopen after the crisis.

Companies drew down their credit lines at the start of the pandemic. This is in sharp contrast with the bloc's financial and debt crises a decade ago, when banks withheld credit to protect their balance sheets, exacerbating the downturn.

The ECB, which also supervises the bloc's biggest banks, has now allowed lenders to run down their buffers without penalties, also in the hope they inducing lending.

IEA Lays Out \$3T Global Green Recovery Plan Over 3 Years

ISTANBUL (Dispatches) - A set of policy actions and \$3 trillion in investments over the next three years can ensure a sustainable recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 crisis by creating 9 million jobs per year and putting global emissions into a structural decline, a new report from the International Energy Agency (IEA) revealed Thursday.

The IEA's Special Report on Sustainable Recovery from the IEA's flagship World Energy Outlook, conducted in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund, outlines energy-focused policies and investments to move the world towards a cleaner and more resilient future while boosting economic growth and creating jobs.

According to the IEA data, in 2019, the energy industry including electricity, oil, gas, coal and biofuels directly employed around 40 million people globally. The special sustainable recovery report estimates that 3 million of those jobs have been lost or are at risk due to the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, with another 3 million jobs lost or at risk in related areas such as vehicles, buildings and industry.

With the global economy set to shrink by 6% in 2020, some 300 million jobs may have been lost during the second quarter of the year. This disruption has sent shock



waves through energy markets, with global energy investment expected to shrink by an unparalleled 20% in 2020, the report said.

The plan estimates that sustainable recovery investments could create 9 million jobs per year. According to the plan for the 2021-2023 period, governments can mobilize investments in six key fields including electricity,

transport, buildings, industry, biofuels and technology.

The report made recommendations for a sustainable recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. These include accelerating the pace of renewables by spreading the use of electric vehicles and investing in charging infrastructure as well as high-speed rail and urban transport. Measures to improve the efficiency of buildings and industry motors were cited along with supporting sustainable biofuels and technology innovation.

The largest portion of the millions of new jobs created through the plan would be in retrofitting buildings to improve energy efficiency and in the electricity sector, particularly in grids and renewables. The other areas that would see higher employment include energy efficiency in industries such as manufacturing, food and textiles; low-carbon transport infrastructure; and more efficient and new energy vehicles.

Iran to Take...

FROM PAGE 1

The envoy expressed his regret that the resolution was presented by countries that either have nuclear weapons or are hosting such destructive and deadly weapons, asking is it not this a mockery of all international norms and rules that such countries has safeguard concern!? On the other hand, these three countries have not yet taken concrete and practical steps to fulfill their obligations under the JCPOA, and their inaction, along with the destructive, illegal and unilateral actions of the US regime, has led to the future of the JCPOA be ambiguous. If you can't take a step to save, at least don't make the situation more complicated and difficult !!

"The IAEA board of governors adopted a resolution calling upon Iran to provide access to 2 locations specified by Agency," Mikhail Ulyanov Permanent Representative of Russia tweeted.

"While stressing the need for Tehran and IAEA to settle this problem without delay, we believe that the resolution can be counterproductive," Ulyanov said.

The E3 drafted, US supported the resolution on Iran at IAEA the board passed 25 in favor, 2 against and with 7 abstentions, wall street journal reported.

The resolution calls out Iran over non-cooperation with the IAEA probe. First resolution since 2012 calling out Iran.

A Wall Street Journal correspondent noted in a tweet, "Just as vote result comes in, UK says E3 foreign mins to meet Friday to discuss Iran, China. "Talks will focus on the importance of finding a diplomatic solution to de-escalate tensions, holding Iran to account for its destabilizing regional activity, & keeping the door open..."

Asia's Oil Market...

FROM PAGE 1

The Brent oil price was once \$16 per barrel in April. The bank's report predicts that the demand for oil would not exceed 91m barrel per day in 2020. This amount for demand for 2020 is almost 9 to 10 million barrels lower than other scenarios which had been predicted by the other energy studies think-tanks. It is predicted the oil demand in 2021 to return to its previous level of 100m bpd.

At the same time, slump in investment in energy sector, which will at least decrease by \$625b according to the bank's experts as well as closure of some oil fields in different parts of the world, will cause the decline in demand for almost 5m barrels of oil between 2020 and 2025.

