

**Ukrainian Foreign Minister
Announced That an Iranian
Delegation Will Visit Kiev Today to
Discuss Compensation for the
Ukrainian Passenger Plane That Was
Mistakenly Downed Near Tehran**

IRAN NEWS

**A Senior Commander at the Islamic
Revolutionary Guards Corps
Warned That the Countries Trying to
Distort the True Image of Iran and
Undermine Its Stability Will Face the
Consequence of Their Actions**

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Health Minister Has Good News on Iran's Coronavirus Vaccine

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Iranian minister of health said he has good news about a homegrown vaccine for the coronavirus disease, adding that Iran is catching up with advanced countries in vaccine production.

In an address to a meeting at the Ministry of Health and Medical Education on Tuesday, Saeed Namaki said he has good news about the coronavirus vaccine being made in Iran.

"We don't want to make delusional comments and don't want to say that the vaccine would be available to the public until autumn," the health minister said.

"Today, we can only say that we are not lagging behind many in the world who claim to have produced the vaccine," Namaki added.

Describing the production of the vaccine as a result of teamwork, the health minister said Iranian experts should exchange their findings so that Iran would be among the first countries with tangible progress in making COVID-19 vaccine. Meanwhile he noted that without the exchange of international information, the world could not defeat COVID-19, stating that to fight this virus national contribution is required.

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Iran Experiences New One-Day Record For COVID-19 Fatalities

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran has registered its highest COVID-19 death toll for a single day, with 235 new fatalities confirmed over the past 24 hours, a record-high since the beginning of the outbreak in the Islamic Republic.

The Health Ministry spokeswoman says the new fatalities increase the overall death toll to 16,147.

In her press briefing on Tuesday, Sima-Sadat Lari also confirmed 2,667 new cases of COVID-19 infection, increasing the total number of infections to 296,273.

According to the spokeswoman, 257,019 patients have so far recovered from COVID-19 or been discharged from the hospital, while 3,902 are still in critical conditions of the disease.

She said so far 2,380,122 COVID-19 tests have been taken across the country.

Lari added that Tehran, Ilam, Ardabil, Isfahan, East Azarbaijan, Alborz, Golestan, Kerman, North Khorasan, Semnan, Hormozgan, Lorestan, Mazandaran, Fars, and Khorasan Razavi are considered as "red zones".

IRGC Shows Muscles by Holding Massive Drills Off Hormuz Strait



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) is conducting large-scale aerial and naval drills off the strategic Strait of Hormuz and in the Persian Gulf, with the country's first domestic multi-purpose satellite monitoring the process.

According to the IRGC's Sepah News, the final phase of the exercises, codenamed Payambar-e A'zam (The Great Prophet) 14, kicked off on Tuesday across land, air and sea in the general area of Hormozgan Province, west of the Hormuz Strait and in the Persian Gulf.

Several units from IRGC's Navy and Aerospace Division are taking part in the maneuvers, which feature missiles, vessels, drones, and radars, and are designed to practice both offensive and defensive missions.

The IRGC forces are slated to conduct missile, drone and mine-planting operations against mock enemy targets during the drills. They are also scheduled to practice tactics to cut off the connection lines of enemy vessels.

Meanwhile, combat helicopters will target enemy positions with coast-to-sea missiles.

Brigadier General Abbas Nilforoushan, the maneuvers' spokesman, said during the exercises, "the interception of ballistic and cruise missiles has been drilled, while surprising weapons and hardware — including long-range ballistic missiles capable of striking intruding vessels floating at a distance — are being used."

For the first time, the drills are being monitored by Iran's Nour-1 (Light-1) Satellite, which was put into orbit on April 22.

Nour-1 is the country's first multi-purpose satellite with application in the defense industry, among other areas.

The launch operation was carried out by the IRGC's Aerospace Division, which said the country's aerospace program was expected to gather pace following the launch.

Meanwhile Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Major General Hossein Salami said the force improves its weaponry considering the strengths and weaknesses of the enemies.

He made the remarks on the sidelines of an IRGC military exercise, titled as the Great Prophet-14 military drill, in Strait of Hormuz.

"Our policies for safeguarding the interests of the Iranian nation is defensive meaning that we will not attack any country," he said noting that however, the forces are offensive in their operations and tactics.

"Our defense doctrine relies on the manufacturing indigenous equipment. In each military exercise, the quality of the equipment is upgraded and the new equipment is tested and used in the real battlefield," he said.

The IRGC commander noted that the drill has been started to ensure the body's capability in protecting the benefits of the Iranian nation.

He added that the enemies' naval flotilla will be invaded if they pose a threat against Iran.

As reported, 'surprising weapons' such long-range ballistic missiles have been launched during the named military drill in the south of Iran, which is jointly being carried out by IRGC Navy and Aerospace.

The military exercise is based upon plans for fighting hybrid warfare and network-oriented combats proportional to the IRGC's offense doctrine.

IRGC Navy's missile, vessel, and drones units and IRGC Aerospace's missile, drone, were radar units conducted operations.

Waging attacks against virtual enemy using missiles, ships, and drones, laying defensive mines, cutting the communication between virtual enemy's ships, launching rockets from helicopters, and launching coast-to-sea missiles were among agenda of this stage of the drill.

Petrochemical Industries Playing Key Role in Non-Oil Exports

TEHRAN (MNA)- President Hassan Rouhani said that petrochemical and steel industries are playing a key role in the field of production and non-oil export in the country.

Producers and activists of petrochemical and steel industries at the forefront of the country's important economic and export front. Petrochemical and steel sectors have passed crude sales.

Speaking on Monday evening in a meeting with producers and activists of the country's petrochemical and steel industries, Rouhani emphasized that self-reliance on valuable products of the petrochemical and steel sectors is an important achievement for the country, and said, "we have invested \$14 billion for the advancement the second step of development in the petrochemical sector."

Appreciating the efforts of all activists in the two sectors of steel and petrochemicals, Rouhani said that these two sectors have returned their currency on time, and if the government is proud to stand against US sanctions and foreign pressure, this resistance is in the shadow of help and efforts of all producers, investors and entrepreneurs, especially in the steel and petrochemical chains, who have been made it possible.

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ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian



U.S. Foul Cry, Democracy in Syria

Last Sunday and almost 10 days ago, Syria held the parliamentary election and Syrian people with their buoyant turnout in the election voted for their favorite candidates to form the parliament.

The U.S. Department of State on July 20 in a statement took its stand against the election in Syria and expressed its dissatisfaction. Spokesman to the U.S. Department of State Morgan Ortugas in the statement said, "Syrian government is seeking to present this election as another success." This statement does not recognize the Syrian election as a voting and claims the election was Bashar Assad's choice and predetermined. The spokesman by accusing the election says, "Syria has seen no free and fair elections since Assad's Ba'ath party came to power, and this year was no exception." She also referred to the UN Security Council Resolution 2254 which assigns Syria to hold the election under the supervision of the United Nations and with presence of its pro-West spies.

But reacting to the U.S. stand on Syrian election, the Islamic Republic of Iran termed the election a positive step on course to strengthening stability in Syria. Spokesman of Iran Foreign Ministry Seyed Abbas Mousavi in his statement expressed Iran's satisfaction on the successful parliamentary election in Syria and said, "Syria's election was held in a situation in which the Syrian nation are facing conflicts and destructions by terrorist groups and the illegal presence of foreign occupying forces, as well as the cruel [US] sanctions on the country." He add, "So the Islamic Republic of Iran hopes the successful parliamentary elections will be a positive step on the path of reaching peace, stability and development in Syria in line with the efforts to alleviate the challenges of the country's people."

In a related development, Syrian President in meeting with his former rival in presidential election Hassan al-Nouri said that successful holding of the election and massive turnout of the people in the poll stations showed the power and capability of the Syrian people and showed that people are committed to their free decisions. Regarding this democratic act in Syria, the Syrian President emphasized that this successes has been achieved while Syria is in a tough and exceptional condition and some of foreign countries are trying to dictate their own wills on Syrian people. Meanwhile Al-Nouri, for his part, said that the previous elections were held fair and clear and it was an important step on course to strengthening the democracy and the current election was the first, like the ones in the past decades, where candidates from all political parties run for the seats in the parliament.

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China's Iran Crude Imports at Zero in June

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China's crude imports from Saudi Arabia held at an all-time high in June, while deliveries from Iran fell to zero for the first time on record, detailed figures from the general customs administration (GAC) show.

Saudi imports were 2.16mn b/d last month, unchanged from May and up by 14.9pc from a year earlier. Riyadh remained China's biggest supplier with a 16.7pc share of total imports in June, followed by Russia with 15pc.

Pipeline and cargo deliveries from Russia increased steadily to 1.94mn b/d in June, up by 6.6pc from 1.82mn b/d in May.

Crude imports from Brazil hit a record 1.21mn b/d last month, up by 120pc from May and almost double year-earlier levels. This made Brazil the fourth largest crude supplier to China in June. The previous record high in Brazilian shipments was 1.04mn b/d in February 2019.

