

Iran's Health Ministry Spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari Said on Monday That Some 215 More Iranians Have Died From Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Over the Past 24 Hours Bringing the Total Deaths to 17,405

IRAN NEWS

Iran's Intelligence Ministry Has Rejected Reports Alleging That The Ringleader of a U.S.-Based Anti-Iran Terrorist Group Was Actually Nabbed in Tajikistan

VOL. XXVI, No. 7011 TEHRAN Price 40,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

TUESDAY AUGUST 4, 2020 - MORDAD 14, 1399

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Leader Urges for Boosting University-Industry Relations

TEHRAN (MNA) – Leader of the Islamic Revolution has pointed to the need to continue the path of increasing cooperation between the academic and industrial sections of the country.

His remarks came on Monday in a short message to the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology in response to a report earlier sent to the Leader by the Ministry. The report points to the performance of the universities and research institutes in the area of boosting ties with industrial sectors during the year 1398 (March 2019 – March 2020).

“The issue of relations between university and industry is very important. What has been done is the initial steps of a major movement. They should keep up the work with power, God willing,” reads Ayatollah Khamenei's message.

Part of the Ministry's report notes that the number of contracts inked between universities and industries has increased from 4723 in the year 1397 to 8002 in 1398 while their value also enhanced by almost 100%.

The report also points to different strategies and approaches adopted by the Ministry to promote the mentioned area.

Iran Sanctions Ex-Aide to U.S. National Security Advisor

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Ministry reiterated on Sunday that Iran would impose sanctions on Richard Goldberg, a member of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies (FDD) and a former aide to former U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton in compliance with the Law on Combating Human Rights Violations and U.S. Adventurous and Terrorist Actions in the Region, passed by the Iranian Parliament in 2017.

In a statement on Sunday, the Iranian foreign ministry underscored that the sanctions are in accordance with articles 4 and 5 of the Law on Combating Human Rights Violations and U.S. Adventurous and Terrorist Actions in the Region, passed by the Iranian Parliament in 2017.

“In order to achieve the goals of the aforementioned law in imposing sanctions on American individuals who are actively involved in economic terrorism against the interests of the government and citizens of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Richard Goldberg, an affiliate to the FDD and former aide to the former U.S. national security advisor, John Bolton, will be placed under sanctions set forth in articles 6 to 8 of the said law,” the statement said.

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Judiciary Chief Blasts West For Harboring Terrorists



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Judiciary Chief Hojjatoleslam Seyed Ebrahim Raisi yesterday hailed the Iranian intelligence forces for arresting the ringleader of a U.S.-based anti-Iran terrorist group and said the West has turned into a safe place for terrorists.

Speaking at the Supreme Council of Judiciary, Hojjatoleslam Raisi hailed the intelligence forces for nabbing the leader of the terrorist group, saying that today a question is raised how those countries, claiming to defend human rights, have become safe havens for the terrorist groups who have killed innocent people in any part of the world and support them.

He said that this has been proved to the world that the U.S. and Europe are the biggest violators of human rights and the U.S. hegemony is the most hated system in the world, and the most amount of hatred towards the U.S. is seen among the nations.

Hojjatoleslam Raisi further said reliance on and retreating against enemy is a strategic mistake and called for drawing up the resistance and self-belief theory from the media, and exposing the nature and performance of the distortion current.

He also pointed to some axes of the Supreme Leader's recent remarks, adding that management of the market and control of the prices of the basic goods are emphasized by the Leader and all economic elites which should be focused by the government and wherever it is needed, the Judiciary is ready to cooperate.

Hojjatoleslam Raisi added that the second issue which has been emphasized by the leader is the management of forex market and urged the intelligence bodies to work on to find the reasons and to confront with the hidden hands which cause disrupt in the country's forex and monetary system, underscoring that the Judiciary is ready to encounter with the disruptors.

He also said the disqualified lawyers and judges are not allowed to return to work, adding that the Judiciary is doing its best to keep the advocacy in the Judiciary system healthy through precise legal supervisions.

Indian Basmati Rice, Tea Exporters to Iran Facing Uncertainty

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - Indian basmati rice exporters said they are not entering into new contract with Iranian importers so as to avoid any payment-related problems. Meanwhile, tea traders said export to Iran may stop within a month if the payment issue is not resolved. This would impact the trade in orthodox teas as Iran is India's biggest buyer in this category.

India exported 1.156 million tonnes of basmati rice in the first quarter of FY20, according to AIREA statistics. Uncertainty looms over export of basmati rice and tea to Iran as the Central Bank of Iran has slowed down allocation of currency against which Iranian traders were buying these commodities from India.

Indian basmati rice exporters said they are not entering into new contract with Iranian importers so as to avoid any payment-related problems. Meanwhile, tea traders said export to Iran may stop within a month if the payment issue is not resolved. This would impact the trade in orthodox teas as Iran is India's biggest buyer in this category.

“Getting payment from Iran has become a major issue. There is no clarity on whether the rupee reserve of UCO Bank and IDBI Bank has come down or not. Exports to Iran in the first quarter have fallen significantly due to the lockdown. The exporters are not doing any new contracts with Iran,” Vinod Kaul, executive director at All India Rice Exporters Association (AIREA), told ET.

India exported 1.156 million tons of basmati rice in the first quarter of FY20, according to AIREA statistics. According to Kaul, in April of FY21, India exported 429,000 tons of basmati rice, of which only 50,966 tons were exported to Iran. “The figures for May and June are yet to be compiled, but according to information from trade, exports in May were more or less similar to that in April. But in June and July there has been drastic reduction in exports to Iran, as the payment issue has upset basmati exporters,” Kaul said. Gautam Miglani, owner of LRNK, a Haryana-based basmati rice exporter, said his firm is receiving payments for consignments to Iran that were shipped before the Covid-19 outbreak. “The payment is very slow and it is coming in small tranches. It is becoming impossible to do trade with Iran. The Indian government should work out a deal with Tehran so that exports can be carried out smoothly,” said Miglani.

Tea exports to Iran have already taken a hit in the first three months of 2020. In the January-March period of the current year, Iran has imported 9.6 million kg of Indian teas, down 45.36% from the year-ago period. In 2019, Iran had imported nearly 54 million kg of orthodox teas from India.

Anish Bhansali, managing partner, Bhansali & Company, and a tea exporter to Iran, said, “Payment is not coming from Iran on a regular basis. If this trend continues, then exports will come to halt within a fortnight or by the end of this month.” Mohit Agarwal, director, Asian Tea, said, “Till Friday, no payment was coming. But on Saturday some payment came from Iran for the teas shipped in May. But payments are being delayed. We are hoping that things will improve shortly so that orthodox tea exports pick up to Iran and prices revive.”

3 Petchem Projects to Be Launched by Weekend

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Oil Minister said the country would launch Kaveh Methanol, Pars Kimia Middle East and Lorestan Catalyst projects on Thursday (August 6), saying inauguration of 17 petrochemical projects is planned by the end of this calendar year.

Bijan Zangeneh yesterday on the sidelines of the opening ceremony of gas supply to 77 villages talked to reporters.

In response to a question about the opening of three petrochemical projects on Thursday this week, he said, “Kimia Pars Middle East with a daily production capacity of 5,000 tons of methanol, Kaveh Plant with a daily production capacity of 7,000 tons of methanol and Lorestan Catalyst Plant will be inaugurated this week.”

The volume of Lorestan catalysts is not high, but this plant is strategically important because if there is no catalyst, the operation of many processes will not take place, he explained.

The Iranian Oil Minister further said that 17 petrochemical projects were planned to come online by March 2021 which would add 25 million tons to the country's petrochemical production capacity.

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Iraqi Company Accused of Involvement in Assassination Of Martyr Soleimani

TEHRAN (IP) - The Special Investigation Committee for the Assassination of Second-in-Command of the Iraqi Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis and Commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Lieutenant-General Qasem Soleimani have filed charges against an Iraqi telecommunications company for involvement in the incident.

According to an informed source, the committee had received documents from some PMU leaders which showed a mobile phone company had allegedly provided the U.S. Army Command at Victoria Base at Iraq Airport with mobile phone information of one of the Al-Muhandis's associates.

The source who talked to Shafaq News added, “The U.S. Army Command has obtained enough information about the location of the Al-Muhandis and his meeting with Lt. Gen. Soleimani through this phone line, and this has contributed to the assassination process.”

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Iran's Nuclear Capacity Absolutely Legitimate

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russia's permanent representative to international organizations in Vienna says Iran's nuclear capacity is “absolutely legitimate” as it fits within the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

“These opportunities and capabilities are absolutely legitimate as long as they are used for peaceful purposes,” Mikhail Ulyanov tweeted on Sunday.

“The duty of IAEA (the International Atomic Energy Agency) is to certify non-diversion of nuclear materials,” he added. He was apparently referring to the United Nations nuclear agency's repeated verification of non-diversion of Iran's nuclear energy program.

