

Iran's Health Ministry Spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari Said That Some 208 More Iranians Have Died From Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Over the Past 24 Hours Bringing the Total Deaths to 17,190

IRAN NEWS

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MONDAY AUGUST 3, 2020 - MORDAD 13, 1399

2 DOMESTIC

Majlis Ready to Develop Parliamentary Cooperation With Moscow

> SEE PAGE 2



3 DOMESTIC

Electricity Production To Increase by 20,000 Megawatts

> SEE PAGE 3



4 INTERNATIONAL

Berlin Protest Over Virus Restrictions Draws Thousands

> SEE PAGE 4



8 SPORTS

Aubameyang Leads Arsenal to FA Cup Triumph

> SEE PAGE 8



Move on Path of Surge In Economy Should Be Based on Realities

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Speaking at a meeting of the government's economic coordination headquarters, President Rouhani said that moving towards the prosperity and surge in the economy of the country should be based on realities and should not be based on unrealistic analysis of pessimism and tarnishing the image of the country.

Hassan Rouhani who was speaking in the 156th meeting of the government's economic coordination headquarters added, "The realities of the country in the economic field show that by taking advantage of economic capabilities and coordination among all bodies and cohesion in managing and implementing coordinated programs, unprecedented problems caused by maximum enemy pressure can be overcome."

In the meeting, the macroeconomic management road-map of the country in 26 areas was presented and discussed.

Referring to the road-map designed, Rouhani said, "The main goal in the economic war imposed by the enemies on Iran is to make the country's management unplanned in its decisions and actions, and in this regard create and induce negative expectations." **See Page 7**

Iran Stock Market Surges to Record High



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's main stock index broke through the key 2 million point mark for the first time ever on Sunday, state media reported, amid warnings that the market is overheating.

The Tehran Stock Exchange's benchmark TEDPIX index gained 46,844 points in early trading, the official IRNA news agency said, up 2.4%.

The index closed at 1,961,649 on Saturday after surging by over 57,325 points, or 3.01%, on the day, according to the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE) website.

Analysts and some lawmakers, however, have warned that the move might raise the risk of a stock market bubble as the rising market is at odds with Iran's deteriorating economic fundamentals, which are also feeling the impact of the coronavirus outbreak.

But authorities have denied that there is a bubble in the country's stock market.

Meanwhile a member of Supreme Council of the Stock Exchange told ILNA news agency that the capital market gets momentum from the dollar and forex market, adding that unfortunately policy-making in the national economy is moving towards chaos in the forex market, adding although people expected stock market correction, the condition of forex market has led to these records in the stock market.

Saeed Esلمي pointed to the factors behind the current rise in the capital market which in the past days some signs of correcting prices had been seen. He added that the capital market is highly dependent on the economic decisions and since the dollar rate in the country has grown in the past days, it has led to the rise in the prices in the capital market.

He noted that signals in the other market make people think of value of their money, and the capital market is definitely not an exception and people, in order to keep the value of their properties, prefer to invest in the capital market which is cashable one.

Esلمي criticized the government's policy-making which has forced people and investors to expect more inflation and devaluation of their properties.

He said the condition of capital market is not concerning for now.

Iran Sets a New Order In West Asia

IRAN NEW NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Majlis Speaker stated that by the resistance of the people against all kinds of sedition, the country gained such power to thwart the most complex plots of the enemies and establish a new order in the West Asia region.

Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, in his speech in today's open session of the parliament August 2, said, "After the Islamic Revolution, our nation gained tremendous power to protect the Revolution, and after passing through the sedition of the first years of the Revolution, we were able to bravely resist in the holy defense."

He added, "With the resistance of the people against all kinds of internal and international sedition in the second and third decades of the revolution, we gained such power that we thwarted the most complex plots of the enemies and established a new order in the West Asia region."

"These days, the enemies of the Iranian people have complicated plots to harm the people economically, so the people's livelihood problems must be solved," Qalibaf pointed out. **See Page 7**

ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

History's Trial Awaits the West

During the days when the ex-Shah of Iran was preparing to flee the country, we used to hold meetings with friends in the Fajr-e Islam Group and in the meetings, we thought that Imperialism would stand trial through the channel of the victory of the Islamic Revolution.

Through the history and especially after the geo-hegemonic changes and formation of modern state structures in its present form of ruling the people in the world, what oppressions, massacres, invasions, lootings and treasons have happened through the fingers and views of the imperialism. The history will not forget the bitter memories of what the imperialism and especially westerns have inflicted on the world communities and geographies.

Three centuries of fate of the American Indians, namely, in 17th, 18th and 19th Centuries, with deaths of over 300 million in the U.S., deaths of over 100 million people and humiliating and considering the blacks as the second-hand citizens for two centuries in Africa, the U.S. and Europe, killing of over 20 million Indians in Bengal State and concentration camps in two centuries where the British were their custodians and 50 years of killing Tasmanians by the British who used to behead the men and hang their heads on the necks of women. The British pushed some 100,000 people to the death in Africa to control the population and achieve their ominous goals.

In Iran, too, the British tyrannized the country. The 19th Century in Iran was the century of tyranny and massacre of Iranian people and some nine million people died of hunger and drought. When new powers with new capabilities were formed, it was then the turn of using Atomic bombs, tanks, mines, gunpowder and cannons.

In August 1945 and during the World War II, 220,000 Japanese were killed in Hiroshima by the U.S. A-Bomb attack and later through the propagation, buying the people in the political parties for remaining silent against this crime loomed on Japan.

In the second half of the very 20th Century while 50 years have not passed since the Zionist regime's horrible crime and its memory has not become old enough, these Zionists after tearing apart the stomachs of some pregnant women and assaulting the young girls set some 500 people alive in Deir Yassin.

Vietnam witnessed what a big massacre. What did the Americans seek in that part of the world? Still media documents are proofs for the American soldiers' crime when they maimed, raped, dismembered and killed most of inhabitants of a village who were mostly women and children. **See Page 7**

Seoul, Tehran Agree to Launch Working Group on Humanitarian Trade

SEOUL (Yonhap) -- South Korea and Iran have agreed to launch a working group on expanding humanitarian trade as part of efforts to maintain bilateral partnership within the scope of a U.S.-approved sanctions exemption, a source close to the matter said Sunday.

The director general-level consultation aims to discuss on a regular basis how to match Iran's demand for medicine and medical equipment with what South Korean exporters can offer, the source said.

The first working group talks will likely be held early next month.

The two sides reached the agreement during their higher-level virtual talks held earlier this week. In the talks, the Iranian side expressed intent to purchase several hundred millions of dollars worth of South Korean products, according to the source.

South Korea has been seeking to expand humanitarian exports to Iran, including coronavirus test kits, amid the worsening COVID-19 outbreak there, as well as other essential medicine, like flu vaccines and antidiabetics.

Expanding humanitarian trade with Tehran is also expected to help the two countries settle the issue of Iran's assets -- known to be worth up to US\$7 billion -- frozen in two Korean bank accounts since last year due to Washington's tightened sanctions against Tehran.

The two countries had used the won currency-based accounts to continue Korea's oil imports from Iran and exports of goods to Iran upon the U.S. waiver of sanctions limiting dollar-based financial transactions with Tehran. But Washington refused to extend the sanctions waiver.

In April, Washington approved a special license for Seoul to resume some humanitarian transactions with Tehran even if they involve Iran's central bank subject to U.S. sanctions. In late May, Seoul sent to Tehran \$500,000 worth of medicine for hereditary diseases in the first such shipment to the Middle Eastern country.

The Seoul government has also launched an interagency task force to step up humanitarian trade with Iran and hosted a series of briefing sessions for local companies to help them resume trade with Tehran.

This undated photo, provided by Seoul's foreign ministry, shows boxes of medicine for hereditary diseases sent to Iran as part of humanitarian trade with the Middle East country.

Tehran Hopes Intra-Afghan Talks Will Lead to Lasting Peace

TEHRAN (IFP) - The Iranian president has expressed hope intra-Afghan negotiations led by the Afghan government and attended by all political groups in the country will be conducive to peace in Afghanistan.

President Hassan Rouhani said he was pleased to see a truce has been established in Afghanistan, and that he hopes the ceasefire will hold and lead to a drop in violence.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has always supported the peace trend led by the Afghan government," said the president in a phone conversation with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani.

He said he hopes talks between Afghan groups and the Taliban based on the Constitution will bear fruit.

The president said he was happy to see the coronavirus outbreak is being controlled in Afghanistan as reports suggest.

"When it comes to fighting coronavirus, the Islamic Republic of Iran is standing by the Afghan government and nation and will spare no effort to offer assistance," said Rouhani. **See Page 7**

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West Urged to Cease Financing, Harboring Terrorists

TEHRAN - Iran's foreign minister blamed the U.S. and Europe for funding and protecting terrorists Saturday following the arrest of the leader of a U.S.-based anti-regime group.

"The west must cease financing and harboring terrorists. From their safe havens in U.S. and Europe, they promote hatred, agitate & organize murder &

mayhem, and shamelessly claim responsibility for the murder of innocent Iranian civilians," Javad Zarif said on Twitter.