Brazilian loadings to China eased in June amid congestion at Chinese ports and other logistical constraints, suggesting arrivals may fall back from last month's high. But China increased its share of Brazil's total exports to 88pc in June, driven by demand from independent refineries in Shandong for the country's light sweet crude. Imports from Iraq fell back to 1.46mn b/d in June after surging to 1.64mn b/d in May, but were still the second highest on record. Crude imports from Angola hit 1.08mn b/d in June, an increase of 57pc from May.

The GAC data showed no crude imports from Iran in June for the first time in at least eight years. China took 60,000 b/d of Iranian crude in May. June imports from Venezuela stayed at zero for a ninth straight month amid U.S. sanctions.



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UK Embassy Resumes Issuing Visa for Iranians

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The UK Embassy in Tehran said early on Tuesday that it has resumed issuing visa for Iranians after 10 years shutdown of visa office.

The UK embassy announced in its official Twitter account that it has reopened a center in Tehran on Monday where Iranian citizens can apply for British visa.

British ambassador in Tehran Rob Macaire had said in the official Instagram page of the embassy a week ago that the aimed to reopen the center.

Two Swedish Nationals Arrested

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Judiciary spokesman says two Swedish nationals have been apprehended in Iran on drug smuggling charges.

“News that two Swedish citizens have been arrested for smuggling narcotics is confirmed,” Gholam-Hossein Esmacili said in a press conference on Tuesday.

He said a drug haul was seized from them when they were arrested. “They are still under arrest.”

“These individuals receive consular services and also enjoy the privileges that other prisoners have,” the spokesman said.

“We are waiting for the court to hold a session and issue a verdict,” he added.

He also slammed the “inhumane” U.S. harassment of a Beirut-bound Mahan Air flight over Syrian airspace, calling on the Foreign Ministry to follow up on the “vicious” move through legal and diplomatic channels.

“The illegal and inhumane act of aggression committed by American fighter jets against the Mahan Air passenger plane was yet another manifestation of the American terrorists’ bestial nature,” Judiciary spokesman Esmacili said.



“The Judiciary calls on our country’s Foreign Ministry and international bodies to diplomatically and legally pursue the case as a deterrent measure,” he added.

On Thursday, two U.S. F-15 warplanes conducted a dangerous maneuvering close to Mahan Air’s Flight 1152 that had taken off from Tehran and was heading to Beirut.

The incident took place over Syria’s al-Tanf region, where the U.S. maintains an illegal military presence.

Esmacili denounced the incident as a clear violation of aviation rules and a breach of human rights, saying it has caused physical and mental harm to the passengers and flight crew.

He also emphasized that the Islamic Republic was in contact with Syria and Lebanon regarding the case.

Lifting Sanctions, Not a Precondition for Negotiations, But a Reality

TEHRAN (IP) - President Hassan Rouhani stated that lifting of US illegal sanctions against Iran is not a precondition for negotiations, but a reality.

Referring to the American economic terrorism against the Iranian people in the context of the outbreak of Coronavirus, the Iranian president said, “The lifting of illegal sanctions is not a precondition for negotiations, but a reality.”

He said that the enemies thought that Tehran would be forced to contact them after the sanctions and the economic war against the Iranian nation.

“During more than two years that have passed since the most severe economic sanctions were imposed against Iran, they themselves have repeatedly called for negotiations,” added Rouhani.

Rouhani described the doubling of production of petrochemical and steel products in the last seven years as the result of valuable action and the great art of Iranian producers, specialists, experts and workers, and He stated: “This increase in production has created a great change in the steel and petrochemical industries of the country.”

Countries Urged Not to Be Deceived by U.S. Over Arms Embargo

TEHRAN (IFP) - A senior Iranian official has urged other countries not to be deceived by the U.S., which is trying to have the UN’s arms embargo on Iran extended.

Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Mohsen Baharvand made the comment as US Special Representative for Iran Brian Hook travelled to the region in recent days in line with Washington’s efforts to extend the arms embargo on the Islamic Republic. Hook is to visit several European countries as well to pursue this objective.

“Our message to countries in the region and across world is that they should not be deceived by the U.S.,” said the top Iranian diplomat.

He said the White House has launched propaganda

campaigns to make others change their minds about the issue.

“The Americans know well that Iran is a logical player and has never been, and will never be a threat to the regional countries,” he said.

He noted the U.S. seeks to scuttle the Iran nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and stir up fresh chaos in the region.

“The outcome of this illogical behavior of the U.S. is that all countries in the region and beyond will lose,” he added.

Iran has, on numerous occasions, condemned Washington’s efforts to coerce the UN into extending an arms embargo on the Islamic Republic which expires in October, 2020.

Tehran, Baghdad Emphasize Cooperation in Maintaining Common Interests

TEHRAN (MNA) – Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq stressed the need to continue cooperation in line with preserving common interests between the two country.

Iraqi National Security Adviser Qasim Al-Araji in his meeting with Iranian Ambassador to Iraq Iraj Masjedi in Baghdad on Mon. stressed the need to continue cooperation between Iran and Iraq in line with rendering services to the common interests of the two countries.

The office of Iraq National Security Adviser in a statement announced, “at the beginning of the meeting, al-Araji thanked Iranian envoy for congratulating him on his appointment as Iraqi National Security Adviser, and then the two sides discussed about the issues of mutual concerns between the two countries.”

According to this statement, the two sides explored avenues for continuation of cooperation and coordination in line with rendering services to the common interests of these two neighboring countries.

Interior Minister Qasim al-Araji, Iraqi Minister of Interior in former Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi administration and one of the commanders of Badr Organization took over the post of Iraqi National Security Adviser from Falih Al-Fayyadh, who is also the head of Hashd al-Sha’abi Organization, on July 14.

Post-Coronavirus Modern World Order Will Not Be Western Type



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran’s foreign minister says the new world order, which will emerge following the deadly coronavirus pandemic, will not be of a Western type.

Speaking in a live Instagram conversation with English-speaking audience from Tehran on Monday, Mohammad Javad Zarif said the past 30 years have constituted one of the most turbulent junctures in the world’s history, which has been marked with various wars as well as cataclysmic changes and catastrophes for the international community.

“Throughout the history, the old order has collapsed and been replaced with a new one after widespread bloodshed. I believe that absolute Western approaches have failed to provide us with a true understanding of global events. The modern international order will not be totally Western anymore,” the top Iranian diplomat said.

The U.S. is mistaken to think that the use of military power would lead to a lasting world order, Zarif added and noted Washington’s military interference has turned into “a norm” in the U.S.’ foreign policy, which he said was a “huge mistake.”

The Iranian foreign minister said the U.S. adventurism has cost nothing but the lives of many Americans and the loss of eight thousand billion dollars from the country’s treasury and resulted in the spread of extremism and terrorism in West Asia.

He noted that the United States has spent huge sums of money on military affairs in comparison with other countries, saying, “The U.S. sought to create a security situation in the world in order to be able to dominate the world through military spending.”

Int’l Community and U.S. Illegitimate Demands

TEHRAN (IP) - The U.S. efforts to limit Iran’s defense power; creating challenges for Iran’s ties in international level and the U.S. insistence on extending arms embargo on Iran are along with the U.S. efforts to prove its superiority in the UNSC’s decision-making which constitute the ridiculing principles governing the international relations.

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Abbas Mousavi said in response to the U.S. efforts to exert pressure on other countries for extending Iran’s arms embargo: “The international community does not give in to the bullying and illegitimate demands of the United States, and Washington just pursues a futile try”. By the virtue of the UNSC resolution No.2231, the embargo on arms sales to Iran will be lifted on October 18, 2020.

Exiting JCPOA on May 8, 2018, the US President Donald Trump reinstated the nuclear sanctions against Iran for two times, and through threatening and enticing other countries and economic enterprises, it prevented the implementation of JCPOA by other partners of the international agreement. Doing so, the U.S. government, on the one hand, seeks to turn JCPOA into a non-binding treaty for the other parties remaining in the agreement, and on the other hand, exploit it as a success in its failed foreign policy; during the coming U.S. presidential elections.

Iran First Migration Outlook Unveiled

TEHRAN (IP) - The unveiling ceremony of Iran Migration Outlook was held on Tuesday as the first and most reliable data about the migration of the Iranians.

The most reliable and comprehensive data about Iranians’ migration is available, head of Iran Migration Observatory, Bahram Salavati said on Tuesday.

On the sidelines of the unveiling ceremony of ‘Iran Migration Outlook’, Bahram Salavati told Iran Press that all data regarding Iranian students’ mobility, economic migration, and forced migration is available in this outlook.

“International Researchers, policymakers, and others can use this outlook since it is in both English and Persian versions,” he added.

According to Salavati, the most specific feature of this book is that researchers can compare Iran’s historical background of migration with international ones.

The unveiling ceremony of Iran Migration Outlook was held on Tuesday with Iran’s Vice President for Science and Technology, Sorena Sattari in attendance.

Iran, Iraq Discuss Expansion of Bilateral Ties

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iranian Military Attaché to Iraq and Iraqi Interior Minister met and discussed various issues, including the travel of citizens and the expansion of relations between the two countries.

During the meeting, Mostafa Moradian and Othman al-Ghanmi discussed the problems and obstacles in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. In this regard, they accelerated the increase of cross-border trade and the deepening of relations between the two countries.

Moradian attached importance to facilitating travel for the people of the two countries.