The envoy made the assertions in response to a tweet by Mark Dubowitz, the CEO of the so-called Foundation for Defense of Democracies' policy institute that has been identified as part of the Israeli lobby in the United States, and works hard to promote Washington's policies against certain countries, including Russia and Iran.

In that tweet, Dubowitz had criticized what he called the “atomic capability” given to Iran under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a 2015 nuclear agreement between the Islamic Republic and world countries.

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Agro Share in Iran's GDP Reaches 8.8%

TEHRAN (MNA) - The share of the agriculture sector in Iran's non-oil gross domestic product (GDP) reached 8.8 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), IRIB reported, quoting an official with the Agriculture Ministry.

"Over the years, the agricultural sector has been the only economic sector that has always registered positive growth, so that we see the growth of this sector reaching 8.8 percent in

[the Iranian calendar year] 1398 from three percent in 1392 (March 2013-March 2014)," Shahrokh Shajari said.

"We must be able to increase the economic growth of this sector even more by using modern science and new technologies and methods, both in the technical aspects and in the commercial sector", the acting head of Agriculture Ministry's Economic Affairs Department stressed.

Unity Between Army, IRGC Foil Enemies' Conspiracies

TEHRAN (MNA) – Deputy Coordinator of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said that there is a unity and amicable tie between Iran's Army and Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps in thwarting enemies' plots.

Speaking in a meeting with the commanders of Iran's Army and IRGC on Monday, he reiterated that the unity and amicable ties between commanders of Army and IRGC are 'integral and inseparable'.

Experience has shown that whenever there has been unity and amity in the country, Iran has been successful in all areas, whether in the field of Sacred Defense or confronting and resisting against Global Arrogance, Sayyari added.

The enemy is seeking to tarnish the solidarity between Armed Forces especially powerful Army and IRGC and tries to damage amicable ties existing between Army and IRGC forces, he highlighted.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Sayyari emphasized the need for setting up joint meetings between Army and IRGC for better organizing the 4th Anniversary of the Sacred



Defense and reiterated, "Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to establish necessary cooperation and collaboration with IRGC for better organization of this ceremony in the best form possible."

This meeting was held at the venue of IRGC Headquarters between commanders of Army and IRGC for coordinating the programs ahead of 40th anniversary of Sacred Defense.

Iran Exports 2nd Non-Oil Cargo to Oman via Sirik Port

TEHRAN (MNA) – Governor of Sirik said on Monday that the second shipment of Iran's non-oil goods was exported via Sirik Port Complex to the Sultanate of Oman.

This is for the second time in the current year (started March 21, 2020) that non-oil cargo is exported from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Oman via Sirik Port.

Ahmad Jamaledini pointed out that the second cargo with a capacity of 22 tons at large, including fresh fruits and vegetables, dried nuts and mineral water, was dispatched to the Omani Port of Khasab.

The first cargo with a capacity of 120 tons, including mineral water and nuts, was dispatched to Oman on June 2, 2020, he added.

Multipurpose jetty of Sirik Port is decided to be turned into a trade and commercial port in very near future, Jameledini highlighted.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he pointed to the salient specifications of jetty of Sirik port for export of non-oil goods and added, "Since Sirik Port nears ports of neighboring countries of the Persian Gulf especially Sultanate of Oman, this port is the best hub for exports."

Neighboring provinces are seeking to use jetties in Sirik Port for exporting their products, he said, adding, "for instance, Kerman governor general has shown high tendency to export agricultural products as well as other non-oil products of this province via jetty of Kouhestak Port to the neighboring countries of the Persian Gulf."

Sirik with a population of 45,000 is a city which is located 60 km east of Minab and 165 km from Bandar Abbas, the capital of Hormuzgan province.

Afghanistan Shuts Its Border to Iranian Trucks

TEHRAN (ILNA) - Spokesman for the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration [IRICA] announced that cross-border trade between Iran-Afghanistan is closed on Iranian trucks.

Seyed Ruhollah Latifi refers to the events on the Milak border terminal with Afghanistan and said that for more than 10 days before Eid al-Adha, traffic at the Milak border was slow but this border is now closed due to some protests.

"A number of Afghan truckers and transport companies disrupted the return route of Iranian trucks in protest of a decision by the Sistan and Baluchestan Provincial Security Council to suspend smuggling trucks for three months," he added.

"Of course, they wanted to change this decision with these measures."

Latifi said that Last week, about 50 Afghan trucks were stopped due to fuel smuggling on Iranian soil, and

the Afghan side wants to pay the fine for fuel smuggling, but the trucks should not be stopped in Iran; adding that "In protest of Afghanistan's behavior, the return route of Afghan trucks was also restricted by Iran."

According to the deputy head of the province's Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization, a total of 80,072 tons of goods were exported from Milak border in the southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province to the neighboring Afghanistan during the first month of the current Iranian year (March 20-April 19).

Iran's exports value of products to neighboring Afghanistan registered a 30 percent hike in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year [from March 21 to May 20, 2020].

With imports worth \$125 million, Afghanistan accounted for 7.5% of Iran's total exports during the first month of the current Iranian year, according to IRICA data.

Iran, UAE Top Diplomats Discuss Regional Cooperation

TEHRAN (IFP) - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has held talks with Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates, on the trend of bilateral collaborations and regional issues of mutual interest.

In the Sunday talks, which were held via a video conference call, the two top diplomats expressed their preparedness to expand Iran-UAE cooperation in various fields in line with the two countries' common interests.

Zarif highlighted the sensitive situation of the region, and underlined the need for dialogue and mutual cooperation.

"Others may take advantage of the current situation in order to destabilize the region, but we as neighbors need to think about regional stability," Zarif said.

The Emirati side, in turn, stressed the necessity of cooperation between Iran and the United Arab Emirates in the region.

He also called for continued consultations between the two countries and turning of challenges into opportunities.

Iranian Elites Abroad Help Developing Coronavirus Vaccine

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Vice-President for Science and Technology, Sorena Sattari said that Iranian elites living abroad are participating in the development of coronavirus vaccine in Iran through a platform created by National Elite Foundation.

Sattari added that a group of Iranian elites living abroad are taking part in a development project of coronavirus vaccine.

As he informed, Iran is working on the production of six

different types of vaccines, one of which is anti-coronavirus.

The Iranian VP added that the Iranian coronavirus vaccine is being tested on animals but not human bodies.

On July 9, the Chancellor of Iran University of Medical Sciences said that the initial laboratory phase of the coronavirus vaccine was performed and its human test and injection will be performed within the next 2 months from the time.

If these steps are successful, the vaccine will be mass-produced.

Eurasian States Representatives To Meet in Aras

TABRIZ (IRNA) - Ambassadors of the Eurasian Economic Union states will convene in Aras Free Zone, Iran, Managing Director of Aras Free Zone Organization Mohsen Nariman said on Monday.

Aras Free Zone is an environment ready for the bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation between Iran and Russia and the countries of the South Caucasus.

Aras Free Zone with an area of 51,000 hectares of land, relying on its fully-prepared investment infrastructure (facilities, including water, electricity, gas, and the development of connecting roads), as one of the Turkish investors said visiting the Zone, is a prepared infrastructure that any country is willing to win a significant share.

Narimani said in a meeting with Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Affairs Gholamreza Ansari that the meeting aims to expand Iran's interaction and economic and trade ties with the countries of Eurasia and the Caucasus region, using the capacity of the Aras Free Zone.

Ansari said for his part that Aras Free Zone, especially Nordooz is regarded as Iran's only gateway to Eurasia.

"Aras Free Zone plays a major role and has a good geographical situation for trade with Eurasia," Ansari said.

Noting that Armenia is the only member of the Eurasian Union that has a land border with Iran, Ansari added: "This is a very important factor that we should use this opportunity and the Armenia-Iran route as a transit road for Iranian goods."

According to Iran's Trade Development Organization, trade between Iran and Eurasia has increased by 14 percent from October 27, 2019, to June 19, 2020, compared to preceding period last year.

Trade increased despite the outbreak of the Coronavirus and the drop in the world trade.

Bosnia Seeking to Expand Relations With Iran

TEHRAN (MNA) – Parliamentary officials of Bosnia and Herzegovina stressed the need to boost relations with the Islamic Republic.

In separate meetings with the Iranian Ambassador to Sarajevo Mahmoud Heidari on Sunday, Parliamentary officials of Bosnia and Herzegovina stressed the need to boost relations with the Islamic Republic.

Heidari noted that in addition to formal ties, Iran's Embassy in Sarajevo has sought to develop relations with scientific, cultural, and media figures in the country.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran supports the independence, territorial integrity, national sovereignty and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina," he added.