"Smokescreens can't obscure this hypocrisy," he added. Tehran announced early Saturday the arrest of the leader of a U.S.-based anti-regime group accused of conducting terror attacks in Iran.

Majlis Ready to Develop Parliamentary Cooperation With Moscow

TEHRAN (IRNA) – Majlis Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said the Iranian parliament will accelerate the initiative of Iran-Russia joint high council, adding that the parliament is ready to promote parliamentary relations with Russia.



Qalibaf made the remarks Saturday in a meeting with Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs Leonid Slutsky.

Referring to strategic agreements between Iran and Russia and describing the meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei as turning point, he stressed the importance of boosting all-out cooperation between two countries in economic, political and cultural fields

Iran and Russia enjoy joint opportunities which can be used in line with both nations' interest.

Underlining the importance of materializing strategic cooperation between Iran and Russia, he said both countries are expected to pay more attention to all dimensions of

relations namely in economic and trade fields.

Qalibaf hailed Iran-Russia cooperation in fighting terrorism in Syria, saying security cooperation can be used as a pattern for reinforcing joint cooperation in other fields.

Slutsky, for his part, congratulated Qalibaf on his election.

He said by maintaining cooperation among Iranian and Russian expert parliamentary committees, "we can hold joint meeting on political, energy and economic fields".

In fact both parliaments can help draw national projects and strategic cooperation, Slutsky added.

He emphasized increasing Iran-Russia cooperation in Caspian Sea.

Slutsky invited Qalibaf to visit Russia.

Terrorist Ringleader Jamshid Sharmahd Arrested Inside Iran

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's intelligence minister says enemies still cannot believe that the terrorist group ringleader Jamshid Sharmahd was apprehended inside Iran.

Mahmoud Alavi said the ringleader of the terror group Tondar was arrested by Intelligence Ministry agents.

"The reason why they first denied [that he was arrested inside Iran] was that they knew he was strongly supported by American and Israeli [spy] services, and they believed it would be unlikely for Iran to be able to penetrate the umbrella support provided by the intelligence services of the U.S. and the Zionist regime [of Israel] and lead this person using a complex program and finally capture him inside the Islamic Republic of Iran," the minister said.

He said the royalist movement led by Sharmahd was one of few royalist movements which was very violent and was trying to prove itself by carrying out terrorist operations.

"Jamshid Sharmahd and his associates conducted around 27 acts of terror all of which were thwarted thanks to the perseverance, vigilance and knowledge of Iranian intelligence agents," said the minister.

"Once, when some individuals threatened in a phone call to catch him (Sharmahd), he said in response that his seat was on the sixth floor of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; he meant they were not able to arrest him," said the minister.

Alavi said the person who regarded himself as having a seat at the FBI is now in the hands of Iranian intelligence agents.

U.S. Culpable for Supporting Anti-Iran Terror Groups

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Foreign Ministry spokesperson hailed the Intelligence Ministry for arresting the ringleader of a terrorist group based in the United States, saying the U.S. regime must be held accountable for supporting the acts of terrorism against the people of Iran.

In a statement, Seyed Abbas Mousavi praised the Intelligence Ministry's "decisive" move to arrest the ringleader of the U.S.-based terrorist and sabotage group.

"The U.S. regime considers itself to be standing by the Iranian people while it harbors and supports in different ways notorious terrorists and those have claimed responsibility for several terrorist operations inside Iran and who have the blood of innocent Iranian people and citizens on their hands," he said, according to the Foreign Ministry's website.

Mousavi also expressed the Islamic Republic's strong protest at the U.S. government, and said, "The regime must be held accountable for supporting this terrorist group and other outfits as well as criminals that lead sabotage, armed and terrorist operations from within the United States against the Iranian people and shed the blood of Iranian citizens."

Tehran, Baghdad Stress Closer Cooperation To Establish Regional Stability

TEHRAN (IFP) - The Iranian president has urged closer cooperation between Tehran and Baghdad to further enhance mutual relations as well as to ensure regional security.

In a phone conversation with Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi on Saturday, President Hassan Rouhani said the two sides are determined to forge closer ties.

"With the willpower of senior officials in Tehran and Baghdad as well as serious and firm efforts they are making, the two sides will be able to tackle all problems and difficulties in the way of boosting mutual ties," said President Rouhani.

The president congratulated the Iraqi premier on the occasion of the Muslim feast of Eid Al Adha, and described the Iraqi official's trip to Tehran as constructive.

"This visit and the agreements reached during that trip will set in motion positive and progressive developments in relations between the two countries," Rouhani said.

The president noted the commencement of operations to lay a railway linking Iran and Iraq will be promising for both nations and give fresh impetus to the promotion of mutual relations.

He said Iran welcomes Iraq's pivotal role in the current sensitive situation in the region.

"Iran would like to see full stability return to the region, and, to that end, remains committed to all its obligations," the president added.

"Of course unfortunately, the U.S. is sending a wrong signal by seeking to hatch fresh plots against Iran and by harassing the Iranian airliner," he noted.

The Iraqi prime minister, in turn, said the two sides can upgrade their constructive engagement in light of serious and cordial cooperation between the two countries.

He said he set up committees after returning from his visit to Iran to follow up on the implementation of the agreements reached between the two sides.

The premier underlined his country would like to remove all obstacles to the enhancement of ties with Iran.

He added Baghdad would like to see tensions ease and stability rise in the region, calling for Iran's positive role in that regard.

Tehran, Baku Review Ways to Develop Economic Ties

BAKU (IRNA) - Head of Iranian President's Office Mahmoud Vaez in a phone call with Azeri Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev reviewed ways to develop economic, commercial and transport cooperation.

Both sides discussed issues regarding the outbreak of coronavirus and stressed the importance of joint efforts for fighting COVID19 and the need for sharing experience by related bodies of Iran and Azerbaijan.

In reference to the need to remove the lockdown enforced in the aftermath of corona virus pandemic, they made it clear that there is no obstacle for economic cooperation observing health protocols.

Despite the outbreak of coronavirus, relations between two countries in commercial and transportation fields have experienced growth.

Iran-Azerbaijan common border has reopened after lifting the lockdown in the aftermath of the outbreak prompting cross-border movement of more trucks and lorries.

Vaezi and Mustafayev also discussed finalizing North-South international corridor.

They underlined the strategic importance of the North-South transport corridor.

Iranian and Azeri officials called for enhanced cooperation in economic, industrial and transit fields.

FM Congratulates Croatian Counterpart on Reappointment

TEHRAN (IFP) - Iran's foreign minister has congratulated his Croatian counterpart Gordan Grlic Radman on his re-appointment as the Croatian foreign and European affairs minister.

In a message, Mohammad Javad Zarif also expressed congratulations on the recent parliamentary elections in Croatia which were held successfully.

"Thanks to the very good relations between the two countries and numerous potentialities which exist, I hope we will witness ever-growing development of mutual relations on all political, economic and cultural ties," read part of the message.

"I wish Your Excellency health and success, and wish Croatian people prosperity," Zarif added.

Advisor Condemns Saudis' Destabilizing Acts in Region

TEHRAN (MNA) – An advisor to Iran's Parliament Speaker noted that Saudi Arabia has continued its destabilizing measures across the region even during the Eid al Adha.

"During #EidAlAdha, the Saudi rulers, relying on U.S. terrorist leaders, continue to bomb women & children in #Yemen, back death penalty for youths in #Bahrain, feed terrorists in the region, aid and abet US in sanctioning people in #Syria & #Lebanon, AND make friendship w/Tel Aviv," Iranian Parliament

Speaker's Special Adviser for International Affairs Hossein Amir-Abdollahian tweeted on Sunday.

With the help of its allies and arms supplied by Western countries, Saudi Arabia has been waging a bloody war in Yemen since March 2015 with the aim of returning former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi back to power. The war has claimed over 100,000 lives so far while also destroying Yemen's infrastructure, including a large number of hospitals and clinics.

Austrian Envoy Praises Beauty of Southwestern Iran

SHAHR-E KORD (IRNA) - Austria's Ambassador to Tehran Stefan Scholz says that untouched and unique nature of southwestern Iranian province of Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari is tourist resort with great capacity for attracting foreign tourists.



Scholz made the remarks during his visit to tourist resort of the province on Saturday evening.

At his visit, the ambassador said efforts made by the provincial officials for sustainable development are visible.

He further predicted a proper prospect for agricultural production and environment protection in the province.

Austrian ambassador is planned to take a two-day visit to Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari Province.

In the meantime, he is scheduled to meet with governor and mayor of the province.

ICJ to Hold Public Hearings on Iran Legal Case Against U.S.

TEHRAN (MNA) – The International Court of Justice will hold public hearings regarding Iran's legal case against U.S. violation of the 1955 Treaty of Amity from Sep. 14 to 21.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, will hold public hearings in the case concerning US violations of the 1955 Treaty of Amity, Economic Relations, and Consular Rights (the Islamic Republic of Iran v. the United States of America) from Monday 14 to Monday 21 September 2020, at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the seat of the Court.