He also called for expanding ties.

For his part, the Iraqi Interior Minister said that Iraq is ready to expand relations with Iran and use experiences in areas of technology to fight organized crimes, drug trafficking, and terrorism.

He also said that the borders will be reopened by observing the healthcare protocols.

The Iraqi Interior Minister further noted: “Recently, serious measures have been taken by the Council of Ministers and the Iraqi Prime Minister to reopen the air and land borders in compliance with health protocols, the results of which will lead to acceleration and facilitation of traffic in the coming days as well as an increase in the volume of trade between Iran and Iraq.”

Knowledge-Based Economy Means Investing on Elites

TEHRAN (IP)- Vice President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari said that investing in educated people leads to a knowledge-based economy.

Delivering a speech on the unveiling ceremony of ‘Iran Migration Outlook’, Sattari said lots of baseless statistics on the number of Iranian immigrants have been given, which made us publish reliable statistics based on referable documents.

He went on to say that in the past 37% of our university students migrated to other countries while this number is less than 2% today, but lots of invalid statistics still insist on ‘brain drain’.

Emphasizing on that fact we need our students to study in top universities to update ourselves with the latest knowledge, Sattari said that we must plan and pave the way for them to return to our country.

In our department, we have focused on this goal since 5 years ago and more than 1700 university students came back to Iran.

Head of ‘Iran Migration Monitoring’, Bahram Salavati also noted that between 2015 and 2020 more than 1500 students, who graduated from 100 top universities of the world, came back to Iran.

Salavati added that Iran is among the countries which have a reference in migrations’ data with both local and international sources.

‘Iran Migration outlook’ is a written and online reference that represents the latest statistics on the number of Iranian migrants based on local and international sources.

Successful Repatriation of Pakistani Prisoners From Iran

TEHRAN (Pakistan Embassy) - Pursuant to Prime Minister Imran Khan’s visit to Iran in April 2019 during which he requested President Hassan Rouhani of Islamic Republic of Iran to grant amnesty to the Pakistani prisoners on humanitarian grounds, fourteen (14) Pakistan Prisoners have been transferred to Pakistan today.

The transfer of prisoner took place under the agreement of Transfer of Sentenced Persons that was signed in 2014. The transfer took place at the Mirjaveh - Taftan border where the Pakistani authorities received the prisoners. From Iran, Syed Kamal Abdullah, Advisor to Deputy Minister for Justice and Human Rights, supervised the arrangements for transfer. It was the first transfer after the agreement has been ratified by both the countries in 2018.



PRAYER TIME

| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| ■ Noon (Zohr) | 13:10 |
| ■ Evening (Maghreb) | 20:31 |
| ■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr) | 04:34 |
| ■ Tomorrow's Sunrise | 06:11 |

63. He said: "Nay, this was done by - this is their biggest one! ask them, if they can speak intelligently!"
64. So they turned to themselves and said, "Surely ye are the ones in the wrong!"
Surah 21. The Prophets (63 - 64)

Expanding Transit Infrastructure to Increase Deterrence Power

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - First Vice President Eshaq Jahangiri said the development of domestic transit infrastructure to connect the country to international corridors will increase Iran's deterrence power.

Making the remarks in a meeting to investigate the strategic necessity of developing rail connections and roads of Iran with neighboring countries, he noted that the administration will not let the enemies to weaken Iran's strategic location and remove the country from the axis of international transit corridors.

The VP called for the foreign ministry to have the development of the transit position of the country via active diplomacy policy as its top agenda.

Considering its geographical location, Iran can play a significant role in the transit of goods in the region and benefit a lot from its status in this due.

To benefit from its location for transit, the country has many plans underway and on the agenda to boost its transit capacity.

Jahangiri stressed, "Our strategic vision in the trade and transportation sector should be the development of domestic transit infrastructures to connect to the north-south and east-west international transport corridors so that Iran's ill-wishers cannot weaken our country's transit position and remove Iran from the axis of international transit."

Jahangiri also highlighted that in addition to long-term planning and strategies, short-term measures should be taken to strengthen Iran's transit position, adding,



"Some projects such as accelerating the operation of the Khaf-Herat railway and Basra-Shalamcheh and Kermanshah-Islamabad routes should be on the agenda in particular, and the Planning and Budget Organization should change the issue of transit into one of the main axes of the Seventh Development Plan, while the development plan of Iran's transit position should become a national and lasting document which must be enforced for all governments."

Emphasizing that one of the most important priorities this year is the development of non-oil exports, the First Vice President called on all relevant executive bodies to cooperate and coordinate with the Ministry of Industry, Mines, and Trade to achieve this year's target which is non-oil exports.

Some of these plans include developing Iran's largest container port, Shahid Rajaei Port in the southern province of Hormozgan, and also Chabahar Port in the southeast of the country, connecting the ports to the railway network, development of transit via railway, and also some customs measures such as improving transit procedures in the customs offices.

On July 26, Iran sent two cargoes from Shahid Rajaei Port in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas to Kyrgyzstan through Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran (KTAI) corridor.

Iran Exports to Turkey Decline by 90%



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Head of Iran and Turkey Joint Chamber of Commerce Mehrdad Saadat says the outbreak of Coronavirus has affected Iran's trade with Turkey as Iran's exports have declined by 90 percent.

Speaking with ILNA on the latest development on Iran-Turkey trade, Saadat said that the virus pandemic was the main reason for decline in Iran's exports to Turkey and there was no other reason for it.

He added that fortunately after reopening of borders, the trade between both countries is growing and traders are to compensate the four-month decrease in trade volume and today one can see long lines of trucks in the border with Turkey for taking their cargoes into Turkey.

Saadat said that talks with Turkey are underway to ask them to increase working hours of their border checkpoints in order to accelerate the arrival of trucks into Turkey.

He reiterated that the main task of the chamber is to attract investment in Iran, adding that housing sector in Turkey in the past 15 years has been an alluring market which has had 35 percent profit and comparing to Iran it has no economic justification, noting that he does not recommend Iranians for investments in housing sector in Turkey because their profits in investment in housing sector in Iran will be two or more times more than in Turkey.

Iran, Austria Undertake 17 Joint Research Projects



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iranian and Austrian universities will cooperate on carrying out 17 joint research projects, it was announced on Tuesday.

The announcement was made after a meeting between Iran's Deputy Minister of Science, Research and Technology Hossein Salar-Amoli and Austrian Embassy's Minister Plenipotentiary Alexander Rieger in Tehran.

In the meeting, the Iranian official said that good ground has been prepared for doing technological activities, and hoped that researchers and inventors would make efforts to launch studies to adopt action plan for resolution of problems.

He put forward a proposal for convening the third Iran-Austria working group for science and research cooperation via video conference to follow up implementation of joint projects.

Since its outbreak in December 2019 worldwide, the coronavirus pandemic has created obstacles to holding many world events, meetings and conventions. The deadly virus has killed over 656,000 up to now.

Fight against the deadly virus needs the nations' vigilance and international cooperation, Salar-Amoli noted.

For his part, the minister plenipotentiary talked of activities of Austrian cultural forum (ÖKF) in Tehran which takes various measures to further cultural exchange between Austrian and Iranian scholars and artists.

Rieger expressed hope that Austrian and Iranian universities would establish academic relations and continue international activities through electronic research as the coronavirus pandemic has created problems for many common international activities.

Tehran Has Good Reserve of Essential Commodities

TEHRAN (IP) - The Deputy Governor-General for Economic Affairs stated that according to reports, Tehran Province has a good condition in terms of the reserve of essential commodities.

Referring to the actions of the Market Regulation Work-group of Tehran Province in controlling the prices of essential commodities, Heshmatollah Asgari said that "Good measures have been taken in monitoring and prevention of hoarding of goods, which is effective in controlling prices."

27 Industrial, Development Projects Implemented in Zanjan

ZANJAN (IP) - The Vice President and Head of the Iran Planning and Budget Organization visited the various phases of the implementation of industrial and development projects in Zanjan, western Iran, and emphasized the completion of these projects in the year of the Surge in Production.

Mohammad Baqer Nobakht said on Monday evening, on the sideline of a visit to the Zanjan-Qazvin Railway Strategic Plan, that 27 industrial and development projects have been planned for Zanjan province this year, so that the Surge in Production can occur.

The Vice President agreed to allocate 200 billion Tomans of credit to complete the project of two-line Zanjan-Qazvin railway. This railway line will shorten the travel time of the Zanjan-Qazvin railway by one and a half hours.

During his one-day trip to Zanjan, the head of Iran's Planning and Budget Organization also agreed to allocate 23 billion tomans of credit to complete the 144-bed project of Valiasr Hospital in Zanjan. The capacity of hospital beds in Iran is increasing with the outbreak of COVID-19 virus to improve the level of medical services to the patients.

Southern Province Attracts Near \$300m Foreign Investment

KERMAN (IRNA) - Southern Iranian province of Kerman has attracted 282 million dollars' foreign investment from total approved investment of 1.65 billion dollars in six years, a provincial official said on Tuesday.

Hamid Shahsavari, director of office of finance and economic affairs in Kerman, made the remarks speaking to IRNA. During the past six years, 38 projects worth 1.65 billion dollars had been approved to be implemented through foreign investment, Shahsavari said, adding that investment will continue for completion of the projects.