So those areas, where oil is produced with cheaper cost or investment costs are cheaper there, can compete to dominate the market. On the oil shale and its expensive production cost comparing to the conventional oil, JP Morgan predicts its production to rise from 10.9m bpd in 2020 to 11m in 2030.

Before the Coronavirus pandemic, some scenarios predicted that oil shale production would hit 17m bpd in 2030 but due to the current condition in the U.S., it is unlikely to happen. So the OPEC members can take advantage of this gap and increase their productions and their shares from the market in order to minimize their budget deficits.

In this condition, Iran will have the lowest share of oil sales in 2020 ,and of course, new Majlis and economic resistance policies consider this trend of cutting dependence on sales of crude oil as useful for the national economy.



Iran Pushing on...

FROM PAGE 1

The president further highlighted the significant role of transportation industry in dealing with the coronavirus-related problems, saying the administration gives priority to the health and the livelihood of people.

"Transportation accounts for a large share of the currency revenues, the exports and the production," President Rouhani added, saying the process of exports and imports relies on the land, railway, maritime, and aerial transportation.

Pointing to the pressure that the coronavirus outbreak has put on the transportation and tourism industries in Iran, the president said the transportation has begun to revive since May.

"Thank God, we are witnessing very good movements in the maritime routes and the ports, particularly in Chabahar, as well as in the railroad and land transportation," President Rouhani added.

Iran Has Over \$62b...

FROM PAGE 1

Iran's central bank says the economy without oil grew 1.1 percent over the past calendar year.

Iran came under a series of new and unilateral sanctions by the United States in 2018 when the US government decided to pull out of the nuclear agreement.

That has caused a decline in Iran's exports of oil which is a major source of earning foreign currency for the country. However, funds related to previous sales of crude are still held in banks outside Iran mainly because sanctions make transfers into Iran almost impossible.

In the meantime, the Iranian government has opted to use some of the funds held in foreign banks for purchase of certain goods and services.

Venezuela to Take...

FROM PAGE 1

Venezuela descended into political turmoil after opposition figure Juan Guido unilaterally declared himself "interim president" of the country in January last year, and with Washington's assistance and help from a small number of rogue soldiers, later launched a botched putsch against the elected government. There was also an attempt at assassinating the legitimately-elected President Nicolas Maduro with a drone in 2018.

Washington has imposed several rounds of crippling sanctions against the oil-rich South American country aimed at ousting Maduro and replacing him with Guaido. The sanctions, which include the illegal confiscation of Venezuelan assets abroad and an economic blockade, have caused enormous suffering for millions of people in the country.

In yet another show of animosity toward the government in Caracas, a group of U.S.-backed mercenaries attempted to intrude into the northern Venezuelan state of La Guaira on speedboats last month, but the country's military foiled the attack, killing eight of the armed men and arresting several others. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro says there is evidence his American counterpart Donald Trump "personally ordered" the recent incursion attempt.

One of the two U.S. citizens arrested during the marine incursion said in a public interrogation on Venezuelan state TV that the purpose of the military operation had been to seize an airport in Caracas, kidnap Maduro, and take him to the U.S.

The contract under which the mercenaries carried out the attack bore Guaido's signature as well as those of other opposition figures.

McIlroy Dismisses European Players' Ranking Complaints

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Rory McIlroy says European players who decided not to travel to the United States for the US PGA Tour's restart shouldn't complain about missing out on world rankings points.

The Official World Golf Rankings decided to unfreeze the ranking system when the PGA Tour resumed at Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth, Texas, last week after a hiatus caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

LICENCE HOLDER: SOKHAN GOSTAR INSTITUTE

Switchboard:

(+98) (21) 44253448

Public Relations Tel:

(+98)(21) 44253450

Editorial Board: 44253449

Public Relations Fax:

(+98)(21) 44253395

Advertising Department:

Tel/Fax:(+98) (21) 44253335-9/44253234

Website:

http://www.irannewsdaily.com

E-Mail Address:

info@irannewsdaily.com

ISSN 1024-6053

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:

Cities of Iran Cultural and

Artistic Institute

Managing Director: Fereydoon Taherpour Asl

Australia Batting Coach Hick Axed in Coronavirus Cull

SYDNEY (Dispatches) - Australian coach Justin Langer revealed Thursday long-time batting assistant Graeme Hick was among 40 jobs axed due to COVID-19, and said telling him was like "facing Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh without a helmet and a box on".