The hearings will be devoted to the preliminary objections raised by the United States of America.

In view of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the hearings will take place by video link. Some members of the Court will attend the oral proceedings in person in the Great Hall of Justice, while others will participate remotely by video link.

Representatives of the Parties to the case will address the Court by video link. Members of the diplomatic corps, the media, and the public will be able to follow the hearings through a live webcast on the Court's website, as well as on UN Web TV.

Additional Protocol Being Cancelled, If Arms Embargo Extended

MASHHAD (IP) - The Deputy-Speaker of Iran's Parliament said in case the UN Security Council extends arms embargo on Iran, it discards the Additional Protocol, and the cooperation with International Atomic Energy Agency will be disturbed.

Amirhossein Qazizadeh Hashemi noted that the U.S. seeks to revive the restrictions on Iran's armed activities which will be ended under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Qazizadeh Hashemi added that if the UNSC and the member states, particularly the Europeans, are enticed by the U.S., Iran's Parliament will not allow the former considerations to happen in cooperation with IAEA.

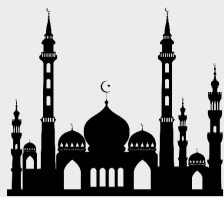
Although numerous restrictions and sanctions have been imposed on Iran under the shadow of the JCPOA, we hope that the UNSC member states do not make strategic mistakes and miscalculation he stressed.

Iran Should Not Negotiate With U.S.

TEHRAN (MNA) – A legislator in the Iranian Parliament said that the Islamic Republic of Iran should not negotiate with the United States since they (U.S.) is not determined to lift sanctions imposed against Tehran.

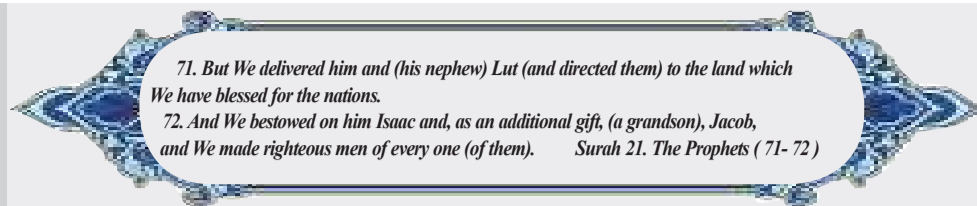
Ali Akbar Karimi pointed to recent remarks of Leader of the Islamic Revolution, saying that taking vital capabilities of Iranian people is the main and vital goal of Americans' claim to talk with Iran and added, "resolving problems between Iran and US is not the goal of U.S. government, rather, they (U.S.) seek to impose a humiliating condition on the Iranian nation."

By claiming to talk with Iran, Americans want to say that "we could bring back Iran to the negotiating table and the Islamic Republic of Iran retreated from its position so that their request for negotiating with Iran has no other meaning," Karimi highlighted.



PRAYER TIME

- Noon (Zohr) 13:10
- Evening (Maghreb) 20:26
- Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr) 04:39
- Tomorrow's Sunrise 06:15



71. But We delivered him and (his nephew) Lut (and directed them) to the land which We have blessed for the nations.
72. And We bestowed on him Isaac and, as an additional gift, (a grandson), Jacob, and We made righteous men of every one (of them). Surah 21. The Prophets (71- 72)

Electricity Production To Increase by 20,000 Megawatts

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian during a TV program said that by the end of this government next year, the power production capacity will increase by 20,000 megawatts and it will added to the network.

Ardakanian said despite a decline in the ministry's budget from the oil revenues comparing to the preceding years, the ministry will increase the production capacity by 20,000 megawatts by the end of next year.

He added that the ministry has tried to minimize the power outage, reiterating that all depends on the public cooperation and their management of electricity consumption.

He added that every year the number of electricity outage decreases in the country and it has almost been zeroed because of power shortage. He added that this year the number of big industries being supplied with electricity has soared and it means the number of production lines has increased.

Ardakanian added that every year some one million subscribers are added to the list of electricity users in the country who should be supplied with power. He reiterated that the country is determined to activate all of its capacities for surge in production and this needs more energy, reiterating that the ministry's main goal is to enhance electricity production in order to export the surplus production to earn forex needed for the industry.



He reiterated that some power outages in the country have not happened because of power shortage or its export to the neighboring states, and it has just been because of technical problems.

Ardakanian noted that Iran has no problem in electricity knowhow and it can rely on itself in managing its power industry and it can even present its achievements in this industry to the world.

But he admitted that if there is any problem in this industry it is not technical and it is just financial and it should be dealt fairly and seriously.

He also reiterated that subsidies in this sector should not lead to overconsumption of electricity by the public.

Ardakanian noted that despite decline in oil revenues and fall in the ministry's budget, the electricity production capacity has been boosted and 20,000 megawatts of electricity will be added to the current amount by the end of the current government next year.

He said 18 dams have been inaugurated or will be inaugurated this year which will boost the power production.

Iran Exports Fall by 40%

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran's foreign trade value hit \$19.635 billion in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (from March 21 to July 22).

Spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Seyed Rouhollah Latifi made the remarks and put the volume of Iran's foreign trade in this period at more than 42 million tons.

He also put the proven non-oil export volume, without inclusion of crude oil, fuel oil and kerosene as well as without export from luggage trade, at over 30,285,000 tons, valued at \$8.713 billion, showing about 40 percent decline as compared to the last year's corresponding period.

In this period, 11,793,000 tons of products, valued at \$10.922 billion, were imported into the country, registering over 24 percent decrease as compared to the same period of last year, he added.

Islamic Republic of Iran exported more than 30 million tons of non-oil goods, valued at \$8.713 billion, in the first four months of the current year, Latifi highlighted.

Iran's main export target markets in this period included as follows, China with importing 8,469,000 tons of Iranian products, valued at \$2.474 billion, followed by Iraq with importing 6,446,000 tons of products, valued at \$1.965 billion, United Arab Emirates with importing 4,625,000 tons of products, valued at \$4.216 billion, Afghanistan with importing 2,115,000 tons of products, valued at \$713 million, IRICA spox added.

Over 70 Knowledge-Based Firms Cooperating With Defense Industry

TEHRAN (FNA) - Vice-President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari said that more than 70 knowledge-based companies in Iran are providing services to the defense industry, stressing determination to develop such firms.

"We have numerous areas for cooperation with the Army and the defense industries. We have over 70 knowledge-based firms which provide the defense field with products," Sattari said.

He added that Iran plans to develop these knowledge-based companies and increase their number. Sattari said that several parts of Iran's first home-made fighter jet, Kowsar, were also manufactured by the knowledge-based companies, adding that the aircraft will certainly further develop with new technologies.

Iran last September unveiled Kowsar which is equipped with avionics (aviation electronics) and fire-control systems.

Kowsar was unveiled in a ceremony participated by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in Tehran who ordered the fighter jet to fly.

The new fighter jet uses the fourth generation of military digital network and is equipped with heads-up display (HUD) system to increase the precision-striking power of weapons, advanced and multi-purpose radar for fire-control to boost the precision to trace the targets and threats and high-precision navigation system.

Iran Eyes Increasing Mineral Exports Via Oman

TEHRAN – The MoU between Iran Mine House and Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce will pave the ground for Iranian activists in mine sector in Oman to enhance their mineral products via this Arab country.

According to reports, Head of the Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce Mohsen Zarrabi and Head of Iran Mine House Mr. Mohammad Reza Bahramen signed the MoU to facilitate joint investments and form specialized mine committees for boosting cooperation in the mine sector.

During the ceremony for signing the deal, Mr. Zarrabi pointed to the ninth five-year plan of Oman government which is based on five axes of mine, industry, tourism, fishery, transportation and logistics.

He said mining sector is the important axe in the five-year plan, adding that the chamber by signing the MoU is to inform and disseminate information to Iran Mine House on projects, tenders and any activities regarding the mine sector in Oman. He noted that the chamber is to offer consultation and create infrastructures and provide facilities for Iranian economic activists in the mining sector who are active in Oman.

Meanwhile Bahramen, for his part, pointed to the importance of Oman and its bright economic future, adding that the chamber and the house complete

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK



activities of each other and following the signed MoU, specialized reports will be available for the house member by the chamber.

He said information and data provided by the chamber is for attracting foreign investment, introducing Iranian active companies in mineral industries sector, exporting minerals and also offering technical and engineering services to Oman. Bahramen noted that cooperation for investment, exploration and exploitation as well as creating value added chain between both countries have been put on the agenda.

He said all decisions made in the MoU will be carried out in presence of representatives of both parties in the form of a strategic team.

Bahramen also expressed his satisfaction over the house's first MoU with a joint chamber, noting that this move will definitely be a beginning for activities with other joint chambers.

He added that Iran Mine House currently has active representatives in 31 provinces, adding that due to legal issues, the house has established an international law institute whose presence in Oman beside the activists in the mining sector is inevitable.

WHO Envoys To Visit Western Iranian Province

HAMEDAN (IRNA) - Two teams from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank were to arrive in this western Iranian province late yesterday.