Elaborating on the foreign investment in this province, the official said that it has been made by European and South East Asian countries in industrial and solar power projects. Provincial officials review the process of implementation of projects being implemented by foreign investors every three months, he said.

627k Tons of Basic Goods Imported via Chabahar Port

CHABAHAR (IRNA) - Some 627,000 tons of basic goods have entered Iran through Shahid Rajaei Port in southeastern city of Chabahar this year (started March 21, 2020), according to a local official.

Behrouz Aghaei, the director of the Sistan and Baluchestan Department of Ports and Maritime Organization, told IRNA on Tuesday that the amount shows a significant growth that signals a bright future for Chabahar, as the country's only ocean port.

Iran also registered a record daily export of 800 trucks from Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar, Aghaei said.

He said that the growth in exports and imports of commodities and transportation of goods has created many jobs in the southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan.

Chabahar Port is one of the country's most important ports which provides one of the most economically-efficient routes for imports and exports of commodities, the official said.

Major National Steelmakers To Gather at Isfahan Exhibition

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

ISFAHAN - The 12th International Exhibition of Metallurgy, Steel, Foundry, Machinery and Related Industries will be held on August 22-25 at Isfahan International Fairground which is a great opportunity for owners of steel industries to display their products and capabilities vastly to the public and enthusiasts of this field.

According to the Public Relations of International Exhibition Company Isfahan Province, companies active in production of steel, cast iron and non-ferrous metals, casting, heat treating, and processing, metallurgical powder, activists in metallurgical industry services, raw materials and smelting assistants, molding and modeling, laboratory services, machineries and the related industrial equipment are to attend this big gathering.

The exhibition will be an opportunity for the participants to put on display their products, services and capabilities in the casting and metallurgical industries with an eye for boosting their trade volume and exports. The exhibition is aimed at supporting the industrial industries and boosting the indigenization in the metallurgy, steel, casting and machinery industries.

The previous editions of the exhibitions have been welcomed warmly by the companies, active in the steel and metallurgy industries, and since Isfahan is the hub of Iran's steel industry, it has consolidated the position of its prestigious steel exhibition in the country. The former edition was held on an area about 10,000 cubic meters and with participation of 144 major companies and some companies from China, Germany, Switzerland, Turkey, Belgium and UK attended there.



KSC Reaches 4,800b Tomans of Sales in Q1

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The amount of sales of Khouzestan Steel Company has grown by 26 percent in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year comparing to the previous year as the amount of its sales in the domestic and international markets hit 4,800b tomans.

According to reports, Khouzestan Steel Company had put behind a hot and fruitful spring in terms of production and sales as the company set several records for the first quarter of the year.

This trend of growth started in the late March and it climaxed on May 22. The company produces products like concentrate, pellet, sponge iron, billet, slab and steel bloom, of course concentrate is produced by Sanabad Inclusive Mining and Industrial Development Company (SIMIDCO) which is the affiliated company to KSC and it has recently added pellet to its productions.

According to reports, in the first quarter of the year and in spring season, KSC produced 636,962 tons of steel and billet bloom, 387,232 tons of slab and 1.61m tons of pellet. The total volume of production of steel products in the first quarter exceeded one million tons for the first time and hit 1.024m tons while the company had produced 671,917 tons of bloom and billet, 308, 206 tons of slab and 1.61m tons of pellet last year. The total volume of production of the company stood at 980,123 tons in the first quarter of last year.

Statistics show that bloom and billet production has declined by 25 percent and pellet by 6,000 tons while slab production has grown by 25 percent in the first quarter this year and the total volume of steel products of the company has grown by 4 percent.

According to the company, it has earned over 4,800b tomans through sales of its products in the first quarter which indicates 26 percent growth comparing to the same period last year. KSC had earned over 3,800b tomans in the first quarter of last year.



Bolsonaro Removes Mask in Public

BRASILIA (Reuters) - Brazil President Jair Bolsonaro on Monday took off his mask in public as he greeted supporters in Brasilia, days after saying he had recovered from the coronavirus, which he said had not had a serious impact on his health.

The right-wing leader tested positive for the coronavirus earlier this month and went into quarantine at his residence, but said on Saturday that his latest test had come back negative.

"I didn't have any problems," Bolsonaro said on Monday. "For people who have prior health problems and are of a certain age, anything can be dangerous."



Malta Rescues 95 Migrants From Sinking Dinghy

VALLETTA (Reuters) - Malta's armed forces have rescued a group of 95 migrants found in distress on a dinghy north of Libya and brought them ashore at a military base near the capital Valletta, authorities said on Monday.

A volunteer organisation, Alarm Phone, on Sunday morning said the dinghy was overcrowded and taking in water. It said the boat was located within Malta's search-and-rescue region.

A Maltese patrol boat rescued another group of 63 migrants and brought them to Malta on July 17. One of those migrants later tested positive to COVID-19 and the medical authorities put the whole group in quarantine.



Two Baghdad Protesters Dead After Clashes With Police



BAGHDAD (AFP) - Two demonstrators died in Baghdad early Monday after being shot in confrontations with security forces, the first victims of protest-related violence under a new Iraqi premier who had promised a dialogue with activists.

The deaths threaten to reignite an unprecedented movement slamming government graft and incompetence, which erupted across Baghdad and the country's south in October but had waned in recent months.

On Sunday, demonstrators staged angry rallies in the capital and several southern cities, where temperatures topping 50 degrees Celsius (122 Fahrenheit) have swelled demand for air-conditioning, overwhelming dilapidated power grids. In Baghdad, dozens gathered at the protest hub of Tahrir Square, clashing with police and other security forces stationed there.

"Two protesters died this morning. One was shot with a tear gas canister in the head, and another in the neck," a medical source told AFP on Monday.

Their bodies were carried through Tahrir on Monday morning by fellow activists, before being driven to the holy city of Najaf to be buried.

An AFP correspondent saw the burnt remains of tent structures in the square on Monday morning. The two victims are the first since Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi, who had promised a dialogue with protesters, took office in May.

In a statement overnight, his office acknowledged "unfortunate events" in protest squares, but insisted security forces had been instructed not to use violence unless absolutely necessary.

It said the government would carry out an investigation into Sunday's events to hold those responsible to account. But online, activists were already comparing Kadhemi to his predecessor Adel Abdel Mahdi, who stepped down last year following months of protest-related violence.

Around 550 people were killed in that wave of rallies and another 30,000 wounded, many of them by military-grade tear gas canisters that can pierce human skulls if fired directly rather than lobbed in an arc to disperse crowds.

There was virtually no accountability for those deaths under Abdel Mahdi; Kadhemi had pledged to publish a list of all the victims, carry out investigations and listen to protester demands.

But activists on Monday appeared to see little difference between the two, sharing a doctored image of Abdel Mahdi's handover to Kadhemi that depicted the outgoing premier pushing a collection of tear gas canisters and a rifle toward his successor.

They called for more rallies on Monday night, sending out invitations to gather over Whatsapp and Facebook. The United Nations said it "deplored" the violence. "Iraqis are in a difficult place facing many challenges. Their right to peaceful protest must be protected unconditionally," the UN's office in Iraq (UNAMI) said.

Duterte Renews Push for Death Penalty for Drug Crimes

MANILA (AFP) - Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said Monday drug offenders should be executed by lethal injection, in a fresh push for the death penalty as part of his anti-narcotics crackdown that has killed thousands.

In a wide-ranging State of the Nation address, Duterte also admitted the government's response to the coronavirus epidemic had been "far from perfect" as the number of infections surged past 82,000, with nearly 2,000 deaths.

Duterte had been expected to use the annual speech to lawmakers to lay out a roadmap for recovery after the economy contracted with millions of jobs lost during more than four months of a nationwide lockdown.

But he provided few details.

Instead, he took the opportunity to once again push Congress, which is dominated by his allies, to restore the death penalty -- an unrealised plank of the tough-on-crime platform that helped get him elected in 2016.



Hezbollah Denies Role in Israel Border Clash

BEIRUT (AFP) - The Lebanese Shiite group Hezbollah denied any involvement in fighting Monday on the Lebanon-Israel border after the Jewish state said it had repelled an infiltration attempt by "terrorists".

Hezbollah "confirms that it did not take part in any clash and did not open fire in today's events until now", it said in a statement.

"All that the enemy's media is claiming about thwarting an infiltration operation from Lebanon into occupied Palestine... is completely false."

It said no Hezbollah fighters were killed or wounded.

The Israeli army said a group of three to five men armed with rifles crossed the UN-demarcated Blue Line border in the disputed Mount Dov area, claimed by Lebanon, Syria and Israel.

It said the "terrorists" had fled back to Lebanon after an exchange of gunfire and that Israeli forces had fired artillery into Lebanon "for defensive purposes".

An AFP correspondent reported Israeli bombardment of the Kfarchouba hills in the Shebaa Farms sector near the Israeli position of Roueysaat al-Alam, with plumes of smoke rising above the area.

The bombardment hit a civilian home in the village of Hibariyyeh close to the border, according to Lebanese media.

The latest spike in tensions follows a July 20 Israeli missile attack on positions of Syrian regime forces and their allies south of Damascus that left five dead.