The officials of the Bosnian Parliament further appreciated the ambassador's efforts to expand bilateral relations between the two countries in various political, economic, and cultural fields.

Majlis Probes Into U.S. Threat Against Mahan Passenger Plane

TEHRAN (IRNA) – Rapporteur of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission said that the commission on Sunday has probed into the US jet fighter jets' threatening of Iran's passenger plane, praising the moves of Mahan Airlines and its professional flight crew.

It was also decided during the meeting that the Security, Human Rights and Foreign Relations Committees of the Commission would follow up on approaches in the face of the US dangerous action, Abulfazl Amouei said.

Sunday's meeting of the National Security and Foreign Policy Commission attended by officials from the Civil Aviation Organization, Mahan Airlines and Foreign Ministry of Affairs was held this evening with a focus on examining various aspects of the attack of American fighter jets on Iranian passenger planes in Syria airspace, he said.

Members of the National Security Commission protested against the illegal and irrational behavior of the Americans and stressed the need to pursue the issue in international forums, the spokesman said.

Amouei also quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Mohsen Baharvand as saying during the meeting that the perilous act was in violation of international law in several ways, first is the illegal presence of American forces in the Syrian soil and territory, which does not give them the right to intercept aircraft.

Second, flight safety, as a fundamental principle of aviation law, has been violated. Third, the approach of American fighter jets has been quite unprofessional and dangerous, Baharvand said. Baharvand announced that the Foreign Ministry is also following up on the issue through the UN Secretary General.

Austria Interested in Cultural, Economic Ties With Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari Province



SHAHR-E KORD (IRNA) - Austrian Envoy to Tehran Stefan Scholz said that Austria is interested in economic and cultural relations with Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province and holding Austrian cultural events in the province.

Speaking in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari – Austria Business Forum, Scholz said that Austria permanent cultural society in Iran held 130 cultural events across Iran

We are willing to hold one of our cultural programs in Shahrekord, he added.

The Austrian ambassador said that Austria permanent cultural society in Iran has paved the way for reinforcing cultural relations with Iran.

Austria is one of the most successful countries in the field of water resources management in the world, he said, adding that the country is interested in starting cooperation in management of water resources and water treatment in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari.

Referring to the significant capacity of the province in agricultural sector, Scholz said that promoting sustainable agriculture is also the agenda of cooperation between the Austrian and the provincial officials.

We can have cooperation on food processing industries, packaging and on-time transport of fresh food, he reiterated.

He pointed to capacities of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province in tourism field, saying that due to the fact that tourism constitutes 15% of Austria's gross domestic product, Austria can develop cooperation with Iranian province on tourism.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Austrian envoy lauded cooperation between Iranian and Austrian scientists amid COVID19 outbreak and through webinars, saying efforts have been made for taking advantage of smart solutions.

He noted that compared with other countries, Iran-Austria relations are based on 700-year-old amity, 500 years partnership and 160 years diplomatic ties.

Austria contributed to opening faculty of the Middle East studies at Tehran University, Scholz said adding that Austrian engineers played role in construction of Iran's nationwide railway.

Austria was the first country after the Islamic Revolution to recognize Iranian transitional Government, he added.

Austrian president was the first president who visited Iran after signing Iran nuclear deal, he noted.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:10
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:25
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:40
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:16

73. And We made them leaders, guiding (men) by Our Command, and We sent them inspiration to do good deeds, to establish regular prayers, and to practise regular charity; and they constantly served Us (and Us only).

Surah 21. The Prophets (73)

Tehran Municipality Deprived of Gov't's Special Support

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Tehran Mayor says one of the measures that the governments have taken in the urban management during the outbreak of the Coronavirus has been special support of mayors but in Iran, municipalities have been deprived of such supports.

Speaking at an online presser on the occasion of Journalists' Day, Tehran Mayor Pirouz Hanachi felicitated the day to journalists in the country and immediately responded to a question regarding the effect of the Coronavirus pandemic on municipalities' financial resources. He said the Coronavirus issue for Tehran municipality has two meanings: first the rise in the costs and secondly the decline in the revenues. He added that of course this problem is not only confined to the Tehran municipality and all municipalities in Iran and the world are struggling with it.

He admitted some part of municipality's revenues has been fully cut and currently metro and public bus transportation are working with 50 percent of their capacities and with the current rupture in the traffic scheme, the municipality's revenues have fallen sharply in this sector.

Hanachi went on to say that one of the measures taken by governments in urban management regarding the Coronavirus has been special support of their municipalities but unfortunately in Iran, municipalities have been deprived of it.

On resolving the problem, he said the municipality is drawing up a double-impact



bill to submit it to the city council. He noted that the municipality has a new auditing on the agenda because upgrading the auditing system is very important.

Hanachi noted that the municipality has tried to reduce its current expenditures, adding that with submitting the bill, the municipality does its best to reduce expenditures.

On his absence in the government's cabinet meeting, he said according to the law, Tehran Mayor is not a cabinet member and in the past, his presence in the cabinet has been traditional and as a guest, and this tradition had started since the late Ayatollah Hashemi Rafsanjani's government.

He said the government's condition is unusual and critical and one cannot expect too much of it, adding that when the government borrows money from the National Development Fund to tackle with the pandemic, it means one cannot expect too much.

He noted that the government has promised to help the municipality for renovating metro and public bus transportation, reiterating that he will not accept any demanding rhetoric and offensive literature and through talks and constant pursuits, one can get result.

Hanachi said that some credit has been earmarked for renovating the public bus transportation navigation, adding that the credit for renovating 500 busses has been earmarked and it will be soon signed and currently renovation of 500 more busses is in the works.

Sustainable Production and Exports To Make Sanctions Ineffective

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The CEO of Khouzestan Steel Company slammed the U.S. cruel sanctions against Iran, adding that with sustainable production and exports, the country can make the U.S. sanctions ineffective.



Mr. Ali Mohammadi said that cruel and unilateral sanctions against Iran began when the Islamic Republic was established in Iran and announced its independence and its support of the oppressed people against the arrogance like Zionist regime and the U.S. He added that ever, the U.S. has tried different ways and pretexts to take control of Iran like before the victory of the Islamic Revolution and fortunately due to the endeavors and prudence of officials in the establishment, it has not only failed in materializing its goal but also it has made Iran's economy resistant.

Mohammadi added that in recent years, the U.S. sanctions have intensified but Iran's economy is still alive. He noted resistance economy, supporting national production and goods, pick-up in production and its support are all signs of Iran's determination to strengthen its economy against sanctions.

He said in recent years the products of Khouzestan Steel Company have been warmly welcomed due to their quality and customer-oriented policy of the company in the international market. He reiterated that with sustainable production and exports of high-quality products, the country can make the sanctions ineffective.

Mohammadi stated employing the strategy of "making sanctions ineffective" has strengthened the economy of Islamic Iran, and boom in domestic production and expansion of non-oil exports like steel based on the resistance economy pattern will lead to development and helping the public welfare.

He said Khouzestan Steel Company has also been the target of sanctions in recent years but like the previous years, it has put on agenda the issue of keeping the trend of sustainable production and exports of its goods to different parts of the world and by increasing the production, the company will prove the world that Iran has no fear of imposing any sanction.

Mohammadi added that since the beginning of the current year the company has increased its production and it has even set record for daily production of one million tons of steel ingot, reiterating this success had an important message to the world especially the U.S. that the more they increase their sanctions, the more Iranians will get determined to make sanctions ineffective.

Steel Accounts for 45% of Mineral Industries' Export Share

TEHRAN (MNA) – According to an official with the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, steel accounts for 45 percent of the total export share of mining and mineral industries.

Based on the statistical tables of Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA), steel productions' consumption volume in 2016 hit 19,272,000 tons but this volume decreased 23.5 percent last year (ended March 20, 2020).

Khodadad Gharibpour, Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade, said that steel industry can yield \$4 billion worth of foreign currency for the country annually, the rate of which accounts for 40 to 45 percent exports share in mining and mineral industrial sector.

Presently, Islamic Republic of Iran is ranked 10th largest steel producer in the world, he added.

Some 27.2 million tons of steel were produced last year (ended March 20, 2020), he said, adding, "of total 27.2 million tons of steel produced in the country last year, over 10 million tons of which was exported to target markets." It is expected that the country would attain at least 15 percent growth capacity building in steel industry, he added.

Petrochemical Income Rises Up by 80%

TEHRAN (IRNA) - CEO of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC) Behzad Mohammadi said on Monday that the revenue has increased by 80% in the new Iranian year (started March 20).

Some 17 new plans have opened, which has led to 60% increase in output capacities of petrochemical plants, said Behzad Mohammadi on a visit to IRNA, on the verge of Iran's National Reporter's Day, August 7.

Mohammadi made the remarks in a meeting with IRNA chief Mohammad-Reza Noruzpour.