Manouchehr Karami, a health official in Hamedan, told IRNA that WHO officials' visit to Hamedan and some other provinces will take place in line with International Conference on Education Research and Policy (ICERP) which manages the response to COVID-19.

Representatives of WHO and the World Bank are planned to visit some medical centers and hospitals in Hamedan for three days to review their situation in order to provide them with modern equipment [to fight the coronavirus pandemic].

The deadly coronavirus radiating from Wuhan, China, in December 2019 has affected near 18,040,000 people across the world and killed over 689,000 people; while in Iran the number of the dead is near 17,200.



IME Posts Trade of Over 2.6m Tons of Commodities in July

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - At the end of July 2020, different trading floors of the Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) witnessed trading of more than 2,608,406 tons of commodities worth over \$4,669m



According to the report by the IME's International Affairs and PR, during July, the oil and petrochemical trading floor of the IME played host to trading of 1,729,295 MT of commodities worth more than \$2,346m

On this trading floor, more than 434,379 MT of bitumen, 292,014 MT of polymer products and 189,902 MT of chemical products, 590,000 MT of VB feed stock, 134,500 MT of lube cut oil, 72,095 MT of sulfur, 4,585 MT of insulation, 3,000 MT of slaps waxes, 100 MT of argon as well as 8,720 MT of oil were traded by customers.

The metal and mineral trading floor witnessed trading over 873,768 MT of commodities worth more than \$2,310m

On this trading floor 738,319 MT of steel, 24,565 MT of copper, 530 MT of molybdenum concentrates, 54 MT of precious metals concentrates, 94,300 MT of zinc, 200 MT of lead ingot, 16,000 MT of aluminum as well as 30 kg of gold bullion were traded by customers.

Furthermore, in agricultural trading floor of the IME more than 1,250 kg of saffron was traded by the customers.

The side market of the IME experienced trading of 300 MT of PDA TAR, a total of 9,950 empty barrels, 4,260 MT of tomato paste, 53 MT of used locomotive engine oil, 606 MT of metal scrape as well as 500 MT of Ferrosilicon.

Iran Non-Oil Exports Via SP Customs Increase

TEHRAN (MNA) - According to the Department General of South Pars Customs, 6,036,447 tons of non-oil goods, valued at \$1,467,652,224, were exported via this customs office in first four months of the current year (from March 21 to July 22).

Head of Department General of Pars Energy Special Economic Zone's Customs Amir Abbas Hamidi made the remarks in an interview with Fars News Agency and added, "over 6,043,568 tons of products [including methanol, propane, butane, light- and heavy polyethylene, gas condensates, ammonia, sulfur, styrene and crude oil] were exported from the country in the same period."

He put the value of no-oil products exported via customs office at over \$1,471,434,513, adding, "these non-oil products were exported to the countries including China, South Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Turkey, Italy, Germany, Turkey, Egypt and Kuwait."

Some 6,465 tons of goods, valued at \$121,095,965, were transited from the country from March 21 to July 22, showing a 22 percent hike as compared to the same period of last year, he added.

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

PERMIT NO : 1399.2297

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY - AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO: 01-31-9250077

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

ITEMS	MATERIAL DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
01	PARTS FOR "DEMG DELAVAL" CENTRIFUGAL GAS COMP. TYPE 05MV4	NO:2

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tender are requested to send their "INTENTION TO PARTICIPATE" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to qualitative assessment Form no.1, available at www.nisoc.ir not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for Participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 2,721 EURO or 577,500,000 RIAL in favor of NISOC.

Tender documents including the materials through technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN
PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg, No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex, kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel / NO.: +98-61-34123589 Fax No.: +98-61-34457437

Public Relations: WWW.SHANA.IR | WWW.NISOC.IR | <http://IETS.MPORG.IR>

S. Korean Sect Leader Arrested

SEOUL (AFP) - The elderly leader of a secretive South Korean sect at the center of the country's early coronavirus outbreak was arrested on Saturday for allegedly hindering the government's effort to contain the epidemic.



Lee Man-hee, 88, is the head of the Shincheonji Church of Jesus, which is often condemned as a cult.

People linked to the church accounted for more than half of the South's 4,000-plus coronavirus cases in February when the country was enduring one of the worst early outbreaks in the world.

Berlin Protest Over Virus Restrictions Draws Thousands



BERLIN (AFP) - A Berlin protest against coronavirus restrictions drew thousands, from the hard left and right to conspiracy theorists on Saturday.

Police put turnout at 15,000 -- well below the 500,000 organizers had announced as they urged a "day of freedom" from months of virus curbs.

"We are the second wave," shouted some as marchers headed for the Brandenburg Gate while others called for "resistance", dubbing the pandemic "the biggest conspiracy theory".

Few protesters wore a mask or respected the 1.5-metre (five-foot) social distancing requirement, an AFP journalist reported, despite police calling on them via megaphone to do so.

Berlin police revealed on Twitter they had launched a legal action against organisers over "non-respect of hygiene rules".

A handful of people held a counter demonstration. Dubbing themselves "grandmothers against the extreme right", they shouted insults against "Nazi" protesters.

The "Day of Freedom" slogan for the protest echoes the title of a 1935 documentary by Nazi-era film producer Leni Riefenstahl on a party conference by Hitler's National Socialist German Workers' Party.

Several politicians spoke out against the demonstration as Germany seeks to minimise transmission of COVID-19, with the virus having claimed just over 9,000 deaths to Saturday -- a far lower toll than its neighbours.

Saskia Esken of the Social Democrats, a junior coalition partner in Angela Merkel's government, blasted the demonstrators as "Covidiot".

In a tweet Esken railed: "No distancing, no mask. They are not only putting at risk our health but also our success against the pandemic as well as economic recovery, education and society. Irresponsible!"

Jan Redmann, regional head of Merkel's Christian Democrats in the eastern state of Brandenburg, also took aim at the marchers.

"A thousand new infections a day still and in Berlin there are protests against anti-virus measures? We can no longer allow ourselves these dangerous absurdities," Redmann complained.

Despite Germany's comparatively low toll, authorities are concerned at a rise in infections over recent weeks.

Saturday saw 955 new infections -- a level which the country had not seen since May 9, according to the Robert Koch health institute.

Russia Aims Mass COVID-19 Vaccination From October

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russia is preparing to start a mass vaccination campaign against the novel coronavirus from October, the country's health minister said on Saturday.

The vaccination will be free of charge, and doctors and teachers would be the first to be vaccinated, Mikhail Murashko told reporters. People will be immunized with the first Russian vaccine developed by the Gamaleya National Research Centre, which is currently in process of getting the state registration, Murashko said. However, clinical trials of the vaccine will continue along with its production and use in order to improve it as more details emerge.



Russia and Belarus at Odds Over Arrest Of Suspected Mercenaries

MOSCOW (Reuters) - A dispute between Moscow and Minsk over the detention of more than 30 men who Belarus accused of being Russian mercenaries deepened on Saturday, as the two sides contradicted each other about the group's plans.

The arrests this week, shortly before an Aug. 9 presidential election in Belarus, could further strain relations between Minsk and its traditional ally Russia, which soured after the neighbours failed to agree on an oil supply contract for this year.

Russia said on Thursday that the men, who it described as employees of a private security firm, had stayed in Belarus after missing their connecting flight to Istanbul. President Alexander Lukashenko cast doubt on this version on Saturday. "There was no Istanbul... It's clear that the group has had another goals. It is the task of the investigation to find out about those goals", he said, according to state news agency Belta, after hearing reports from the heads of state security and investigation committee.

He said there had been no agreement with Russia for the men to be in the country, while adding that Belarus is open to cooperate with Russia on the issue. Belarusian authorities said earlier this week that the men were arrested after Minsk received information that more than 200 fighters had entered the country to destabilise it.

On Friday, Alexander Agafonov, the head of the Belarusian investigative group that is handling the case, said that the men - some of whom were wearing army fatigues - had no plans to fly further to Istanbul and said they had given "contradictory accounts" about the purpose of their stay in Belarus.

He was quoted as saying that 11 of the arrested men had told authorities they planned to fly on to Venezuela, 15 - to Turkey, two - to Cuba and one to Syria. Another said he did not know his destination, while three refused to make a statement.

Furgal, held in Moscow's notorious Lefortovo prison, has been fired, and President Vladimir Putin has replaced him with a new young governor with no ties to the region in a move that has not gone down well in Khabarovsk.

The protest movement against the government is the largest outside of Moscow in several years.

The rally on Saturday was visibly smaller than the previous weekend, which was the largest over 22 days of near daily protests.

Journalists estimated turnout at around 30,000 people while the Khabarovsk city hall put the number at just 3,500, claiming there was "falling interest".

Last week, the Kremlin said the protests were fuelled by opposition activists from outside the region. Despite a downpour, spirits were high among the marchers on Saturday, who clapped, waved signs and Russian flags and chanted "20 years -- no trust" in reference to the time Vladimir Putin has spent in power.