Hezbollah, whose fighters back the Damascus regime in war-torn Syria, said one of its own was among the dead.

"Our response to the killing of... Ali Kamil Mohsen in the Zionist aggression near Damascus airport is definitely coming," the Shiite movement said in its statement.

"We will not remain quiet in the face of this day's bombardments... and the hitting of a civilian's house," it added.



North Korea's Leader Says Nuclear Deterrent Crucial

SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said that Pyongyang's nuclear weapons guarantee its safety, state media reported Tuesday, signaling once again that it will not give up its arsenal.

Kim was addressing a conference of veterans on the 67th anniversary of the 1953 armistice that ended Korean War hostilities, the official Korean Central News Agency said.

Up to three million Koreans died in the three-year conflict, in which the armistice has never been replaced with a peace treaty, leaving North and South technically still at war.

"Thanks to our reliable and effective self-defensive nuclear deterrent, there will no longer be such word as war on this land," Kim was quoted as saying by the KCNA.

"Our national security and future will be firmly guaranteed forever," he added.

Pyongyang insists that it needs its nuclear arsenal to deter against a possible US invasion.

It has spent decades developing it and is internationally isolated as a result, subject to multiple United Nations Security Council sanctions over its banned weapons programmes.

Inter-Korean relations have been in deep freeze for months, following the collapse of a summit in Hanoi between Kim and U.S. President Donald Trump last year.

That nuclear negotiation foundered on what the North would be willing to give up in exchange for a loosening of sanctions.

Kim declared in December an end to moratoriums on nuclear and ballistic missile tests, and Pyongyang has repeatedly said it has no intention to continue talks unless Washington drops what it describes as "hostile" policies towards the North.



Turkish, Russian Presidents Discuss Regional Issues

ANKARA (Dispatches) - The Turkish and Russian presidents on Monday spoke over the phone and discussed a variety of issues, including bilateral relations and developments in the region, according to the Turkish Communications Directorate.

The directorate said Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Vladimir Putin discussed bilateral ties, recent escalation between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and latest developments in Libya and Syria.

Both leaders agreed to maintain cooperation and dialogue regarding bilateral relations and regional issues.

Since April 2019, warlord Khalifa Haftar's illegitimate forces have launched attacks on the Libyan capital of Tripoli and other parts of northwestern Libya, resulting in more than 1,000 deaths, including civilian women and children.

However, the Libyan government has recently achieved significant victories, pushing Haftar's forces out of Tripoli and the strategic city of Tarhuna.

The country's government was founded in 2015 under a UN-led agreement, but efforts for a long-term political settlement failed due to a military offensive by Haftar, who has been backed by France, Russia, the UAE, and Egypt.

The UN recognizes the Libyan government headed by Faye al-Sarraj as the country's legitimate authority.





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Fully Furn

Parsian

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balcony, pkg

Elahieh bldg (\$4000)
4storey, 12bdrs, pkgs

Zaferanieh (\$1300)
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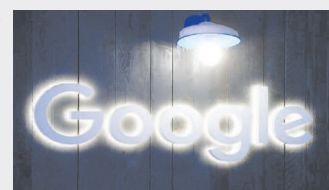
Google to Keep Employees Home Until Summer 2021

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Alphabet Inc's Google will keep its employees home until at least next July, the Wall Street Journal reported on Monday, citing people familiar with the matter.

Chief Executive Officer Sundar Pichai made the decision himself last week after debate among an internal group of top executives that he chairs, according to the report.

Google did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

Google had earlier said it would begin reopening more offices globally as early as June this year, but most Google employees would likely work from home until the end of this year.



U.S. Core Capital Goods Orders, Shipments Accelerate in June

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - New orders for key U.S.-made capital goods increased more than expected in June and shipments accelerated, but the gains were likely insufficient to avert the deepest plunge in business investment and economic activity since the Great Depression in the second quarter because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Orders for non-defense capital goods excluding aircraft, a closely watched proxy for business spending plans, jumped 3.3% last month, the Commerce Department said on Monday. These so-called core capital goods orders rose 1.6% in May and remained below their pre-pandemic level. Orders last month were boosted by strong demand for machinery, fabricated metals, primary metals and electrical equipment, appliances, and components.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast core capital goods orders advancing 2.3% in June. Core capital goods orders fell 2.3% on a year-on-year basis in June.

Shipments of core capital goods surged 3.4% last month. Core capital goods shipments are used to calculate equipment spending in the government's gross domestic product measurement. Core capital goods shipments rose 1.6% in May.

Stocks on Wall Street opened slightly higher amid hopes of more stimulus to revive the economy. The dollar fell against a basket of currencies. U.S. Treasury prices rose.

Economists expect business spending contracted at its sharpest pace on record in the second quarter, which would mark the fifth straight quarterly decline.

According to a Reuters survey of economists, GDP collapsed at a 34.1% annualized rate last quarter, which would be the sharpest contraction in output since the government started keeping records in 1947. The economy contracted at a 5.0% rate in the January-March quarter, the deepest since the 2007-09 recession.

The government will publish its snapshot of second-quarter GDP on Thursday. The closure of nonessential businesses in mid-March to slow the spread of the coronavirus almost ground the economy to a halt, with most of the effects felt in April.

Activity has rebounded as businesses reopened, but the nascent recovery is being threatened by a resurgence in cases of the respiratory illness across the country. Some authorities in the hard-hit South and West regions have either shut down businesses again or paused reopenings.

Orders for durable goods, items ranging from toasters to aircraft that are meant to last three years or more, increased 7.3% in June after rebounding 15.1% in May. Durable goods orders were driven by strong demand for motor vehicles, which led to a 20% rise in orders for transportation equipment after a 78.9% surge in May.

Orders for motor vehicles accelerated 85.7%. That followed a 28.8% increase in May. Orders for civilian aircraft tanked 462.3%. Boeing (BA.N) reported only one aircraft order last month after receiving nine in May, according to information posted on its website.

The planemaker reported this month that customers canceled orders for 355 of its 737 MAX jets in the first half of 2020, as the damage done by the jet's grounding and the coronavirus crisis to the airline industry mounted. Boeing has been hurt by the fallout from two crashes in Indonesia and Ethiopia, which led to the grounding of its best-selling plane since March 2019.

French Jobless Total Drops in June

PARIS (Reuters) - France saw its biggest ever monthly drop in the jobless total last month as some jobseekers found part-time work, data from the Labour Ministry showed on Monday.

The number of people registered at government employment agencies as out of work fell by 204,700 in June - the biggest monthly drop on record - to 4,220,900, the ministry said.



France's jobless total had surged to a record 4,575,500 in April as new hiring ground to a halt during the coronavirus lockdown that the government put in place in mid-March. Most restrictions remained in place until May 11.

The ministry said the improvement in June was due mainly to some jobseekers being reclassified as partly active in the labour market because they had found less than full-time work.

Using the broader definition, the number of people seeking work continued to rise in June to a record 6,156,900 even though hiring returned to pre-crisis levels, the data showed.

German Business Morale Brightens

BERLIN (Reuters) - German business morale continued to recover in July from its biggest decline in decades, with companies expecting Europe's largest economy to rebound from the coronavirus shock - as long as a second wave of infections is avoided.

The Ifo institute said on Monday its business climate index rose to 90.5 in July from an upwardly revised 86.3 in June. It was the third increase in a row and a higher reading than expected.

"The German economy is recovering step by step," Ifo President Clemens Fuest said, adding that companies were notably more satisfied with their current business situation.

The government hopes its stimulus package — more than 130 billion euro (118 billion pounds), including a temporary VAT cut to boost domestic demand — will help the economy return to a growth path.

The survey showed that consumers were starting to open their wallets while industrial activity was picking up slowly, Ifo economist Klaus Wohlrabe said.

The surprisingly strong Ifo figures suggested that the economy got off to a good start at the beginning of the third quarter. Wohlrabe confirmed a growth forecast of 6.9%.

Still, the economy is expected to plunge by double digits in the three months from April to June, when public life and economic activity came to a near halt because of the pandemic.

The Statistics Office will release preliminary gross domestic product growth data for the second quarter on Thursday. KfW chief economist Fritzi Koehler-Geib warned it was too early to give the all-clear, despite the encouraging Ifo reading and the trend among other sentiment indicators.

"The pre-crisis level will remain a long way off for the foreseeable future, and the continuing fierce rage of the pandemic in large parts of the world is an enormous risk for Germany as an export nation," she said. Commerzbank economist Marco Wagner pointed to higher corporate debt, which was curtailing investment, and a tense job market, which was curbing private consumption. "In addition, a second wave of infection seems to be looming in Europe," Wagner warned.

Health Minister Jens Spahn said on Saturday that the government may introduce compulsory coronavirus testing for holidaymakers returning from high-risk destinations after the number of new infections in Germany hit a two-month high.



India Bans 47 More Chinese Mobile Apps

NEW DELHI (AFP) - India has banned 47 more Chinese apps just weeks after blocking the highly popular video-sharing platform TikTok and 58 others over national security and privacy concerns, an information ministry official and media reports said Monday.

Tensions between the world's two most-populous nations soared last month after a Himalayan border clash that left 20 Indian troops dead and an unknown number of Chinese casualties.