Cricket Australia announced the round of cuts on Wednesday, a day after chief executive Kevin Roberts resigned, with the former England batsman one of those let go.

8 IRAN NEWS

SPORTS

SATURDAY JUNE 20, 2020

UEFA Opts to Keep 12-City Format for Delayed Euro 2020

NYON (Dispatches) - UEFA announced on Wednesday that it was planning to keep the same pan-continental format for the postponed Euro 2020 after president Aleksander Ceferin recently hinted that the number of host cities could be reduced.

"The 12 original host cities have been confirmed as venues for the final tournament in the summer of 2021," UEFA said in a statement.

Euro 2020, as it is still called even though it will be played in 2021, was meant to be in full swing by now, but postponing the tournament by 12 months was one of the first big decisions UEFA took as the coronavirus crisis intensified.

"UEFA took a bold decision when it decided to postpone Euro 2020," UEFA said.

"But in doing so, we created the space which has allowed domestic club competitions across the continent to resume, where possible, and play to a conclusion."

UEFA had broken with the tradition of naming one, or two countries, as tournament hosts for this edition, instead selecting 12 cities, from as far apart as Baku and Dublin. The unwieldy format allowed the governing body of European football to spread the prestige of hosting matches across the continent.

In an interview with beIN Sports, Ceferin recently admitted to having "some issues" with three unnamed cities.

"In principle, we will do it in 12 cities. But if not, we are ready to do it in 10, nine or eight," he said. That would have left some hosts less than happy, making the meeting that decided on whether to trim the format a potentially delicate diplomatic operation for UEFA.

Andreescu Joins Serena Williams in Committing To U.S. Open

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Canadian Bianca Andreescu has announced that she will defend her US Open title, hours after six-time winner Serena Williams confirmed she would also play. Leading European players have expressed concern about US Tennis Association (USTA) plans to play the tournament in a bubble to minimize coronavirus risks.

"I have no doubt that the USTA has come up with the best plan to ensure our safety as we look to the return of tennis in 2020," world number six Andreescu wrote on Twitter following Wednesday's USTA announcement of details of the conditions under which the first post-COVID-19 Grand Slam tournament would be held.

Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Simona Halep have all said they are unlikely to play in the U.S. Open.

The tournament will be played behind closed doors from August 31 to September 13.

Under the health protocols, players will be tested for COVID-19 before leaving for New York, upon arrival and once or twice a week during their stay.

They will be able to stay in a hotel where two double rooms will be reserved for them, or rent a house, outside Manhattan.

The number of members of their entourage who can accompany them remains to be determined.

Kyrgios Labels ATP Chief Potato in U.S. Open Blast

SYDNEY (Dispatches) - Australian firebrand Nick Kyrgios branded ATP chief Andrea Gaudenzi as a "potato" in his latest attack on the way tennis is being run during the coronavirus.

"Cheers mate, you've really looked after the players during this time. Seriously, how about you have a collaborative effort with us, potato," tweeted the world number 40.

Earlier Wednesday, the ATP announced their season, on ice since mid-March, would resume on August 14 in Washington.

"It has been a truly collaborative effort and we hope to add more events to the calendar as the situation evolves," said Gaudenzi.



are likely to be held either in March 2021, or later in the year after the European Championship is finished.

The first four-time Nations League finals were held in Portugal last year, with the hosts emerging victorious.

The 2019-2020 Champions League, suspended since March because of the coronavirus pandemic, will be completed in a 'final eight' format in Lisbon in August, UEFA said on Wednesday.

Europe's top club competition will be decided by a series of one-off matches from the quarter-final stage beginning in the Portuguese capital on August 12, with the final on August 23, European football's governing body confirmed following a meeting of its executive committee.

Similarly, the Europa League will be completed with a 'final eight' across four German cities, with the final in Cologne on August 21.

The closing stages of the women's Champions League will also go ahead in an eight-team straight knock-out tournament in Bilbao and San Sebastian, in Spain, from August 21 to 30.