Mohammadi said that petrochemical industry is the biggest industry in Iran and, alongside the steel industry, it the most lucrative industries for the country.

He said that the petrochemical industry is still growing, adding that the revenues will be guaranteed with producing high-quality products, like propylene.

He added that Iran produces 950,000 tons of propylene a year and there is currently a shortage of 200,000 tons.

Only 5% of Iran's petrochemical productions is propylene. It is 17% in Saudi Arabia, 18% in the US, and 16% in the whole world. With implementing projects in Iran, the figure will reach 10% in the next four years, he said.

Tehran-Baku Trade Turnover Down

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The foreign trade operations between Azerbaijan and Iran amounted to \$129.3 million, which is 43.5 percent less compared to the same period in 2019, according to the statistical bulletin of the State Customs Committee (SCC) of Azerbaijan.

The export of Azerbaijani products to Iran amounted to \$13 million in the first five months of 2020, while a year earlier this indicator was \$20.7 million. Thus, import of Azerbaijani products to Iran declined by 37.2 percent year on year, and Iran's share in total

exports of Azerbaijan decreased from 0.24 percent to 0.19 percent, according to the committee.

From January through May 2020, the volume of imports of Iranian products to Azerbaijan dropped by 43.4 percent to \$116.3 million year on year. The share of Iran in the total volume of Azerbaijan's imports also dropped by 1.9 percent to 2.79 percent of the total volume.

In the first five months of 2019, foreign trade relations were marked by a wide margin towards imports (92.8 percent against 7.2 percent respectively), while in the same period of this year the ratio of import to export made up

89.9 percent to 10.1 percent. The share of Azerbaijani products exports to Iran in the total trade between the two countries dropped by 2.9 percent.

The balance of foreign trade between Azerbaijan and Iran for the reporting period was negative and amounted to \$103.2 million.

In total, the foreign trade turnover of Azerbaijan amounted to \$11.1 billion in the reporting period, having shown a 22.9-percent drop over the year. The balance of foreign trade turnover increased by 0.9 percent on an annualized basis and remained positive, having surpassed \$2.8 billion.

Iran Insurance Industry Successful Despite Sanctions

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN Chairman of the Central Insurance of Iran Dr. Gholamreza Soleimani says Iran's insurance industry has performed very successfully despite sanctions and it has now appropriate insurance coverages for all major risks.

The chairman of the Central Insurance Company and the policy-making board of insurance industry of the country met Majlis Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf on Sunday.

During the meeting, Mr. Qalibaf expressed his satisfaction over the performance of insurance industry regarding the economic growth and observing social responsibilities. He added that the cooperation between Majlis's related committees with insurance industry is an undeniable necessity and by launching a workgroup, all ways for growth of insurance industry will be reviewed and it will pursue seriously amending the laws or legislating new ones.

Meanwhile Mr. Soleimani, for his part, said that insurance industry in the nick of times like in the unfair sanctions, Coronavirus crisis, quakes and recent floods have proved itself, and with the support of the legislative body and approving important insurance laws, the current trend will continue with more speed.

He added that establishment of national risk management was an important development for balancing the national economy and by its launch, all activists in businesses, production, services and imports and exports can continue their activities peacefully.

Soleimani further said the authority of insurance industry has been one of the achievements of the sanctions, noting that fortunately, insurance industry has performed very well despite sanctions and it currently has appropriate coverages for all big risks.



SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT



PERMIT NO : 1399.2171

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY - AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 01-31-9250340

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

ITEMS	MATERIAL DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
27	P/F BROOM & WADE AIR COMPRESSOR MODEL V100 SER. NO. E044 1558 & 1559 REF. BROOM & WADE LTD.	1,715

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 3,096 EURO or 593,187,000 RIAL in favor of NISOC.

Tender documents including the materials thorough 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, kouty-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel / NO.: +98-61-34123455 Fax No.: +98-61-34457437

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

Kosovo Prime Minister Has COVID-19

PRISTINA (Reuters) - Kosovo Prime Minister Avdullah Hoti said on Sunday he has contracted COVID-19 and will self-isolate at home for two weeks. "I don't have symptoms expect a very mild cough," Hoti said on his Facebook page.

Hoti's government has faced criticism for not doing enough to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus, with the small Balkan country reporting a sharp increase in cases in the past few days — including 13 deaths on Sunday.

Around 9,000 people have been infected with the new coronavirus and 249 have died since mid-March, when the first cases with the virus were reported in the small Balkan country.



Guyana's Ali Sworn In as President

GEORGETOWN (Reuters) - Former Guyanese housing minister Irfaan Ali was sworn in as president of the newly oil-producing South American country on Sunday, after he was declared winner of a disputed March 2 election following a recount.

Preliminary recount data released in June showed Ali, a member of the opposition People's Progressive Party (PPP), had won the initial poll, and Washington last month called on current President David Granger to resign.

The final result comes months after a consortium led by Exxon Mobil Corp began producing oil off Guyana's coast, turning the impoverished country of fewer than 800,000 people into the world's newest crude hot spot and promising to boost growth in the agriculture- and mining-dependent economy.



Afghan Gov't Urges Taliban To Extend Ceasefire



KABUL (AFP) - The Afghan government on Sunday urged the Taliban to extend a rare ceasefire hours before it was due to end, as a contentious prisoner swap between the two warring sides edged closer to completion.

Officials said there were no reports of fighting between the enemies across much of Afghanistan during the three day truce that marked the Muslim festival of Eid al-Adha.

However, the calm was broken Sunday evening when gunmen stormed a prison in Jalalabad in the east of the country, leaving at least three people dead. The Taliban denied involvement in the assault.

President Ashraf Ghani and the Taliban have both previously indicated that long-delayed peace talks could begin straight after Eid.

"We hope the Taliban will not resume violence," said Sediq Sediqqi, spokesman to Ghani.

"The Afghan government's actions and steps taken in the peace process must be reciprocated by the Taliban."

Under a deal signed by the Taliban and the U.S. in February, the "intra-Afghan" peace talks were slated to start in March, but were delayed amid political infighting in Kabul and as an agreed prisoner swap dragged on.

The deal stipulated that Kabul would free around 5,000 Taliban prisoners in return for 1,000 Afghan security personnel held captive by the Taliban.

The National Security Council said Sunday that a further 300 Taliban prisoners had been released since Friday, taking the total number freed so far to just over 4,900.

The Taliban say they have already fulfilled their commitment.

Authorities however have refused to free hundreds of inmates accused of serious crimes that the group had requested for release, adding that a gathering of Afghan elders would decide their fate.

The rare respite from violence gave some Afghans the opportunity to safely visit relatives for Eid celebrations after long periods apart.

"I managed to visit my village for the first time in two years," said Khalil Ahmad from volatile Uruzgan province, a hotbed for insurgents.

"There were many Taliban check posts on the way, but they did not bother anyone," Shahpoor Shadab, a resident from the eastern city of Jalalabad, told AFP that "Eid feels different, parks are full with people".

"You almost forget that there has been a war in this country for 40 years."

Kabul resident Fawad Babak, a shopkeeper, was sad that it was the last day of the ceasefire.

"I'm a little disheartened... the killing and bloodshed may resume again tomorrow," he said.

In restive Zabul province, several residents recited poems calling for the ceasefire -- only the third official halt in fighting in nearly two decades of conflict -- to be made permanent.

Syria Says U.S. Oil Firm Signed Deal With Kurdish-Led Rebels

BEIRUT (Reuters) - Syria's foreign ministry said on Sunday that an American oil company had signed an agreement with Kurdish-led rebels who control northeastern oilfields in what it described as an illegal deal aimed at "stealing" Syria's crude.

A ministry statement, published on state media, did not name the firm involved in the deal with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), an alliance that seized swathes of north and east Syria from Islamic State with U.S. help.

There was no immediate response from SDF officials to a Reuters' request for comment. There was no immediate comment from U.S. officials on Sunday.

A U.S. senator and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had referred to an oilfields deal between the SDF and a U.S. firm during a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Thursday.



Venezuelan Coalition Rejects Upcoming Vote

CARACAS (AP) — A coalition of political parties in Venezuela led by U.S.-backed Juan Guaidó said Sunday that it won't participate in upcoming congressional elections called by officials loyal to President Nicolás Maduro.

A group of 27 opposition parties rejected the Dec. 6 election as "fraud."

The vote would determine control of the National Assembly led by Guaidó and the only branch of Venezuela's government that Maduro doesn't control.

"We will fight together to choose the fate of our country," Guaidó tweeted Sunday. "Now we must mobilize our majority that desires to live with dignity. Together we're going to beat the regime!"

The coalition has invited Venezuelans to unite behind a fresh push against what they call Maduro's "dictatorship." It has also asked for international help in the campaign against Maduro.

Maduro didn't immediately respond Sunday to the opposition's decision, but he has said that it is important for his allies to win back control of the National Assembly. He has accused opposition leaders who control the congress of being manipulated by the United States.