Locals see the move as politically motivated and question why he is being tried in the far-away capital. "To grab the governor like that, like the worst bandit... that's spitting into the faces of the citizens who elected him," 40-year-old Stanislav Nasonov told AFP at the rally.

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Israel's Attacks Violate UNSC Resolution

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Lebanon is prepared to defend itself against Israel's attacks, which are in violation of the 2006 UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution, Lebanese President Michel Aoun said on Saturday.

In a televised address, the president said Israel's attacks in southern Lebanon had once again flouted UNSC Resolution 1701, which calls for full cessation of hostilities and Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

Aoun asserted that Lebanon remains willing to abide by the resolution and resolving all disputes under UN supervision.

"We are committed to defend ourselves, our land, our water, and our authority. We will not compromise on this matter," he said.

The president's comments come after Israeli

forces bombed the border town of Kafr Shuba on July 27 because of a "security incident."

On the same day, Lebanon said it would lodge an official complaint with the UNSC.

The Israeli military claimed it had "thwarted an infiltration attempt by Hezbollah" in the Jabal Ros area.

Hezbollah, however, denied the claim, saying: "There was no clash or shooting on our part in the events that took place today on the southern border in Lebanon, but rather it was only one party which was the fearful, anxious, and tense enemy."

It also vowed to respond to the killing of one of its members in "Israeli aggression" in Syria's capital Damascus last week.

Israel has recently increased the number of troops along its northern borders in anticipation of retaliatory attacks by Hezbollah.



Coronavirus Pandemic Will Be With Us for A Long Time

GENEVA (Dispatches) - The World Health Organization on Saturday warned the coronavirus pandemic was likely to be "lengthy" after its emergency committee met to evaluate the crisis six months after sounding the international alarm.

The committee "highlighted the anticipated lengthy duration of this COVID-19 pandemic", the WHO said in a statement, and warned of the risk of "response fatigue" given the socio-economic pressures on countries.

The panel gathered Friday for the fourth time over the coronavirus crisis, half a year on from its January 30 declaration of a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) -- the WHO's highest level of alarm.

"WHO continues to assess the global risk level of COVID-19 to be very high," said its latest statement.

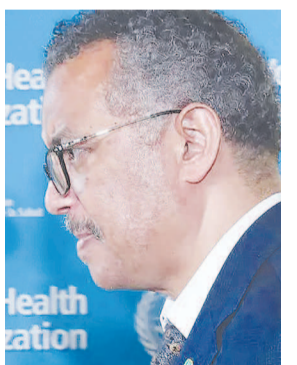
"The committee highlighted the anticipated lengthy duration of this COVID-19 pandemic, noting the importance of sustained community, national, regional, and global response efforts."

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 680,000 people and infected at least 17.6 million since the outbreak emerged in China last December, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP.

Unsurprisingly, the panel, comprising 18 members and 12 advisers, unanimously agreed that the pandemic still constituted a PHEIC. Several countries around the world have imposed strict lockdowns in a bid to control the spread of the respiratory disease, plunging economies into sharp contraction.

The committee urged the WHO to provide nuanced, pragmatic guidance on COVID-19 reactions "to reduce the risk of response fatigue in the context of socio-economic pressures".

The panel urged the WHO to support countries in preparing for the rollout of proven therapeutics and vaccines. The committee also urged the agency to accelerate research into the remaining "critical unknowns" of the virus, such as the animal source and potential animal reservoirs.



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J, balcony
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Shanon (adviser)

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5bdrs, S/p
S, J, balcony
green yard
Fully Furn

Parsian

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Zaferanieh (\$2200) 220sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, & F.F
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Samsung Electronics to Halt Production in China

SEOUL (Reuters) - Samsung Electronics Co will halt operations of its last computer factory in China, the South Korean tech giant said on Saturday, the latest manufacturer to shift production from the world's second-biggest economy.

Companies are rethinking their production and supply chains amid rising Chinese labour costs, a

U.S.-China trade war and the blow from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Around half the 1,700 employees on contract at Samsung Electronics Suzhou Computer will be affected, excluding those involved in research and development, the South China Morning Post reported on Friday, citing a notice to Samsung staff.



TikTok's Chinese Owner Offers to Forego Stake to Clinch U.S. Deal

NEW YORK (Reuters) - China's ByteDance has agreed to divest the U.S. operations of TikTok completely in a bid to save a deal with the White House, after President Donald Trump said on Friday he had decided to ban the popular short-video app, two people familiar with the matter said on Saturday.

U.S. officials have said TikTok under its Chinese parent poses a national risk because of the personal data it handles. ByteDance's concession will test whether Trump's threat to ban TikTok is a negotiating tactic or whether he is intent on cracking down on a social media app that has up to 80 million daily active users in the United States.

Trump told reporters onboard Air Force One late on Friday that he would issue an order for TikTok to be banned in the United States as early as Saturday. "Not the deal that you have been hearing about, that they are going to buy and sell... We are not an M&A (mergers and acquisitions) country," Trump said.

ByteDance was previously seeking to keep a minority stake in the U.S. business of TikTok, which the White House had rejected. Under the new proposed deal, ByteDance would exit completely and Microsoft Corp would take over TikTok in the United States, the sources said.

Some ByteDance investors that are based in the United States may be given the opportunity to take minority stakes in the business, the sources added. About 70% of ByteDance's outside investors come from the United States.

The White House declined to comment on whether Trump would accept ByteDance's concession. ByteDance in Beijing did not respond to a request for comment.

Under ByteDance's new proposal, Microsoft will be in charge of protecting all U.S. user data, the sources said. The plan allows for another U.S. company other than Microsoft to take over TikTok in the United States, the sources added. Microsoft did not respond to a request for comment.

As relations between the United States and China deteriorate over trade, Hong Kong's autonomy, cyber security and the spread of the novel coronavirus, TikTok has emerged as a flashpoint in the dispute between the world's two largest economies.

ByteDance has been considering a range of options for TikTok amid U.S. pressure to relinquish control of the app, which allows users to create short videos with special effects and has become wildly popular with U.S. teenagers.

ByteDance had received a proposal from some of its investors, including Sequoia and General Atlantic, to transfer majority ownership of TikTok to them, Reuters reported on Wednesday. The proposal valued TikTok at about \$50 billion, but some ByteDance executives believe the app is worth more than that.

ByteDance acquired Shanghai-based video app Musical.ly in a \$1 billion deal in 2017 and relaunched it as TikTok the following year. ByteDance did not seek approval for the acquisition from the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), which reviews deals for potential national security risks. Reuters reported last year that CFIUS had opened an investigation into TikTok.

Record Economic Slumps Hit Europe in Face of Resurgent Virus

PARIS (Dispatches) - Nation after nation across Europe on Friday unveiled the extent of historic economic devastation as resurgent coronavirus cases forced agonizing new trade-offs between lives and financial health.

Six months after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global emergency, the novel coronavirus has infected more than 17 million people and wreaked global economic mayhem.

France's economy contracted by a record 13.8 percent in the second quarter, Spain went into recession after its gross domestic product (GDP) slumped 18.5 percent, Portugal's economy contracted by 14.1 percent, and Italy's GDP plunged 12.4 percent.

Europe as a whole was hammered by its sharpest recorded contraction in the second quarter, with GDP down 12.1 percent in the euro zone and 11.9 percent across the bloc.

"It is a shocking drop, but completely understandable as the economy was shut for a considerable period during the quarter," said Bert Colijn, senior economist at ING Bank.

Airline conglomerate IAG, the owner of British Airways, on Friday posted a first-half net loss of €3.8 billion (\$4.5 billion), UK bank NatWest slid into the red, while Dutch airline KLM and truck makers Scania said they were each shedding 5,000 jobs.

Britain on Friday enforced new lockdown rules in Manchester and nearby parts of northern England in an announcement made on the eve of the Muslim Eid-Al-Adha festival.

Under the measures, people from different households in the affected areas are banned from meeting indoors. They apply to some 4 million people across Greater Manchester and parts of the counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire — areas that have a sizeable Muslim population.



U.S. Debt Outlook Is Downgraded

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - The credit rating firm Fitch left the United States' AAA rating untouched, but downgraded its outlook on what is effectively the national credit score, suggesting the country's status as one of the world's most trustworthy borrowers could be put at risk by the enormous deficits the federal government is running to combat the fallout from the pandemic.

"The outlook has been revised to negative to reflect the ongoing deterioration in the U.S. public finances and the absence of a credible fiscal consolidation plan," Fitch analysts wrote on Friday in a report announcing the decision.

Cratering tax revenues and surging expenditures have driven record levels of red ink for the federal government in recent months. The United States' budget deficit hit a record \$864 billion in June as the government continued pumping money into the economy to support workers and businesses slammed by the pandemic. Some analysts expect monthly deficits to soon top \$1 trillion.

Ballooning deficits have led to an explosion of new borrowing. Fitch noted that the Treasury Department borrowed just under \$3 trillion dollars from the end of February to the end of June.

Much of the supply of new government bonds was, essentially, purchased by the Federal Reserve, which has bought \$2.6 trillion in financial assets since the middle of March, Fitch noted. The presence of the Federal Reserve, which can essentially create whatever money it wants and use it to buy assets, such as U.S. government debt, has depressed yields on government bonds even as debts and deficits rise sharply.