Napoli Beat Juventus on Penalties to Win Sixth Italian Cup

ROME (Dispatches) - Napoli beat Juventus 4-2 on penalties to lift the Italian Cup for the sixth time after the score was 0-0 after 90 minutes in an empty Stadio Olimpico in Rome.

Paulo Dybala and Danilo both missed their spot-kicks for record 13-times Italian Cup champions Juventus with Arkadiusz Milik slotting in the winner for Napoli past veteran keeper Gianluigi Buffon.

It is the first trophy for the southerners since 2014, and also a maiden coaching trophy for Gennaro Gattuso, who replaced Carlo Ancelotti in December, and claimed a crown he won as a player with AC Milan.

Organisers had scrapped extra-time to minimise injuries to players as football resumes in Italy after a three-month coronavirus shutdown.

Maurizio Sarri's side, who also lost the Italian SuperCup final last December to Lazio, now turn their focus to Serie A, which resumes this weekend with the eight-time reigning champions just one point ahead of second-placed Lazio.

Napoli are sixth in the league table as they target a return to the Champions League.



Chelsea Complete Deal to Sign Werner From Leipzig

LONDON (Dispatches) - Chelsea announced the signing of German international forward Timo Werner from RB Leipzig on Thursday in the first major move of the summer transfer market.

Werner, 24, who has scored 32 goals in all competitions this season, had a 60 million euro (£53 million, \$67 million) release clause in his contract with the German club.

He will remain at Leipzig for the remaining two Bundesliga games of the season.



However, Werner will not be available for the end of Leipzig's 2019/20 Champions League campaign in August as he is set to join Chelsea in July.

"I am delighted to be signing for Chelsea, it is a very proud moment for me to be joining this great club," Werner said in a statement.

"I look forward to next season with my new team-mates, my new manager and of course the Chelsea fans."

"Together we have a very successful future ahead of us."

The signing is a major coup for the Blues as they seek to close the gap on Liverpool and Manchester City at the top of the Premier League.

Werner was often linked with a move to Liverpool after he admitted to being flattered by Jurgen Klopp's interest.

Man City Make Winning Return

LONDON (Dispatches) - Manchester City secured the first win of the Premier League's restart with a 3-0 victory over 10-man Arsenal at an empty Etihad on Wednesday as the English top flight's return was marked by protests against racial injustice.

Both sets of players came together before kick-off to take a knee, as had Aston Villa and Sheffield United players in the first match after a 100-day stoppage due to coronavirus.

"I'm embarrassed and ashamed of what the white people have done for the black people," said City manager Pep Guardiola.

"We have to do a lot of things for the black people which we have not done so far."

City's victory closes the gap on Liverpool at the top to 22 points and means the Reds cannot secure the title when they face Everton in the Merseyside derby on Sunday.

A minute's silence before kick-off remembered those who had lost their lives to COVID-19, including Guardiola's mother.

Black Lives Matter was also emblazoned on the back of shirts where the stars names are normally printed, as the players took a knee around the centre circle.

There was little return to normality once the game did kick-off to the hollow ring of an empty stadium as a torrential downpour added to the difficult conditions for the players.



Sri Lankan Sold 2011 Cricket World Cup Final

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Sri Lanka "sold" the 2011 World Cup final to India, the country's former sports minister said on Thursday, reviving one of cricket's most explosive match-fixing controversies.

Mahindananda Aluthgamage, who was sports minister at the time, is the second senior figure to allege the final was fixed, after 1996 World Cup-winning skipper Arjuna Ranatunga.

"I tell you today that we sold the 2011 World Cup finals," Aluthgamage told Sirasa TV.

"Even when I was sports minister I believed this."

Aluthgamage, sports minister from 2010 to 2015 and now state minister for renewable energy and power, said he "did not want to disclose" the plot at the time.

"In 2011, we were to win, but we sold the match. I feel I can talk about it now. I am not connecting players, but some sections were involved," he said.

Sri Lanka lost the match at Mumbai's Wankhede stadium by six wickets. Indian players have strongly denied any wrongdoing.

Ranatunga, who was at the stadium as a commentator, has previously called for an investigation into the defeat.

"When we lost, I was distressed and I had a doubt," he said in July 2017. "We must investigate what happened to Sri Lanka at the 2011 World Cup final."