"We have banned 47 mobile apps from China in this ongoing exercise which highlights the government's seriousness about data privacy and security," the official, who asked to remain anonymous, told AFP.

"The order was issued on Friday. Most of these 47 apps are banned for the same reasons as the earlier 59, and many were lite versions or variants of the earlier banned applications."

There has been no official statement or order released by the government about the ban but it has been widely reported across major Indian media.

Anti-China sentiment has soared since the deadly fight in mid-June, which sparked street protests and calls for Chinese products to be banned in the nation of 1.3 billion people.

Local media on Monday said 275 other Chinese apps could also be on the chopping block over similar concerns, including the hugely popular "PUBG Mobile" game owned by tech giant Tencent.

From toys, cosmetics and handbags to home appliances, pharma, auto components, and steel, China exports more than 3,000 products to India.

Tokyo, Sydney Aim To Lure Edgy HK Financial Firms

HONG KONG (Reuters) - Japan, Australia and some other nations are readying incentives to attract banks and asset managers in Hong Kong that are worried about the new security law imposed by China, but finance sector experts said even if they move, it will be to Singapore.

High taxes and costs, bloated bureaucracies and cultural differences in some of these Asia-Pacific nations present formidable challenges for the Hong Kong financial institutions to relocate even partially, while Singapore's similarities to Hong Kong give it an advantage, they said, though the Southeast Asian city-state has not actively been seeking such business.

Beijing imposed a tough national security law from July 1 on Hong Kong, regional home to many global financial groups, prompting companies to reassess their operations there. Hong Kong's financial regulators said last week they had been approached by institutions concerned about the law, but they said it would not affect operations.

Nonetheless, rivals hope to benefit from the concerns.

"The political upheaval in Hong Kong has created an opportunity for Australia and Sydney to become a stronger regional financial centre," Senator Andrew Bragg wrote to Australia's Treasurer this month, proposing policy changes. Japan included attracting "excellent human resources" to form a global financial centre in an economic policy roadmap earlier this month, following official remarks they could win business from Hong Kong.

Ruling party draft proposals include visa support and streamlining approvals for investment management licenses.

Smaller financial centers are also trying their luck.

Busan in South Korea is offering tax breaks and rent free offices to financial firms, while Taiwan's top regulator told Reuters he hoped the island's rule of law and democratic values would attract business.

However, the mooted reforms do not move the dial enough, say some sector professionals.

"Tokyo will, frankly, struggle to steal significant market share from, let alone replace, Hong Kong," said Steven Tran, a partner at law firm Mayer Brown in Hong Kong, who was previously based in Tokyo for four years.

Tran said Japanese taxes, together with a perceived greater level of bureaucracy, higher labor costs and less English language fluency, would make it harder for financial institutions to operate regional hubs from Tokyo.

Hong Kong's corporate tax rate of 16.5% is a little over half that of Japan's and Australia's, and among the lowest in the region. Convincing senior staff to give up an international lifestyle in Hong Kong is another challenge.

"Typically, when expatriates move to Japan they need much more hand-holding than when moving to Hong Kong," said Jeremy Laughlin, a Tokyo-based business development manager at Santa Fe Relocation.

Language and cultural difficulties as well as the absence of adequate financial infrastructure could scupper South Korea and Taiwan's efforts too.

Huawei Cuts India Revenue Target by up to 50%



BEIJING (Reuters) - Chinese telecom company Huawei Technologies Co has cut its India revenue target for 2020 by up to 50% and is laying off more than half of its staff in the country, the Economic Times reported on Monday, amid calls to boycott Chinese goods.

Huawei's India unit said the report suggesting layoffs of more than half of Huawei staff in the country was untrue, but did not elaborate.

The newspaper said the company was targeting \$350-500 million (272-389 million pounds) in revenue for 2020, compared with roughly \$700-800 million it was aiming for earlier in Asia's third-largest economy.

The Economic Times said the company was cutting 60-70% of its Indian staff, excluding those in research and development and the global service centre.

Huawei's India unit said it continues "to work closely" with all customers in the country.

"Our India operations and resources, backed by robust local talent are designed to meet any customer requirements."

The Economic Times report comes amid a rise in anti-China sentiment in India following the killing of 20 Indian soldiers by Chinese forces in a Himalayan border dispute last month.

India has also told two state-run telecoms firms to use locally-made rather than Chinese telecom equipment to upgrade their mobile networks to 4G.

2 Short Animations Win at Cinrecreo

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian short animated pieces ‘The Fox’ directed by Sadeq Javadi and ‘Pet Man’ by Marzieh Abrar-Paydar win Cinrecreo youth short film festival awards in Ecuador.

“Pet Man,” tells the story of an animal dealer who falls asleep in his shop and has a nightmare where he is trapped

inside an animal cage. In his attempt to escape from the animals, he encounters various obstacles.

The Iranian animated piece won the best short animation award at the fourth edition of the Bogota International Animation Festival in Colombia, held on Oct. 21 to Nov. 4, 2019.



Young Leaders Tapped to Invigorate UN's Climate Action Plans

TEHRAN (UNIC) - The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres announced the names of seven young climate leaders – between the ages of 18 and 28 years old – who will advise him regularly on accelerating global action and ambition to tackle the worsening climate crisis.

The announcement marks a new effort by the United Nations to bring more young leaders into decision-making and planning processes, as the UN works to mobilize climate action as part of the COVID-19 recovery efforts.

“We are in a climate emergency. We do not have the luxury of time,” the Secretary-General said in a video announcing the establishment of the Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change. “We need urgent action now -- to recover better from COVID-19, to confront injustice and inequality and address climate disruption.”

“We have seen young people on the front lines of climate action, showing us what bold leadership looks like,” he added. “That is why I am launching my Youth Advisory Group on climate change today -- to provide perspectives, ideas and solutions that will help us scale up climate action.”

The members of the Secretary-General’s Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change represent the diverse voices of young people from all regions as well as small island states. They will offer perspectives and solutions on climate change, from science to community mobilization, from entrepreneurship to politics, and from industry to conservation.

The newly selected members of the Group, ranging from 18-28 years old, are:

Nisreen Elsaïm (Sudan) is a climate activist and junior negotiator at intergovernmental climate change platforms with experience across a range of environmental topics, and she was part of the social movement that brought about democratic change in Sudan.

Ernest Gibson (Fiji) is the co-coordinator for 350 Fiji, a regional youth-led climate change network, driven by young climate leaders.

Vladislav Kaim, (Moldova) is a young economist committed to ensuring green and decent jobs for youth, and he brings deep expertise in international trade and migration.

Sophia Kianni (United States) has helped organize nationwide strikes and has built a network of non-profits as part of the Zero Hour National Partnerships Team.

Nathan Metenier (France) is the political director at the ‘Jeunes Ambassadeurs pour le Climat’, where he helped develop the French youth climate coalition.

Paloma Costa Oliveira (Brazil) is a lawyer and human rights defender who has coordinated the youth delegations to several climate conferences.

Archana Soreng (India) is experienced in advocacy and research, and she is working to document, preserve, and promote traditional knowledge and cultural practices of indigenous communities.

The initial seven members of the Group have been chosen to give frank and fearless advice to the Secretary-General, at a time of growing urgency to hold government and corporate leaders to account on climate action.

“Our ancestors have been protecting the forest and nature over the ages through



their traditional knowledge and practices. Now it is on us to be the front runners in combating the climate crisis,” Ms Soreng said.

“The climate emergency is a threat to life, and taking climate action is the only way to free our future,” Ms Oliveira said.

“Climate action is not just about reducing greenhouse gas emissions, it is also about: creating green jobs in a post-COVID world, preserving our health and biodiversity and protecting the poorest and most marginalised communities,” Mr Metenier said.

“As an Iranian-American, I have witnessed firsthand the devastating effect climate change is having on the Middle East. It is crucial for world leaders to stand as a united front as we work to combat the climate crisis and racial injustice,” Ms Kianni said.

“Taking climate action means contributing in the most direct way possible to the great reset of global economic order, an order in which nature will reconquer its rightful place as the main safe tangible asset that will never become stranded,” Mr Kaim said.

“Climate action matters because the story I want to tell my children is of how we took on the biggest challenge the world has ever seen and we won! We won for them,” Mr Gibson said. “Taking the right action is the greatest motivation. Keeping up our work is the only solution, and doesn’t need a second thought. With every challenge there are many opportunities, but we must do it together,” Ms Elsaïm said.

The establishment of the Group builds on last year’s successful Youth Climate Summit – the first time a Secretary-General has convened a summit for young people entirely devoted to climate action. The Summit brought over 1,000 young climate champions together from more than 140 countries to share their solutions on the global stage and deliver a clear message to world leaders: we must act now to confront the climate crisis. The initiative is also aligned with the Secretary-General’s vision for the UN Youth Strategy, launched in September 2018.

U.S. Course at Record Low, Trump Sinks on Virus

WASHINGTON (AP) — With the November election 100 days away, more Americans say the country is heading in the wrong direction than at any previous point in Donald Trump’s presidency, putting the incumbent in a perilous position as his reelection bid against Democrat Joe Biden enters a pivotal stretch.