Venezuela is in a political and economic crisis during which roughly 5 million people have fled the nation in recent years. The once-wealthy oil nation lacks basic goods, including a reliable supply of gasoline and a decent health care system, which is especially fragile as the coronavirus surges.

The opposition coalition rejected the December election, citing unfair conditions orchestrated by Maduro. They said 30 opposition lawmakers have been stripped of immunity guaranteed by law, while dozens more have been driven into exile and five are currently in jail.

The Supreme Court — loyal to Maduro — recently appointed a new elections commission, including three members who have been sanctioned by the U.S. and Canada, without participation of the opposition-led congress, as the law requires.

The court also took over three leading opposition parties, appointing new leaders the opposition accuses of conspiring to support Maduro.

45 Police Injured in Berlin Protests Against Virus Curbs

BERLIN (AFP) - Some 45 police officers were injured in a wave of weekend demonstrations in Berlin including protests against coronavirus restrictions, police said as protesters gathered again in smaller numbers on Sunday.

A total of 133 people were arrested during Saturday's protests, which included a huge "day of freedom" demo against coronavirus restrictions, police said in a statement.

The arrests were for offences including resisting police officers, breach of the peace and the use of unconstitutional symbols.

Three officers required hospital treatment, police said.

Around 20,000 people took part in the "day of freedom" demonstration, the majority not wearing masks or respecting Germany's 1.5-metre (five-foot) social distancing requirement.

The crowd, a mixture of hard left and right, and conspiracy theorists, shouted "We are the second wave" as they converged on the Brandenburg Gate, demanding "resistance" and dubbing the pandemic "the biggest conspiracy theory".

Police began dispersing the crowds in the late afternoon, but hundreds of protesters remained at the Brandenburg Gate late into the evening.

Police have launched legal proceedings against organisers for not respecting virus hygiene rules.

In a separate anti-fascist demonstration in the southern Neukölln district, protesters threw stones at police officers, let off fireworks and damaged two police vehicles and a local party office.

Several officers were injured while dispersing the crowd, including three who were treated in hospital after being hit in the face by shards of glass.

Arrests were also made at smaller unofficial protests.

A total of 1,100 officers were deployed during the day.

A few hundred protesters gathered to the west of the Brandenburg gate on Sunday, according to an AFP reporter at the scene, with the majority wearing masks and observing social distancing guidelines.

Despite Germany's comparatively low toll, authorities are concerned at a rise in infections over recent weeks and politicians took to social media to criticise Saturday's rally as irresponsible.

"Yes, demonstrations should also be possible in times of coronavirus, but not like this," Health Minister Jens Spahn said.

"Distance, hygiene rules and masks serve to protect us all, so we treat each other with respect."



U.S. Election Will Be Nov. 3 as Planned



WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The White House and Donald Trump's campaign on Sunday sought to shut down the Republican president's musings on delaying the 2020 vote, saying there will be an election on Nov. 3.

White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows said Trump was raising concerns about mail-in ballots when he floated the idea of delaying the U.S. vote.

"We're going to hold an election on November 3 and the president is going to win," Meadows said on CBS' "Face the Nation."

Presidential campaign adviser Jason Miller echoed the sentiment on "Fox News Sunday," saying, "The election is going to be on November 3rd and President Trump wants the election to be on November 3rd."

Trump on Thursday suggested delaying the U.S. elections, an idea immediately rejected by both Democrats and his fellow Republicans in Congress - the sole branch of government with the authority to make such a change.

Critics and even Trump's allies dismissed the notion as an unserious attempt to distract from devastating economic news, but some legal experts warned that his repeated attacks could undermine his supporters' faith in the election process.

The Republican president has been trying to undermine confidence in mail-in balloting, claiming repeatedly and without evidence that it would lead to widespread voter fraud.

Meadows took up his boss's cause on Sunday, warning that mail-in ballots must be handled properly without providing evidence that they have not been in the past.

Asked if it were irresponsible for Trump to float the idea, Meadows skirted the question, saying "It is responsible for him to say that if we try to go to 100% universal mail-in ballots, will we have an election result on November 3? Now I would suggest we wouldn't even have it on January 1."

Republican Governor Asa Hutchinson told CNN on Sunday the election should be held on time and it was up to states to ensure balloting be carried out properly.



Farmanieh (\$2500)
250sq.m, 3bdrs
S/p, Sauna
J, balcony
fireplace
Fully Furn

Shanon (adviser)

Navaran Villa (\$5000)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
S, J, balcony
green garden
Fully Furn

Parsian

Apt
Nice view
Gheitarieh
240sq.m, 3bdrs
S/p, S, J, pkg
Large balcony
marble floor
(\$2600)
F.F

Zaferanieh Apt (\$1500)
130sq.m, 2bdrs, S/p, gym, F.F

Jordan Apt (\$1700)
220sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, & F.F

bldg
Farmanieh
Brand new
5storey, 20bdrs
S/pool, S, J, gym
green yard, pkgs
parquet floor
Semi Furn
(\$20000)

(\$1000)
Sa'adat abad
140sq.m, 2bdrs
S/p, S, J, & F.F

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Trump to Act on Chinese Software Companies in Coming Days

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Donald Trump will take action shortly on Chinese software companies that are feeding data directly to the Beijing government, posing a risk to U.S. national security, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Sunday. "President Trump has said 'enough' and we're going to fix it and so he will take action in the coming days with respect to a broad array of national security risks that are presented by software connected to the Chinese Communist Party," Pompeo said on Fox News Channel's "Sunday Morning Futures."



Mexico's Economy Takes 2Q Nose Dive

MEXICO CITY (Dispatches) - Mexico's economic activity plummeted 18.9% in the second quarter compared with the same period last year as the economic shutdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic drove the country deeper into a recession, according to preliminary government data released last week.

Mexico's statistical agency said that the second quarter running from April through June was 17.3% lower than the previous quarter in its seasonally adjusted estimates for gross domestic product.

In June, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography announced that industrial activity fell 25% in April compared with March, the worst monthly decline since it began tracking the monthly data in 1993.

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has said that the economy hit bottom in late April, and late last week, he predicted a rapid, V-shaped recovery.

"We expected this data because it is measuring April, May and June, the three worst months," Lopez Obrador said.

Data for the next quarter would tell the story of the economy's recovery, he said. "I can tell the people that the worst has passed and that the strategy worked and we are already recovering."

The Mexican economy was already in a recession before the country recorded its first confirmed case of covid-19 on Feb. 28. It contracted 0.3% in 2019, a year of stagnation.

The economy is forecast to contract at least 9% in 2020.

Gabriela Siller, economic analysis director at Banco BASE, said in a report last week that the drop in economic output in the second quarter was the largest in Mexico's recorded history, surpassing the recession of 2007-09 and the peso crisis in 1995. During the Great Depression in 1932, Mexico's economic output shrank by 14.92%.

"With the economic impact of covid-19, the stagnation became one of the worst economic crises in the history of contemporary Mexico," Siller said. She forecasts a contraction of 11.2% for 2020.

Not surprisingly, the pandemic lockdown hit the service sector the hardest. Unemployment and those who remain on payrolls, but who have been suspended from their jobs, compounded the drop in consumption. The country has lost more than 1 million jobs in its formal sector. More than half of Mexicans work in the informal economy, which is believed to have shed many more jobs.

The government's occupation and employment phone survey showed that the working population dropped by 12.5 million people in April. That number did not translate directly to the unemployment rate because many of those people still had jobs they just couldn't go to, so they weren't looking for new ones, Siller said. That could change if the recovery is slow.

The government has reported more than 408,000 confirmed infections and more than 45,000 deaths.

S. Korea's Growth Rate Second Highest Among 14 Major Countries

SEOUL (Dispatches) - South Korea's economy contracted 3.3 percent in the second quarter from a quarter earlier, but it fared well compared with other major economies, data showed Sunday.

South Korea's gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate was the second highest among the 14 countries that included the United States, China, Germany and France, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a group of 36 mostly rich and advanced nations.

The OECD has released GDP growth rates for 13 out of 36 member states, as well as six other major economies — China, Russia, India, Indonesia, Brazil and South Africa.



Among the 14 countries, China topped the list as its economy rose 11.5 percent in the April-June period from the previous quarter.

In comparison, the U.S. economy shrank 9.5 percent in the second quarter compared with the preceding three months.

Germany, France, Italy and Spain also suffered double-digit declines in their economic growth due to the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The German economy contracted 10.1 percent, the French economy fell 13.8 percent, and the Spanish economy shrank 18.5 percent.

On average, the economies of the 14 countries decreased 9.5 percent on-quarter.

France to Push for Rule-of-Law Sanctions as Part of EU Recovery Plan

PARIS (Dispatches) - EU governments who undermine fundamental rights such as equality and media freedom should face financial sanctions under Europe's €750bn coronavirus recovery fund, France's Europe minister has warned.