U.S. Energy Use Hit 30-Year Low

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - U.S. energy consumption plummeted to its lowest level in more than 30 years this spring as the nation's economy largely shut down because of the coronavirus, federal officials reported Wednesday.

The drop was driven by less demand for coal that is burned for electricity and oil that's refined into gasoline and jet fuel, the U.S. Energy Information Administration said.

The declines were in line with lower energy usage around the globe as the pandemic seized up economies. Those trends are expected to turn around as commercial activity resumes, but an annual decline in U.S. and global greenhouse gas emissions is expected and some energy companies already have fallen into bankruptcy.

Overall U.S. energy consumption dropped 14 percent during April compared to a year earlier, the energy administration said. That's the lowest monthly level since 1989 and the largest decrease ever recorded in data that's been collected since 1973. The largest drop previously seen was in December 2001, after the Sept. 11 attacks shocked the economy and a mild winter further depressed electricity demand.

During this spring's energy consumption downturn, natural gas usage bucked the trend among fossil fuels and increased 15 percent during the April lockdown as residential consumption increased with most of the nation under stay-at-home orders.

Petroleum consumption fell to 14.7 million barrels a day in April, down almost a third compared to the same period in 2019. Demand already has rebounded some after stay-at-home orders expired and large sectors of the economy started moving again.

Led by people returning to their old driving habits, petroleum consumption in June was back up to 17.6 million barrels a day, according to the American Petroleum Institute. But new drilling activity continued to be weak, declining in June for the seventh month in a row to 11 million barrels daily as stockpiles of oil and petroleum products remained near record levels.

"While we are not out of the woods yet, we do appear to be headed in the right direction," said Dean Foreman, the industry group's chief economist.

Coal companies are expected to have a tougher time than petroleum producers recovering from the pandemic, which hit as the coal sector remained on a fairly steady downward spiral since 2007 despite President Donald Trump's attempts to prop it up.

UAE Starts Up First Arab Nuclear Plant

ABU DHABI (AFP) - The oil-rich United Arab Emirates on Saturday announced the startup of its Barakah nuclear power plant, scoring another first for the Arab world.

The announcement, coinciding with the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha, comes hot on the heels of the UAE's launch of the Arab world's first probe to Mars.

"UAE first nuclear reactor at the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant has achieved first criticality and successfully started up," tweeted Hamad Alkaabi, the country's representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"This is a historic milestone for the nation with a vision set to deliver a new form of clean energy for the nation," he tweeted in English, along with a photograph of technicians raising their arms in celebration.

The UAE premier and ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, tweeted that work at Barakah had "succeeded in loading nuclear fuel packages, carrying out comprehensive tests and successfully completing the operation".

"Congratulations on realising this historic achievement in the energy sector & marking this milestone in the roadmap for sustainable development," Sheikh Mohammed said.

The UAE started loading fuel rods into the reactor at Barakah in February, after regulators gave the green light for the first of the plant's four reactors, opening the way for commercial operations.

The plant on the Gulf coast west of Abu Dhabi had been due to go online in late 2017 but faced a number of delays that officials attributed to safety and regulatory requirements.

The Nawah Energy Company said at the time that Unit 1 would begin commercial operations after a "series of tests" leading to the start-up process.

During the process, the unit would be synchronised with the power grid and the first electricity produced.

The UAE has substantial oil and gas reserves, but with a power-hungry population of 10 million it has made huge investments in developing clean alternatives, including solar energy.

The plant is a regional first -- Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, has said it plans to build up to 16 nuclear reactors, but the project has yet to materialise.

Barakah was built by a consortium led by the Korea Electric Power Corporation at a cost of some \$24.4 billion.

When fully operational, its four reactors have the capacity to generate 5,600 megawatts of electricity, around 25 percent of the nation's needs. The remaining three reactors are almost ready for operation.

As well as generating competitively priced electricity, the UAE also hopes the nuclear plant will elevate its status as a key regional player, building on its success as a hub for tourism, banking and services.

British Airways Pilots Back Job Loss Deal



LONDON (AFP) - British Airways pilots have overwhelmingly voted to accept a deal cutting wages by 20 percent with 270 jobs lost, according to aviation union BALPA.

The deal, announced Friday, comes as the airline struggles with the economic impact of the coronavirus which has seen it propose lay-offs of 12,000 staff, more than 1,200 of those pilots.

Salaries will initially be reduced by 20 percent, then by eight percent over two years, after which there will be no more wage cuts, said BALPA.

It also prevents, said the union, an unpopular "fire and rehire" scheme where staff would have been handed new contracts on different conditions and which had led to strike threats.

"Our members have made a pragmatic decision in the circumstances but the fact that we were unable to persuade BA to avoid all compulsory redundancies is bitterly disappointing," said BALPA general secretary Brian Strutton.

British Airways employs 4,300 pilots. The deal was backed by 85 percent of pilots, said BALPA, and the turnout was 87 percent.

Earlier this week, BA criticised the British government for placing quarantine rules on all travellers returning from Spain, claiming it would have an "impact on an already troubled aviation industry".

Minister Urges Nation to Observe Health Protocols in Muharram

TEHRAN (MNA) – Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli has called on the Iranian nation to fully observe anti-coronavirus health protocols during Muharram rituals.

Making the remarks in a meeting on Sunday, the minister referred to the recent call of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei for the nation about preserving the anti-coronavirus health protocols during Muharram rituals, underscoring that all the mourners, mourning gatherings and eulogists must follow what is announced by the National Task Force for Fighting Coronavirus because it is a very important issue.



Chevron Books Worst Loss Since 1989

NEW YORK (Dispatches)- Chevron Corporation reported a net loss of US\$8.3 billion for the second quarter on the back of impairment charges due to lower commodity price outlook and write-off its Venezuela operations due to the U.S. sanctions.

Chevron's US\$8.3-billion net loss for Q2 compares with earnings of US\$4.3 billion for the second quarter of 2019, and was the worst loss for the U.S. supermajor since at least 1989, according to Bloomberg's estimates.

The net loss includes impairments and other net charges of US\$1.8 billion, mostly associated with downward revisions to Chevron's commodity price outlook, which the company made in view of the demand collapse and uncertainties over the economic recovery. Chevron follows the European majors in booking impairment charges after revising down its outlook for oil and gas prices.

"Given the uncertainties associated with economic recovery, and ample oil and gas supplies, we made a downward revision to our commodity price outlook which resulted in asset impairments and other charges," said Michael Wirth, Chevron's chairman of the board and CEO.

Apart from the impairments due to revised price assumptions, Chevron also fully impaired its US\$2.6 billion investment in Venezuela because of uncertainties over the current operating environment and overall outlook. Another US\$780 million charge came from several accruals as Chevron plans to cut 13 percent, or around 6,000 jobs, of its workforce.

Without the impairment charges, Chevron posted an adjusted loss of US\$3.0 billion, or a loss of US\$1.59 per share, for Q2 2020, compared to adjusted earnings of US\$3.4 billion for Q2 2019.



Chevron's adjusted US\$1.59 loss per share for this past quarter was worse than analyst estimates of a loss of US\$0.93 per share of The Wall Street Journal.

The U.S. supermajor also warned that the bad financial results could drag on into this quarter.

"While demand and commodity prices have shown signs of recovery, they are not back to pre-pandemic levels, and financial results may continue to be depressed into the third quarter 2020," the company said.

All supermajors reported dismal results for the second quarter, but some of them, like Shell and Total, managed to avoid adjusted losses thanks to their strong oil trading businesses that cushioned the blow from the low oil prices.

FATF Gives Pakistan Chance to Put Its House in Order



ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Senator Mushahid Hussain has said that although Pakistan is doing it in order to meet the requirements of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), money laundering and terror financing are not in the interest of the country.

"The FATF is a new weapon to pressurize countries to comply and recently the UAE has been warned on the matters of financing, but the fact is that we should clean our house ourselves," he said while addressing a webinar organized by the Centre for Pakistan and Gulf Studies (CPGS).

"They (FATF) will not put us in the black list but keep on mounting pressure on us," he said.

The webinar on "Post Covid-19 Relevance of BRI: Focus on CPEC" focused on the political future of the region in the wake of changing international scenario.

Senator Hussain, who was the keynote speaker, stressed that the issues faced by Pakistan today were the fallout of previous build-up related to Afghan jihad.

"The FATF has given us an opportunity to clean it up," he said, adding that the changing attitude of Pakistan towards Afghanistan's internal affairs was also good for the stable future of the region.

Senator Hussain, who is also chairman of Pakistan-China Institute, lauded the incumbent government for striving to have a lasting peace across Pak-Iran border.

"Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to Iran last year was very important," he said, adding that neither Pakistan's territory should be used against Iran nor Iranian territory should be used against Pakistan.

Senator Hussain said that if Jundallah was in Pakistan, the Baloch Liberation Army was in Iran, "If we play the Iranian Baloch card, they will play the other card. So I think we should not do so as this will only serve the interest of India."