A new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research also finds Trump’s approval for his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic falling to a new low, with just 32% of Americans supportive of his approach. Even Trump’s standing on the economy, long the high water mark for the president, has fallen over the past few months after seeming ascendant earlier this year.

Those political headwinds have sparked a sudden summer shift in the White House and the Trump campaign. After spending months playing down the pandemic and largely ignoring the virus’ resurgence in several states, Trump warned this past week that the situation is likely to get worse before it gets better. After repeatedly minimizing the importance of wearing masks to limit the spread of the virus, Trump urged Americans to do exactly that. And after insisting he would press forward with a large campaign convention in August, the president announced that he was scrapping those plans.

Trump’s abrupt about-face underscores the reality of the situation he faces just over three months from Election Day. Even as he tries to refocus his contest with Biden on divisive cultural issues and an ominous “law and order” message, Trump’s reelection prospects are likely to be inextricably linked to his handling of the pandemic and whether voters believe the country will head back in the right direction under his leadership.

The AP-NORC poll makes clear the challenge ahead for Trump on that front: 8 in 10 Americans say the country is heading in the wrong direction. That’s more than at any point since Trump took office. The poll also finds just 38% of Americans say the national economy is good, down from 67% in January, before the pandemic upended most aspects of everyday life.

Biden’s campaign is eager to keep the final months of the campaign focused squarely on Trump, confident



that the former vice president can emerge victorious if the contest is a referendum on whether the current commander in chief has succeeded during his four years in office.

“People are sick and tired of a government that is divided and broken and unable to get things done,” said Kate Bedingfield, Biden’s deputy campaign manager. “What people feel like they’re getting from Trump right now is a hodgepodge mess of self-interested political talk.”

The past few months have proved to be beneficial for Biden’s campaign. He managed to swiftly consolidate the Democratic Party in ways Hillary Clinton, the party’s 2016 nominee, struggled to do. Biden’s fundraising, a weakness for him in the primary, has surged, allowing his campaign

to build out infrastructure and start ad spending in both traditional battleground states and more aspirational targets, including Texas and Georgia.

Biden has also benefited from Trump landing on the wrong side of the public in his initial reactions to the pandemic. For example, 3 in 4 Americans back requiring people to wear masks in public, which Trump initially dismissed.

Another pandemic test for the president lies ahead in August and September, as Trump and his administration aggressively try to sell a skeptical public on reopening schools. The poll finds that about third of Americans are opposed entirely to the idea, while close to half say major adjustments to instruction will be required.

The limitations the pandemic placed on the candidates’ ability to travel and hold large rallies have also played more to Biden’s strengths. While Trump relishes headlining rallies at packed arenas, Biden is less adept in those settings. He’s instead spent the past several months delivering speeches to small groups of invited guests and journalists within driving distance of his home in Delaware, and holding virtual events with supporters and donors.

Trump argues that shows Biden doesn’t have the stamina for a full-blown campaign; Biden’s advisers say voters want to see their leaders abide by the same public health guidelines they’re urging others to follow.

Democrats have been buoyed by public polls finding Biden ahead of Trump both nationally and in some battleground states by a comfortable margin. However, Biden advisers caution that they expect the race to tighten in the final stretch before Election Day as more Republicans who may be dissatisfied with Trump’s job performance gravitate back to their party’s leader.

Overall, 38% of Americans approve of the president’s job performance — well within the narrow range that Trump’s approval ratings have stayed throughout this presidency, but down slightly from earlier this year before the pandemic. Most Republicans — 81% — approve of Trump’s job performance, but just 68% of Republicans support his handling of

India’s Reliance Overtakes Exxon as Second Most Valuable Energy Firm

LONDON (Dispatches) - India’s oil-to-telecoms conglomerate Reliance Industries surpassed on Friday Exxon as the world’s second most valuable firm doing business in energy after Saudi Arabia’s oil giant Aramco.

Reliance Industries is the most valuable company in India and has diversified operations, including oil refining. Its market capitalization hit US\$189 billion (14.1 trillion Indian rupees) on Friday, overtaking Exxon’s market capitalization, Indian media report.

Early on Friday, Exxon’s market capitalization was US\$185.58 billion.

Reliance Industries became the first Indian company to hit a market capitalization of more than 14 trillion Indian rupees, equal to US\$187 billion. Its shares have been rising in recent weeks after tech giants such as Google invested in Reliance’s Jio Platforms, while Amazon is reportedly considering buying a stake of 9.9 percent in Reliance Retail. Over the past five weeks, Reliance Industries has added US\$39 billion to its market value, according to The Economic Times. In the past 14 trading sessions alone, Reliance Industries’ shares surged so much that they added US\$29 billion to the company’s market cap.

The Indian conglomerate, however, is not an energy firm per se, and most of the market rally in recent weeks was thanks to its digital and retail operations, not the oil industry. Regardless, Reliance Industries became the second most valuable company involved in the energy business in the world.

Saudi Aramco of Saudi Arabia, which has been trading on the Saudi Stock Exchange, Tadawul, since December 2019, has a market capitalization of more than US\$1.7 trillion and is not only the most valuable energy company in the world but also the most valuable company in any sector. Saudi Aramco is more valuable than the likes of Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, or Alphabet.

Earlier this month, Apple was close to overtaking Aramco when its market cap jumped to just over US\$1.7 trillion, compared to Aramco’s US\$1.78 trillion based on current exchange rates. Early on Friday, Apple’s market cap was US\$1.58 trillion.

U.S. Foul Cry...

FROM PAGE 1

It is noteworthy to say that in 2014 presidential election, Bashar Assad competed with Maher Hajar and al-Nouri and Assad celebrated a landslide victory by gaining 88 percent of the votes. The West, especially the U.S., and above all



Saudi Arabia are angry that Syrian people restore peace and stability after putting behind a horrible era. In their negative propagations, they try to show Syrian people are unhappy with the condition and are trying to catch fish from muddy water.

But fortunately, their words have no weight and Syrian people are well aware of their ominous goals. And the region with its strategic goals of expulsion of the U.S. forces is going, after years, to enjoy smelling pleasant scent of living in peace and security.

Health Minister...

FROM PAGE 1

Namaki added, “Tehran should not be a base to decide for the whole Iran but should use the capacity of all the provinces to contain the virus.”

He said that according to scientific knowledge, the Coronavirus is complex and different from the early types of the virus and we must prepare ourselves for anything unpredictable.

Iran’s senior health official said that the Ministry of Health in the provinces, despite the shortcomings, has gained significant achievements to combat the Coronavirus.

“COVID-19 has economic, political, social, and psychological aspects that have affected the world, and therefore not just the medical aspect of it would be considered,” the Minister said.

The Minister of Health also stressed that traditional and herbal medicine should be used alongside scientific methods to treat the virus. Namaki said that areas without Coronavirus should be identified in the country so that people such as pregnant women and children can go there safely for vaccination because vaccination is very important and Iran via vaccination was able to control 6 infectious diseases.

Petrochemical...

FROM PAGE 1

“Fortunately, our products are competitive in terms of quality in the global market, and if the quality of the product is not high, we cannot compete in the market,” he said.

He emphasized the importance of completeness of the production chain and said, “In the production process until the final consumption, the production chain must be complete and fortunately today, we are self-sufficient in most of the petrochemical and steel products in the country and we stand on our own two feet. Self-reliance and self-sufficiency have been important achievements of these valuable products in the country.”

Referring to the need to prevent the sale of raw materials in the country’s production sector, the President said, “Today in petrochemicals and steel, we have parted from the sale of raw materials and have reached added value, which can boost employment and develop downstream industries”.

“We have seen an increase in production in other areas, including agricultural products, over the years,” he said, adding, “Agricultural production in this government has increased from 97 million tons to 130 million tons, and self-sufficiency in wheat is an important achievement of this increase in production”.

The President stated, “we should not think only of the short term of our responsibility, it is a wrong idea to see only 4 years or a year left of our government, all governments have a heavy and big task, which is protecting the national interests of the country.”

The President said that enemies thought that two or three months after the sanctions and the economic war against the Iranian nation, we would be forced to contact them, saying, “During the two years and three months that have passed since the imposition of the most severe economic sanctions, they have repeatedly requested to have negotiations and dialogue.”

Emphasizing that we are have no problem with negotiation and are not seeking to put up a show, Rouhani said, “their sanctions are economic terrorism, and they have waged a medicinal terrorism against the Iranian nation during the outbreak of coronavirus.”

“First, they have to put an end to the illegal action they have started and lift the sanctions. This is not a precondition but a fact,” continued Rouhani.

The President said that the efforts for the development of the country and the surge in production will continue this year and next year, adding, “With the opening of new projects in the petrochemical and steel sectors in the coming weeks and months, we will witness the process of great development of the country and a jump in production.”

Hoffenheim Appoint Hoeness as Coach

BERLIN (AFP) - Sebastian Hoeness, reserve-team coach at Bayern Munich where his uncle Uli is honorary president, will take charge of Hoffenheim, the Bundesliga club announced on Monday.

Hoffenheim said the 38-year-old, who is also the son of former Hertha Berlin boss Dieter, has signed until June 2023.

Sebastian Hoeness led Bayern's reserves to an unexpected third division title this season.