Clément Beaune, France's newly appointed minister for European affairs, has said his government will push for a robust rule-of-law mechanism that will make access to billions in EU recovery aid conditional on the respect for fundamental values in the light of developments in Poland and Hungary this month.

"It is not possible to explain to French, Polish, Hungarian and European citizens that you can have financial solidarity in Europe and not care how the basic rules of democracy, free media, and equal rights are respected," Mr Beaune told the Financial Times.

During a marathon four-day summit on the EU's recovery package this month, leaders kept open the precise nature of a rule-of-law mechanism after resistance from Warsaw and Budapest who said their governments were being unfairly targeted by the measure. Member states, along with the commission and the European Parliament, must now agree on how the conditionality will work with a goal of sealing the complete package by the end of the year.

France is allied with Nordic countries and the Netherlands in pushing for recovery money to be withheld for member states who flout fundamental principles. Mr Beaune said financial sanctions were "something we need to develop because legal and financial measures are the most powerful tools" against breaches of the rule of law.

"If there is doubt about how strong the EU is on its basic values, then there will be a doubt in the minds of every citizen about the relevance of the project," said the minister, who was previously Emmanuel Macron's Europe adviser. "Europe is not only a market but a cultural and political project."

The EU's clash with recalcitrant eastern member states has intensified after Poland's government vowed to exit an international treaty on the protection of women against domestic abuse this month. Poland's designation of "LGBTI-free zones" in six towns has also been criticised by the European Commission, which this week decided to withhold funds for the towns under the EU's twinning scheme for cities.

Latin America Can Create Millions of Jobs With a Zero Emission Economy

GENEVA (Dispatches) - The transition to a zero net carbon emissions economy by 2030 may allow the creation of

millions of jobs in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to a new report by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the International Labor Organization (ILO).

The document noted that although the COVID-19 Pandemic has exposed vulnerability and inequalities in the region, the transition to a green economy "offers the promise of creating 15 million new net jobs."

"This is basically the key finding," interim head of the IDB's Climate Change Division, Graham Watkins, said in a virtual meeting with journalists, while the ILO regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean Vinicius Pinheiro added that yes, "it is possible to create jobs and combat climate change at the same time."

In the report "Creating Jobs for a Sustainable Recovery and a Zero Net Emission Future", it was noted that transformations in sectors such as agriculture, forestry, renewable energy, construction and manufacturing can create jobs, tackle climate change and support in the recovery after the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Specifically, agriculture and forestry show great job potential in a region that is home to 40% of the world's biodiversity and close to 50% of tropical forests, in addition to being the world's leading food exporter. This can complement the positions that are already being created in sectors such as renewable energy, electric mobility, public transport, manufacturing, waste management and high energy efficiency construction.

The goal of reaching zero net carbon emissions is "necessary and will bring many benefits" in the region, "although we must admit it is not easy under the current circumstances, but many countries already they are working on plans to achieve this goal." In this sense, countries like Mexico and Chile "have wind energy, which is the cheapest in the world," and decarbonization should be seen "as an opportunity to create employment for all countries."

In turn, the goals of creating jobs and fighting climate change at the same time can be mutually reinforcing, it is not one or the other. That is very positive news, very important, especially in this context of the economic impacts of the COVID-19 epidemic.

The current health situation has generated "the worst recession" in the history of Latin America, with a number of unemployed that can reach 40 million people. The ILO regional representative added that "the key to this compatibility" is "a just transition, which guarantees a passage to a more sustainable economy", since "it is essential" that policies be applied that act "towards equality".

Support should also be given to workers, companies and communities that will be directly affected by the reduction in size of the industries that are currently the most polluting, with those linked to livestock and fossil fuels.

Russia Slightly Raises Oil Output Ahead Of Planned OPEC+ Tapering



MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russia slightly increased its oil production in July, ahead of OPEC+ plans to start easing their record supply cuts starting this month.

The nation's producers pumped 39.63 million tons of crude and condensate last month, according to preliminary data from the Energy Ministry's CDU-TEK unit. That's an average daily of 9.371 million barrels, applying a 7.33 barrel-per-ton conversion rate, and is above June levels, when output averaged 9.329 million barrels a day.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies last month agreed to start tapering their cutbacks from 9.6 million barrels a day in July to 7.7 million from August 1. The group led by Saudi Arabia and Russia will be returning supply at a time oil's recovery has faltered with coronavirus infections still surging in many parts of the world, and new cases emerging in Asia and Europe.

Russia, often a laggard in previous OPEC+ deals, showed nearly full compliance in May and June. The nation's crude oil output target for May-July was 8.5 million barrels a day, excluding condensate. The CDU-TEK doesn't provide a breakdown, but if condensate production was at the same level as in May, then crude-only supply reached 8.571 million barrels a day in July.

Starting August, Russian producers can increase crude oil output by 500,000 barrels a day to 8.99 million a day. Not all of that may end up in international markets as the Energy Ministry advised oil companies to process additional August output domestically to satisfy growing demand for fuel.

Sri Lankan Financial Hub May Give Competition to India's GIFT City

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Sri Lanka is working on a financial hub, with help from China, that could give India's GIFT City some competition.

Sri Lanka has recently given tax incentives for the Colombo International Finance Centre (CIFIC) in Port City, according to a report by The Economic Times.

"Definitely there is an opportunity," Thulci Aluvihare, head of strategy and business development, CHEC Port City Colombo, told ET Magazine.

"It depends on how fast we can adapt to suit the requirement of Hong Kong companies used to much-sophisticated commerce and trade looking to relocate," Aluvihare said.



The Port City Colombo Special Economic Zone (SEZ) is a part of China's Belt and Road Initiative, the report said.

The government that comes into power after the election on August 5 will likely pass legislation to ease the approval process for the project, the report said.

Aluvihare said Indian investors are particularly dissuaded by the "perception" that the project is Chinese. He clarified that the investors will be purchasing a Sri Lankan lease.

Once work on financial hub gains steam, it would give competition to India's GIFT City.

GIFT City, located between Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar, recently gave approval for 28 entities, according to a separate report by The Economic Times.

Some 1,260 Foreign Films Due to Compete in Resistance Film Festival

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Some 1,260 foreign films have applied to compete in the 16th edition of Iran's Resistance Film Festival, the secretariat of the international section of the event announced on Monday.

The applicants are from different South and Central America, Europe, Asia, Middle East and Africa.

Some 460 films from Asia, 280 films from Central and South America, 325 films from Europe and 90 films from Africa have applied for the festival.

India, Turkey, Spain, Brazil and Russia with 248 and 63 and 30 and 51 and 29 films respectively will have taken part in the event.



23 Countries Will Lose Half Their Populations by 2100



to have population growth until mid-century, followed by a moderate decline of less than 10% of the peak population by 2100.

The number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa among the ten most populous will increase from only Nigeria in 2017 to also include DR Congo, Ethiopia, and Tanzania by 2100. In sharp contrast, in the EU the number of children per woman on average will drop to 1.41, and there will be 138 million fewer people by 2100.

It is a continuing global dilemma: how do we value the crucial role of motherhood, while also enabling women to be well-educated and contribute to the workforce. I have written many times that I think the societal role mothers play in bringing up and educating their own children should be recognised as, at the very least, on par with all the other accomplishments or contributions to society that women might make. How is solving disputes between companies, selling widgets or balancing numbers possibly so much more important than nurturing the soul of a child and future citizen?

It is no wonder that women do not have very many children if they do not feel their contribution is important and valuable to society, as well as a more personal experience of love and growth. Studies such as this one show once again just how crucial valuing the role of parenthood is.

SINGAPORE (Dispatches) - Global demographic news has been dominated by the recent population forecasts in The Lancet. While they are hardly new or unexpected, they have made a larger portion of the world sit up and take notice of extreme and widespread global population decline.

Taking into account mortality, fertility, and migration, the study forecasts that global population will peak at 9.73 billion people in 2064 and decline to 8.79 billion by 2100. Thus, it predicts population decline will happen sooner than current United Nations forecasts.

By 2100, 183 of the 195 countries in the study are forecast to have a fertility rate lower than the global replacement level of 2.1 children per woman. As a result, as many as 23 countries are forecast to have their populations reduced by more than half between 2017 and 2100, including Japan, Thailand, Ukraine and Spain. Another 34 countries will likely decline by 25–50%, including China which is forecast to experience a 48% decline. The study report explains:

“Our findings suggest that continued trends in female educational attainment and access to contraception will hasten declines in fertility and slow population growth. A sustained TFR lower than the replacement level in many countries, including China and India, would have economic, social, environmental, and geopolitical consequences.”