The speakers also discussed growing ties between the US and India and the emergence of Al Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS) militant group in Afghanistan.

Senator Hussain said that in Syria, the IS group had the support of the CIA and Mossad. "It has been documented that the IS militants fighting the Syrian army were getting medical treatment at Israeli hospitals in Golan Heights."

At the same time, he said, the world was changing and the decline of the West was evident, particularly during the Covid-19 crisis.

Dr Munawar Hussain of the Area Study Centre for Africa, North and South America, Quaid-i-Azam University, said that the US saw the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as Chinese expansion and did not like this development since it perceived the CPEC as a threat to the US.

"The CPEC is considered by the Americans as a derailing factor for US hegemony and their liberal global order by disturbing the local capacity," Dr Hussain said.

Apple Removes Thousands of Game Apps From China Store

SHANGHAI (Reuters) - Apple Inc removed 29,800 apps from its Chinese app store on Saturday, including more than 26,000 games, according to data from research firm Qimai.

The takedowns come amid a crackdown on unlicensed games by Chinese authorities. Apple did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Earlier this year Apple gave game publishers an end-of-June deadline to submit a government-issued licence number enabling users to make in-app purchases.

China's Android app stores have long complied with those regulations. It is not clear why Apple is enforcing them strictly this year.

The smartphone maker removed more than 2,500 titles from its app store over the first week of July.



Games affected by the sweep included titles from Zynga and Supercell, research firm SensorTower reported at the time.

The Chinese government has long sought to enforce stricter regulations on its gaming industry to remove sensitive content.

The approval process for games looking to enable in-app purchases is long and complicated, hurting all but the largest game developers, industry insiders say.

"This affects small- and mid-sized developers' incomes the most, but due to the difficulties of acquiring a business licence, it's devastating to the whole iOS game industry in China," said Todd Kuhns, marketing manager for AppInChina, a firm that helps overseas companies distribute their apps.

Indonesians Urged to Come Out of Homes to Boost Economy

JAKARTA (The Straits Times) - The Indonesian government has urged people to "come out of their homes" to boost the economy, warning that there are limits to what state coffers can do amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The economic activity has drastically been reduced, as many do not dare leave home, as they avoid meeting others physically. Meanwhile, virtual activities - in place of the usual physical contacts - have not adequately fuelled the economy," said Budi Sadikin, head of the economic recovery task force in the government's Covid-19 response team.

"If we continue to remain in (partial) lockdowns, our fiscal space would no longer be sustained," he added.

Budi's appeal on Wednesday (July 29) comes as it appears the country could be heading for a recession with a second quarter of negative growth. The forecast is for growth in the April to June quarter to be at least minus 3 per cent.

The government has set aside 695 trillion rupiah (\$66.8 billion), or about 4.2 per cent of the country's gross domestic product, to mitigate the impact of the pandemic which has led to millions of job losses.

Despite struggling to curb the spread of Covid-19, cities and provinces across the sprawling archipelago have gradually eased restrictive measures imposed as part of partial lockdowns. The world's fourth-most populous country, with 270 million people, declared its first infections in early March.

The overall number of infections in Indonesia totalled 104,432 as of Wednesday, with fatalities reaching 4,975. Both figures are the highest in South-East Asia.

Offices in the capital of Jakarta started to reopen in the first week of June, with workers put on a staggered roster and going to the office on alternate days. They have also been told to avoid crowding at meal times and in lifts. Shopping malls were also allowed to reopen in mid-June.

Bali, Indonesia's tourism hot spot, is due to reopen on Friday to domestic tourists and to foreign tourists possibly on Sept 11.

A slew of strict protocols has been put in place, including requiring visitors to show proof that they tested negative for Covid-19 would be required. The planned reopening to foreign tourists is subject to approval from Jakarta.

While stressing the need for strict health safeguards, Budi on Wednesday reassured people about going about their normal business.

"Doctors today know better how to treat patients, so chances of recovery have much improved. They have higher therapeutic standards, health protocol standards and antiviral drugs are widely available," he said.

"A hundred years ago, 100 per cent of dengue patients didn't make it. Today, if we get dengue, we may recover. This is not because of a vaccine, but better therapeutic standards," he added.

Government data shows the recovery rate of Covid-19 patients in the country rising to above 40 per cent in July, from 37 per cent, 22 per cent, 10 per cent and 4 per cent in the previous four months respectively.

Epidemiologist Pandu Riono, who teaches at the faculty of public health at the University of Indonesia, remained sceptical about encouraging people to enter a "new normal", saying that this could only be possible with increased surveillance and strict health protocols - the wearing of a mask, frequent hand washing and social distancing - in place.

"Key to surveillance is massive testing, contact tracing and isolating cases. We need to have 100,000 tests per day to contain the pandemic. If we don't achieve this, we may still see cases climb next year," Dr Pandu told The Straits Times.

Between 20,000 and 30,000 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests are currently taken every day.

History's Trial Awaits...

FROM PAGE 1

Even what did this criminal U.S. commit in Panama? What was the attack at Panama for? How many people did lose their lives in the attack? Afghanistan is nearby. Mourning and wedding ceremonies were bombarded by the U.S. planes and several people were killed but the world remained silent towards the crime.



Media had just gotten momentum and because of fear of the media, the Americans who had attacked a wedding ceremony and killing some 48 civilians, collected hastily the corpses in the mosque and set them on fire in order to hide the crime from the lenses.

The then U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton openly and rudely said the Americans have founded the Daesh group. The group killed and beheaded over hundreds of thousands of young, old, children, men and women in Iraq and Syria and massacred the Kurds and buried them in a mass grave.

The 21st Century began with the crimes of the U.S. in Iraq and American soldiers shed blood, tortured and celebrated and the world just watched it. Some of these very American soldiers had been taken captive by the IRGC. These very American soldiers after raping a 14-year-old girl, Abir, in Baghdad killed all her members of family before the eyes of her mother and father and nobody said anything.

This year is 2020. The French doctor is preparing to test the Coronavirus vaccine on the body of the Africans and God damn the French who are worse than the British, the American and Zionists. And today it is Oregon and Minneapolis turns as the Supreme Leader in his remarks on the occasion of Eid-Al Adha said, "The U.S. management is suffering from confusion and bewilderment. The Americans are trying to find an enemy. That is why they sometimes mention Iran, and at other times, they mention Russia and China. However, at the present time, the U.S. has no enemy bigger than its own nation, and this very enemy will bring that regime to its knees."

The world during the recent three centuries has witnessed being administered by the blood-suckers and it will take no long that these blood-suckers will be put on trial by the world oppressed people and justice will get their own way in the end.

Move on Path...

FROM PAGE 1

"The enemies expected that after the outbreak of the coronavirus and the restrictions caused by the imposition of their inhumane sanctions, the country's economy would experience severe and uncontrollable turmoil and face danger," the president noted.

Rouhani added, "Despite all the restrictions and pressures on the people, what is happening today, despite all the restrictions and pressures on the people, in the field of livelihood, capital and foreign exchange markets, liquidity and providing financial assistance to various businesses, is due to God's grace and the efforts of managers and the help of the people and the performance of economic actors."

Iran Sets...

FROM PAGE 1

The speaker added that there are problems, there are animosities and infiltrators are heavily sabotaging, but let's know that change is imminent.

Majlis speaker went on to say that there is a third current that complements the two currents of sanctions and distortion, and that is inefficiency; a current that takes over management positions but ignores the country's priorities and makes sanctions problematic and leads the country to mental collapse.

Tehran Hopes...

FROM PAGE 1

President Rouhani also stressed the need to boost Tehran-Kabul relations on different fronts and to tap into the existing economic, trade and transit potential.

He also expressed hope a comprehensive Iran-Afghanistan cooperation document will be completed soon.

Ghani, in turn, said the private sectors of the two countries are interacting with each other well, saying Iran-Afghanistan economic ties will hopefully further expand by using the potential of Chabahar port.

He also expressed gratitude to Iran for backing peace efforts in Afghanistan.

Oldham Appoint Australian Kewell as Head Coach

LONDON (Reuters) - Oldham Athletic have named Alex-Leeds United and Liverpool forward Harry Kewell as head coach on a one-year deal with an option to extend, the League Two (fourth-tier) club said on Saturday.

The 41-year-old former Australia forward replaces Dino Maamria after the Tunisian, whose Latics team finished 19th in the standings last season, was sacked on Friday.

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Bernal So Happy To Be Back

PARIS (AFP) - Egan Bernal was all smiles Saturday before he embarked on the Route d'Occitanie stage race as he prepares to defend his Tour de France title in three weeks' time.

The 23-year-old Ineos rider was wearing the number one jersey ahead of his four-time Tour de France winning teammate Chris Froome in the number two jersey.

It is the Colombian's first race since returning to Europe from his native country following the sport's coronavirus shutdown.

Aubameyang Leads Arsenal to FA Cup Triumph

LONDON (AFP) - Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang inspired Arsenal to a record 14th FA Cup win as the Gunners captain struck twice to beat Chelsea 2-1 in the final at an empty Wembley on Saturday.