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Vardy Wins Premier League's Golden Boot

LONDON (Reuters) - Leicester City striker Jamie Vardy won the Premier League's Golden Boot award for the top scorer after finishing the season with 23 goals.

Vardy was unable to score in Leicester's 2-0 final day loss to Manchester United on Sunday — a result which meant the Foxes missed out on a Champions League place and had to settle for fifth place and the Europa League next season.

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SPORTS

WEDNESDAY JULY 29, 2020

Murray Mentally Planning to Play U.S. Open in New York

LONDON (Dispatches) - Britain's former world number one Andy Murray says he is "mentally planning" for the US Open to go ahead.

The United States Tennis Association hopes to confirm within the next 10 days that the tournament can be staged behind closed doors from 31 August.

There is still uncertainty if players will have to quarantine on arrival in New York and also when flying onto Europe to prepare for the French Open.

The U.S. has reported the highest number of Covid-19 cases in the world.

"Four or five weeks ago, we were pretty sceptical about it," Murray said.

"But mentally at some stage you need to start preparing and planning for that.

"If it wasn't happening, my schedule for practising, my rehab, would all be a bit different. Mentally I'm planning for it to go ahead." With two hip operations behind him, 33-year-old Murray wants to avoid playing in consecutive weeks in future.

But as he has not played an official event since November's Davis Cup Finals, the three-time Grand Slam champion says he is prepared to make an exception in New York.

The Scot is even considering asking for a wildcard to enter qualifying for the Cincinnati Masters, which this year will be played in New York the week before the US Open.

"The issue for us is the travel, so we'll probably be a bit apprehensive getting over there," Murray continued.

"Hopefully the U.S. Open can go ahead, and it's OK. But if not, I'm also OK with that.

It's not like I'm saying it must go ahead. So long as it's safe for the players then we need to try to get back to competing when it's safe to do so." Meanwhile, Britain's leading women's player, Johanna Konta, believes the U.S. Open will take place.



"Everything is pointing in the direction that it is going to go ahead," the world number 14 said. "They have been quite vocal that they are pushing forwards. Just basing my opinion on all the information that is there, I think it probably will.

"As far as I understand, as professional athletes I think we can come back without quarantining as of now. But I don't know if that has changed in the last 12 hours." Meanwhile Serena Williams says she has asked tournaments to give other women players her spotlight as she admits the battle for equality in tennis isn't make as much progress as she'd like.

Williams has long been the biggest draw in women's tennis, and that has not changed despite her recent struggles to add to her already-incredible 23 Grand Slam titles.

However, speaking at the launch of Angel FC, a new women's soccer team in the US, Serena Williams said it's time for tennis' new wave of women stars to get the opportunity to grab the attention.

"That's [gender equality] something we have to fight for still in tennis," Williams said.

"I'll look at the schedule and there's four men's matches and then two women's matches and then I feel bad, because I'm always one of those women.

"I literally have said just put me on the second court, so we can have other players have an opportunity on centre court.

"Obviously that doesn't go well in the timings, and they're like, 'No, no, no. You need be on centre court,' and I'm like, 'These other women need a chance and they deserve it, they've been working literally their whole lives to have this opportunity.'"

Williams is currently one Grand Slam title short of equalling the all-time record, and has lost her last four major finals.

Lovren Completes Zenit Switch

LONDON (Dispatches) - Liverpool defender Dejan Lovren has completed a move to Russian side Zenit St Petersburg for a reported £10.9 million (\$14 million) after slipping down the pecking order at Anfield.

The 31-year-old, who joined the newly crowned Premier League champions from Southampton in 2014, made just 15 appearances this season, falling to fourth-choice centre-back behind Virgil van Dijk, Joe Gomez and Joel Matip.

The Croatian has been troubled with niggling injuries over the past two years.

"Another Liverpool legend who leaves the club, because he was absolutely a very, very important part of this team from the first day since I was in," manager Jurgen Klopp told liverpoolfc.com.

"When he was fit, he was very, very, very often in the team. A great player and a great person," Klopp added.

"Really good, in the air a machine, and I really liked working together with him. It will be interesting to follow Zenit St Petersburg now. I wish him the best of luck."



Malaysia to Host Asian Champions League Matches in East Asia

KUALA LUMPUR (Reuters) - Malaysia has been named the Asian Champions League's centralized hub in East Asia with matches in the region due to restart in October, the continent's soccer governing body said on Monday.

Asia's elite club competition was suspended in early March because of the COVID-19 pandemic and will resume in West Asia hub Qatar on Sept. 14.

Malaysia will host Group G and Group H matches from October 17-November 1 and a semi-final on November 28. It will also host last-16 games from the two groups on November 4 and two quarter-finals on November 25.

Teams from China, Australia, South Korea, Japan and Malaysia will play in the East Asia regional hub, while teams from Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran and Uzbekistan will play in the West Asia hub.

The centralized venue for Groups E and F and the remaining knockout stage matches have not yet been confirmed.

The AFC said this month that group games would be played in full in a round-robin format while knockouts rounds would be reduced to single games from the usual two-legged tie format. The final pitting the best teams from each region will be held on Dec. 5 in the Western hub.

Thompson Wins 3M Open to Claim Second PGA Tour Victory

NEW YORK (Reuters) - American Michael Thompson won the 3M Open in Blaine, Minnesota on Sunday by two strokes to claim his second career PGA Tour victory and his first in seven years.

The 35-year-old was solid throughout the tournament and didn't buckle under pressure, sinking a 12-foot putt on the par-five 18th to seal the win under sunny skies at TPC Twin Cities.

"It has been a long time," an emotional Thompson said after his round of four-under 67. "I'm really sad my wife and kids aren't here to celebrate this with me. I can't wait to see them. Babe, I love you," he said.



Vertonghen Confirms Spurs Exit

LONDON (Dispatches) - Jan Vertonghen announced his departure from Tottenham after eight years at the Premier League club on Monday.

The Belgium defender, whose contract was extended in June until the end of the current season, made more than 300 appearances for Spurs after joining the club from Ajax in 2012. Vertonghen tweeted: "So my time at the

club comes to an end. A sad day for many reasons.

"I will miss the friends I've made here, the staff that make the club run, playing at the amazing new stadium & of course you fans."

Goalkeeper Michel Vorm is also leaving at the end of his one-year contract.

Spurs players paid tribute to the pair on social media after the 1-1 draw at Crystal Palace on Sunday, which booked Jose Mourinho's men a place in next season's Europa League.

Harry Kane said on Instagram: "Wish nothing but the best for @jvertonghen and @mvorm with whatever is next for them. Been a pleasure sharing a dressing room and playing with them both."

De Bruyne Wants Champions League Win

LONDON (Dispatches) - Kevin De Bruyne is hoping to crown David Silva's glorious 10 years at Manchester City by completing the Spaniard's set of medals with a Champions League win next month.

Silva has won four Premier League titles among 11 major trophies since joining City in 2010, as well as the World Cup and two European Championships at international level with Spain.

The 34-year-old midfielder has never tasted Champions League glory but he has one last chance with Pep Guardiola's men, with his contract ending at the end of the season.

City resume their Champions League campaign at home to Real Madrid on August 7, holding a 2-1 lead from the first leg of their last-16 tie, with the winners progressing to the quarter-finals, which will be held on a neutral site in Lisbon.

De Bruyne scored twice in Silva's final Premier League game as City thrashed Norwich 5-0 on Sunday and labelled his midfield partner one of the best players to ever grace the English game.

"For me he is one of the best players who has ever played in the Premier League," said the Belgian midfielder.

"You can always debate who is (number) one but when you play with him you can appreciate what he does day-in, day-out. I have played with him for five years -- a long time.

"We have won a lot together, we play well together. We complement each other really well in different ways.

"And he's such a nice guy as well. He is going to be a big miss. It would be great if we could win the Champions League so it could end well for him."



Qatar Confirms Interest in Hosting the 2032 Olympic Games

DOHA (Dispatches) - Qatar will seek to host the 2032 Olympic Games, it said on Monday, joining a crowded field and raising questions about scorching summer temperatures and underwhelming attendances at past events.

India, Australia's Queensland state, the Chinese city of Shanghai and a potential joint bid between South and North Korea are also being touted for the 2032 summer games.

Under changes put forward in 2014, interested countries submit a request to join the non-committal "continuous dialogue", which Qatar confirmed to AFP it had done via a letter to the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne.

"Today's announcement marks the beginning of a meaningful dialogue with the IOC's Future Host Commission to explore our interest further and identify how the Olympic Games can support Qatar's long-term development goals," Qatar Olympic Committee president Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani told AFP in a statement.

Qatar unsuccessfully bid to host the 2016 and 2020 games, having proposed to host the former in October without first clearing it with the IOC.

It won a waiver to propose hosting the 2020 games, a joint bid with Baku, Azerbaijan, between September 20 and October 20, but failed to make the shortlist.

The 2020 games, postponed to 2021 because of the coronavirus pandemic, were awarded to Japan, which also experiences searing summer temperatures, leading officials to schedule events early in the morning when conditions are coolest.

"Qatar has earned the reputation of a world-class destination for major sporting events," added Sheikh Joaan, brother of Qatar's ruler Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani.