Obviously, fewer working-age individuals reduces GDP, an important determinant of global political influence, power and military might. The study authors also surmise that fewer working-age individuals could reduce both innovation and domestic markets for consumer goods. The fiscal sustainability of national health insurance and social security programmes will also be challenged. Taxation rates required to sustain such programmes might be so large as to further reduce economic growth and investment. In addition, insecurity from the risk that these programmes could fail could generate considerable political stress. So, according to the study, which countries will be the demographic winners?

By 2100, India is forecast to still have the largest working-age population in the world, followed by Nigeria, China, and the USA. China is forecast to become the largest economy by 2035 but the USA is forecast to once again become the largest economy in 2098. The 63.6% decline forecast for China's population aged 20–24 years is a factor that will negatively influence its global power later in the century.

The five largest countries in 2100 are forecast to be India, Nigeria, China, the USA, and Pakistan. However, these countries have quite different growth trajectories. Nigeria is forecast to have continued population growth through to 2100, becoming the second most populous country by that time. In contrast, China and India peak before 2050 and then have steep declining trajectories, with China down to 51.1% and India down to 68.1% of their peak populations by 2100. The USA is projected

Young People See No Future in Turkey



ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey is experiencing a brain drain of much of its most talented young people due to economic worries, unemployment, corruption, and growing authoritarianism, analyst Burak Bekdil said in an article published on the Gatestone Institute's website.

Bekdil said that most young people have defied Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's stated aim of raising a devout, religiously conservative generation, and instead are more likely to be pro-European and liberal in their beliefs.

He also cited a recent poll by SODEV which found that 60.5 percent of young people that support Erdoğan said they would prefer to live in Christian-majority Switzerland with half the salary they would earn in Muslim Saudi Arabia. SODEV's study also found that 70.3 percent of those surveyed thought talented young people cannot have a successful career in Turkey without nepotism.

“It is not surprising, then, that the young Turks want to build a life for themselves not in their own country, or an Islamic country, but in countries where civil liberties are sacrosanct,” he said.

In 2019, a total of 330,289 people left Turkey to live abroad and 40.8 percent of those who emigrated were between the ages of 20 and 34. Bekdil cited Seren Selvin Korkmaz, executive director of the Istanbul Political Research Institute, as saying in the Arab News in July:

“Migration becomes an exit strategy from everyday struggles. In the country, youth unemployment is more than 25 percent. Many of these young people are still financially dependent on their families or are working for low wages...this creates a ‘violence of uncertainty’ for them. In addition to unemployment, authoritarian tendencies in the country - including social media bans and threats to freedom of thought - impact the youth and make them worry for their future.”

Bekdil said that, with the passing of legislation this week tightening control over social media, many young people in Turkey are only likely to feel increasingly restricted and repressed in the future.

“It is not surprising that young Turks in the 21st century do not want to be strangled by the unpredictable dictates of an Islamist regime,” he said. “Erdoğan might sit down and ask himself: Why do the youths whom he wanted to make ‘devout’ want to flee their Muslim country and live in ‘infidel’ lands?”

Tourist Sites Are Empty as Covid-19 Travel Restrictions Limit Movement

LONDON (Dispatches) - With no American visitors to show around the D-Day beaches or the Loire Valley's chateaux, and no work on the immediate horizon, Paris tour guide Linda Zenou frets about how she'll pay off a loan and continue to care for her ailing mother in the achingly lean months ahead.

“My situation is going to become completely inextricable,” she said. “We have nothing to live on.”

For growing numbers of businesses and individuals who depend on the global tourism industry, the question is not so much when the coronavirus pandemic will end but how and if they'll survive until business picks up. In trying to fend off the virus, countries that put up entry barriers to tourists have done so at a mounting cost to themselves and others.

“It's now survival of the fittest,” said Johann Krige, CEO of the Kanonkop wine estate in South Africa, where the drying up of wine-tasting tourists threatens dozens of wine farms around the historic town of Stellenbosch, near Cape Town.

“A lot of them are going to go under because they just don't have sufficient cash flow,” Krige said.

Around the world, travel amid the pandemic is becoming a story of tentative steps forward in some places, but punishing steps back elsewhere, of “yes” to letting back visitors from places faring somewhat better against COVID-19 but not from others where outbreaks are flaring.

The result is an ever-evolving global mishmash of restrictions and quarantines, all of which are providing zero long-term visibility for businesses trying to make



payrolls and for everyone in the industry from trinket sellers to luxury hotels.

In Australia, the government of Queensland, home to the Great Barrier Reef, barred visitors from Sydney starting Saturday because of a growing outbreak in the country's largest city. Queensland tourism official Brett

Kapernick predicted that could cost some businesses a 40% plunge in revenue.

“With this pandemic, the situation becomes fluid and therefore evolves weekly,” Kapernick said. “A week ago, we didn't think we'd be facing a border closed to Sydney.”

While the Indonesian resort island of Bali tentatively opened up to domestic visitors on Friday, the beaches of Da Nang in Vietnam were deserted. The city locked down Tuesday to contain a cluster of nearly 100 cases.

Shorn of tourism's lifeblood, some businesses already look doomed. Many of the luxury hotels in Rome's historic center didn't reopen in the late spring when Italy started allowing arrivals from elsewhere in the European Union and other select nations. Early in the pandemic, Italians who for years worked as dining room staff, cooks or maids at hotels instead sought farm work, picking fruit and vegetables.

On Portugal's Algarve coast, individual catastrophes also loom for the staffs of empty hotels, bars and restaurants which are losing hope that tourists will return quickly enough to keep them afloat. In a region almost entirely reliant on tourism, the unemployment rate has already jumped 230%.

No Obstacles in Development of Tehran-Baku Economic Ties

TEHRAN (IP) - The Chief of the Presidential Staff Mahmoud Vaezi and the Deputy of the Prime Minister of Azerbaijan Shahin Mustafayev stated that there are no obstacles to the development and continuation of trade and economic relations between Tehran and Baku.

In a telephone conversation, the two sides reviewed the current situation of the coronavirus epidemic, emphasizing the importance of joint efforts to combat the virus and the need to exchange experiences between the relevant institutions of the two countries.

Emphasizing that there are no obstacles in the field of continuation of economic and trade relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Iran in compliance with health protocols, they noted that despite the coronavirus epidemic, relations between the two countries in the fields of trade and transportation should be continued.

The opening of the joint borders of Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan in recent months has increased the volume of transport between the two countries.

The Deputy of the Prime Minister of Azerbaijan also expressed confidence in bringing the level of trade relations between the two countries to the volume of the pre-corona period as soon as possible through joint efforts.

The two sides also said the implementation of joint projects, especially the expansion of relations between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of rail and road transport, is in the interest of both countries and the region.

Iran Sanctions...

FROM PAGE 1

Goldberg has recently said that even if U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo could persuade Russia to extend the arms embargo on Iran as per the contents of the JCPOA, it would not be worthwhile to maintain the deal, which was achieved under the former US President Barack Obama, because it would allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons, when the deal's restrictions are removed.

3 Petchem Projects...

FROM PAGE 1

Zangeneh said Iran's oil industry activities have been going on strongly in the past two years since the U.S. pulled out of the nuclear deal and reimposed sanctions.

He Zangeneh hailed the amount of Iran's export of petroleum products, saying gas distribution projects had facilitated exports of petroleum products.

“The amount of the exports of petroleum products in Iran have been unprecedented thanks to gas distribution projects,” he said.

The official further said, “Activities in the oil industry have continued vigorously for more than two years since the sanctions were imposed.”

“We stand firm and buoyant to serve the goal of serving the people,” Zangeneh said. “There are many problems, but we have kept the activities in the oil industry alive during the two years that have passed since the sanctions were imposed.”

He said that now two years and three months have passed since the severe sanctions against Iran were imposed and during this period not only no plans in the oil industry had halted, but “we have also started new plans.”

Zangeneh said that thanks to the increase in gas production and gas supply in the country, the numbers for exporting products are unique, adding: “I cannot announce any figures because of national interests, but the numbers are really unique and have brought income to the country.”

He inaugurated and commissioned 286 gas supply projects in the northeastern Khorasan Razavi province through video conference.

As part of the mentioned projects, 77 rural areas were connected to the national gas network to increase the coverage of the national network in rural areas to 88 percent, while operations for the gas supply to 39 more villages were also started.

Operations for supplying natural gas to 167 production and industrial units were also started.

Iraqi Company...

FROM PAGE 1

The late Commander of Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Lieutenant General Qasem Soleimani, who had traveled to Iraq on the official invitation of the Iraqi officials, was assassinated by the U.S. drone attack in Baghdad on January 3, 2020, along with the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis as well as eight companions.

The Iraqi Supreme Judicial Council announced on July 20 that it has made the necessary arrangements with the Iranian Judiciary to file a complaint against the US over the assassination Lt. Gen. Soleimani, and Al-Muhandis.