Christian Pulisic had given Chelsea the dream start, but the Blues unravelled after Aubameyang was brought down by Cesar Azpilicueta inside the area and converted the resulting penalty. A brilliant finish from Aubameyang 23 minutes from time earned Mikel Arteta silverware in his first season as Arsenal boss before Chelsea were controversially reduced to 10 men when Mateo Kovacic was shown an extremely soft second yellow card.

Arteta said ahead of the final he hoped a taste of success would encourage Aubameyang, who only has a year left on his contract at the Emirates, to commit to a new long-term deal.

The Gabon international's double took his tally for the season to 29 and ensured the Gunners will not miss out on European football next season for the first time since 1995/96 as they qualify for the Europa League.

An FA Cup final unlike any other with nearly 90,000 empty seats saw the traditional singing of "Abide With Me" performed on the Wembley roof.

Chelsea had already achieved their primary goal from Frank Lampard's first season in charge by securing a place in next season's Champions League last weekend and early on they seemed set to cap a top-four finish with Lampard's first trophy as a manager. Emiliano Martinez flew to his left to turn Mason Mount's shot behind, but Arsenal did not heed that warning as Chelsea's front three combined perfectly for the opener on five minutes.

Mount's low cross was flicked on by former Arsenal striker Olivier Giroud and Pulisic continued his scoring streak since football's return in June by showing quick feet before prodding the ball home.

Arteta has gained plenty of plaudits for his tactical nous during his first eight months in a managerial role and the Spaniard managed to reorganise the Gunners during the first-half drinks break



to change the momentum of the game.

A minute after play resumed, Nicolas Pepe thought he had curled home a brilliant equaliser from the edge of the box, only to be denied by Ainsley Maitland-Niles being flagged for offside in the build-up.

While Chelsea have already significantly strengthened their forward line for next season with the signings of Timo Werner and Hakim Ziyech, Arsenal are hoping just to hold onto their key man in Aubameyang.

Just like in the semi-final win over Manchester City, he proved to be the match winner as he raced onto Kieran Tierney's hopeful ball over the top and outpaced Azpilicueta before being brought down by the Chelsea captain just inside the area.

Azpilicueta escaped the double punishment of a red card, but VAR confirmed the spot-kick and Aubameyang coolly slotted home.

Chelsea were further hit by two big injury blows either side of half-time as Azpilicueta and Pulisic pulled up with hamstring injuries that will almost certainly rule them out of the Champions League last 16, second leg against Bayern Munich next weekend.

Despite Chelsea's major spending spree in reinforcing their attack, it is at the back where they have been found wanting all season and they were caught out too easily for the winner.

Hector Bellerin burst through the weak challenge of Jorginho before the ball was played into the path of Aubameyang, who skipped past Kurt Zouma and nonchalantly lifted the finish over Willy Caballero.

Worse was to come for Lampard's men when Kovacic was inexplicably sent off for the slightest touch on Granit Xhaka, but Anthony Taylor's decision could not be reviewed by VAR as it was a second bookable offence.

Sharapova Recalls Doping Ban



LONDON (Dispatches) - Maria Sharapova says that her drugs ban in 2016 was the fault of her manager at the time, Max Eisenbud.

The Russian was a five-time Grand Slam champion and perpetual contender for the major titles before receiving the ban for testing positive for Meldomium.

Although she did return to tennis after the ban, she was never the same player again and retired earlier this year with a persistent shoulder injury.

However, it was her high-profile doping shame that has dominated the narrative of her career, and she has laid the blame firmly at the feet of her then-manager.

"When there are more people on a team, each has its own task," Maria Sharapova told Marca.

"I worked with the doctor and I told my manager to check all the banned drugs, it was the end of 2015 and he had personal problems.

"He didn't and we know how it turned out. It was a serious mistake.

"The ITF accused me that I was hiding from taking Meldonium, but in reality I never did that, it was very painful and I felt vulnerable.

"I've always been ready to fight for what I consider my right.

Rangers Get Off To Winning Start At Aberdeen

GLASGOW (AFP) - Rangers got their quest to deny Celtic a record-breaking 10th consecutive Scottish Premiership title off to a winning start as Ryan Kent's cool finish earned a 1-0 victory at Aberdeen for Steven Gerrard's men.

In the first Scottish Premiership game for 147 days after the 2019/20 season was ended early due to the coronavirus pandemic, both sides struggled to adapt to their new surroundings with no fans at Pittodrie for a traditionally intense fixture on and off the field. Rangers controlled the game throughout and one goal was enough for a vital three points with Gerrard under pressure to end Celtic's dominance in his third season in charge. Alfredo Morelos has been linked with a big money move to Lille over the past week, but Rangers insist the French side have not come close to matching their valuation of the Colombian, who played his part in the winner.

Morelos picked out the run of Kent, who timed his run perfectly and slotted past Joe Lewis into the far corner on 21 minutes.

Despite the visitors' dominance of possession, neither side had many chances to add to the scoring.

Aberdeen were without their two first-choice strikers in Sam Cosgrove and Curtis Main and it showed as the Dons failed to register a shot on target.

Player Tests Positive For Coronavirus at WTA Palermo Open

PALERMO (AFP) - A player has tested positive for coronavirus at the WTA Palermo Open, which marks the tennis season's resumption after a five-month break, the WTA and organizers confirmed on Saturday.

The competitor, who had no symptoms, withdrew just minutes before the start of qualifying this weekend for the tournament which gets underway in Sicily on August 3.

Her name was not revealed but shortly after the announcement 130th-ranked Bulgarian Viktoriya Tomova, who had been due to take part in qualifying, withdrew because of illness.



Kyrgios Pulls out of U.S. Open Over Virus Fears

SYDNEY (AFP) - Outspoken Nick Kyrgios pulled out of the U.S. Open Sunday, saying he was giving it a miss for "the hundreds of thousands of Americans who have lost their lives".

His decision follows fellow Australian and world number one Ashleigh Barty last week withdrawing from the Grand Slam in New York, citing "significant risks" from the coronavirus pandemic.

"Dear Tennis, I will not be playing this year at the U.S. Open. It hurts me at my core," Kyrgios said in a video posted on Twitter.

"But I'm sitting out for the people, for my Aussies, for the hundreds of thousands of Americans who have lost their lives, for all of you."

The opinionated Kyrgios, ranked just 40 but a major drawcard, last month blasted the ATP as "selfish" for pressing ahead with plans for the U.S. Open, which is scheduled to start in New York on August 31.

He has since waged a running battle on social media with some of the top names in the game who played at Novak Djokovic's recent ill-fated Adria Tour tennis exhibition, blasting their "stupidity" and risky behavior.

Djokovic, Grigor Dimitrov, Borna Coric and Viktor Troicki all tested positive for COVID-19. The tennis season has been at a standstill since mid-March due to the virus outbreak worldwide.

Juve Crash on Season Finale

MILAN (AFP) - Juventus crashed to their second consecutive defeat since sealing a ninth Serie A title in a row, falling 3-1 at home against Roma in their final match of the season on Saturday, days before their Champions League campaign resumes.

Inter Milan took second place with a 2-0 win over direct rivals Atalanta in Bergamo, finishing the season just one point behind Juventus. Juventus are looking towards their last 16 home game against Lyon next Friday where Maurizio Sarri's side need to overturn a 1-0 first-leg deficit.

Cristiano Ronaldo was rested for the final match with nothing left to play for against fifth-place Roma. Argentine Gonzalo Higuain spearheaded the Juventus attack breaking through after just six minutes in the Allianz Stadium.

But Diego Perotti inspired a Roma fightback setting up Nikola Kalinic to nod in the equaliser after 23 minutes.

A Perotti penalty before the break and a second six minutes into the second half condemned Juventus to their third defeat in four matches. The team later lifted the trophy as they celebrated winning the 'Scudetto' for the 36th time in an empty Allianz Stadium.

"There is still a big gap with Juventus," said Inter coach Antonio Conte whose side won a three-team battle for second place.



Alonso Cleared For Indy 500 After U.S. Visa Hurdle

SILVERSTONE (Reuters) - Two times Formula One world champion Fernando Alonso is clear to compete in this month's Indianapolis 500 after resolving a U.S. visa hurdle, McLaren F1 team boss Zak Brown said on Saturday.

Speaking to reporters at the British Grand Prix, Brown said the Spaniard would travel to America next week. "As you can imagine, with the state of play in America right now it is a bit chaotic, so going through all those government hoops was taking some time but he now has everything he needs," he said.

Alonso told reporters last month he was "having issues even to travel to the United States." The Spaniard, who will return to Formula One with Renault next year after two years out, has made the Indy 500 his top priority for 2020.

Victory at Indianapolis this month would make the Monaco Grand Prix winner and Le Mans 24 Hours champion only the second driver, after the late Briton Graham Hill, to complete the Triple Crown of Motorsport. Alonso led Indianapolis for 27 laps on his 2017 debut before his car's engine expired, and he failed to qualify in 2019.

He will line up for Arrow McLaren SP in a race rescheduled from May 24 to Aug. 23 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