Iran's Nuclear...

FROM PAGE 1

Ulyanov, however, asserted, “The atomic opportunities were given to Iran by #NPT.” He added that those who disagree with the nature of the IAEA's duty being verification of various nuclear programs' non-diversion “work against NPT.”

The United States left the JCPOA in 2018, despite the fact that the agreement has been ratified by the UN Security Council as its Resolution 2231.

Russia raps the U.S. for deciding to end Iran sanctions waivers and quitting an international treaty on unarmed surveillance flights.

Washington has also been threatening other JCPOA signatories into forsaking their duties under the accord.

Porto Clinch Domestic Double

COIMBRA (Reuters) - Portuguese champions Porto completed the domestic double in style on Saturday as a pair of second-half headers by defender Chancel Mbemba gave them a 2-1 win over Benfica in the Cup final despite having a man sent off.

Porto forward Luis Diaz was given his marching orders by referee Artur Soares Dias for his second bookable offence shortly before halftime, and five minutes later his manager Sergio Conceicao was also sent off.

LICENCE HOLDER: SOKHAN GOSTAR INSTITUTE	
Switchboard: (+98) (21) 44253448	E-Mail Address: info@irannewsdaily.com
Public Relations Tel: (+98)(21) 44253450	ISSN 1024-6053
Editorial Board: 44253449	P.O. Box: 15875-8551
Public Relations Fax: (+98)(21) 44253395	Address: No 13, Pajouhesh St., Golestan II St, Golestan St.Marzdaran Blvd., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Advertising Department: Tel/Fax:(+98) (21) 44253335-9/44253234	Printed by: Honar Sarzmin Sabz
Website: http://www.irannewsdaily.com	Distributed by: Cities of Iran Cultural and Artistic Institute
	Managing Director: Fereydoon Taherpour Asl

Pulisic, Azpilicueta To Miss Bayern Clash

LONDON (Reuters) - Christian Pulisic and Cesar Azpilicueta will miss Chelsea's Champions League match against Bayern Munich after picking up hamstring injuries, manager Frank Lampard said.

Defender Azpilicueta and forward Pulisic limped off during Chelsea's 2-1 defeat by Arsenal in the FA Cup final on Saturday.

Chelsea will visit German champions Bayern Munich on Aug. 8, trailing 3-0 from the first leg of their last-16 tie.

Hamilton Wins Seventh British GP On Three Wheels

SILVERSTONE (AFP) - World championship leader Lewis Hamilton survived a tense last lap drama with a deflated and shredded tyre to clinch a record seventh victory in Sunday's British Grand Prix, claiming "my heart almost stopped".

The six-time world champion led from lights to flag, and through two Safety Car interventions, before he suffered a front left tyre failure on his final lap, leaving him to nurse his Mercedes home with second-placed Max Verstappen in hot pursuit in his Red Bull.

He finished 5.9 seconds behind.

The Dutchman had inherited second when Hamilton's Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas, running comfortably in second for most of the contest, was hit by the same problem, his front-left delaminating and deflating on his penultimate lap.

The Finn limped back to the pits and finished pointless in 11th place while his rivals slowed to preserve their rubber, Ferrari's Charles Leclerc taking third place behind Verstappen ahead of Daniel Ricciardo of Renault and Lando Norris of McLaren.

Hamilton's victory was the 87th of his career and moved him within four of Michael Schumacher's record of 91. Norris's team-mate Carlos Sainz was also a puncture victim in the closing laps of an exciting race that saw him fall from fourth to 13th.

Esteban Ocon finished sixth in the second Renault ahead of Pierre Gasly of Alpha Tauri, Alex Albon in the second Red Bull, Lance Stroll of Racing Point and four-time champion Sebastian Vettel, in his final season with Ferrari.

George, Clippers Rain 3s on Pelicans In 126-103 Blowout

LAKE BUENA VISTA (AP) — Paul George made three straight 3-pointers in the opening minutes and had eight overall for 28 points for the Los Angeles Clippers, who rode a team-record barrage of long-range shots to beat the faltering New Orleans Pelicans 126-103.

The Clippers broke the franchise record by making 25 of 47 3-pointers. George made 8 of 11. The Clippers also tied the team record for 3-pointers made in a half and fell one short of the NBA record by hitting 16 of 24 in racing to a 77-45 halftime lead.

"We were just having fun with it," George said. "We put the work in tonight and it paid off at the end."

Los Angeles made its first six 3-pointers to take a 20-6 lead. Patrick Beverley scored from behind the arc for L.A.'s first points and then George connected on three straight possessions for a 12-2 lead just 2:11 in.

Kawhi Leonard and Beverley kept the barrage going for six straight 3s before Leonard had the Clippers' first miss. The Clippers made 9 of 13 3s in the first quarter for a 37-25 lead.

Leonard had 24 points for the Clippers, who bounced back from a 103-101 loss to LeBron James and the Los Angeles Lakers on Thursday night.

"As a group, we thought we weren't ourselves," George said of that loss. "We were trying to get our identity back that we had closing the season out before the pandemic hit. It just hasn't been us and tonight was a huge emphasis on ball movement, playing comfortable, playing among each other and having fun. I thought you saw that tonight."

Said coach Doc Rivers: "It just means we got our first victory in the bubble. We've got to keep growing. We've got six more. We've got to keep growing for the playoffs."

The Pelicans had a minor scare midway through the first half when rookie Zion Williamson stepped on Reggie Jackson's foot and appeared to slightly roll his right ankle while driving to the basket, ending up on his backside under the basket. He got up with a slight limp and was subbed out.



"The Mercedes were too quick. The tyres didn't look great with 10 laps to go and then Valtteri got a puncture and they boxed me to go for fastest lap... Second is a good result." Leclerc said: "It was a tricky race – as soon as I heard Valtteri had a tyre problem, I slowed down quite a lot. We took our opportunities."

On another bright, but windy day, Hamilton overcame an imperfect start from his 91st pole position and record seventh in Britain. He led as he pulled clear before a final corner collision, on the opening lap, involving Kevin Magnussen and the luckless Albon led to the first deployment of a Safety Car.

The Dane's Haas car was on the outside of Albon's Red Bull, with the Thai driver refusing to concede, when they crashed and Magnussen spun into a gravel trap, his front left wheel smashing off in the barriers.

The stewards blamed Albon and gave him a five-second penalty.

The Safety Car led the field for five laps before handing back to Hamilton who stayed in control until lap 13 when Daniil Kvyat suffered a right rear puncture and crashed heavily at Maggots, where both rear wheels smashed off his Alpha Tauri.

He was unhurt, but a second Safety Car was required for five laps while debris was cleared.

This reduced the field to 17, Nico Hulkenberg having failed to start on his dramatic return, with Racing Point, as stand-in for coronavirus victim Sergio Perez.

The interruptions did nothing to halt Mercedes' progress at the front, Hamilton and Bottas pulling clear of Verstappen with some ease.

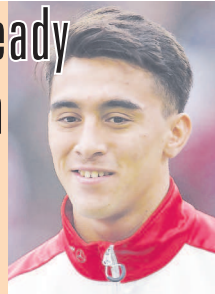
By lap 30, the gap was eight seconds with Leclerc 14 seconds adrift.

Behind them, Grosjean and Sainz were engaged in a fierce battle for fifth, which saw the Frenchman weaving to resist at Brooklands.

The Frenchman continued his aggressive approach, however, in a duel with Ricciardo. It was duly noted by the stewards as more "moving under braking".

Ricciardo called it "sketchy".

Stuttgart Ready To Part With Gonzalez at Right Price



BERLIN (Reuters) - VfB Stuttgart are ready to part ways with their top scorer Nicolas Gonzalez as long as the price is right, the club's sports director Sven Mislintat said on Sunday.

The 22-year-old Argentina international scored 14 goals and delivered seven assists in 27 second division games last season to help Stuttgart return to the Bundesliga.

"Everyone needs revenues during the time of the coronavirus," Mislintat told Sport1 broadcaster.

"If someone comes today and offers us an amount that would be irresponsible to turn down at the current time then we sell and either develop or bring in a replacement."

Gonzalez, who joined Stuttgart in 2018 on a five-year contract, said last month he had informed the club of his desire to leave.

Several Premier League clubs are reportedly interested in the striker.

"We obviously are aware of the speculation regarding Nicolas Gonzalez," Mislintat said. "We do see the possibility that someone will offer us enough money so that we are forced to consider a sale."

"But what is important is that Nico still has three years on his contract and no buy-out clause. That simply means that anything will have to come through us and at the end it will be our decision."

Ajax Urged to Change Style After Ziyech Moves to Chelsea



AMSTERDAM (Reuters) - Ajax Amsterdam will have to change their playing style after the sale of Hakim Ziyech to Chelsea and the possibility of up to six others leaving before the new season in the Netherlands starts, coach Erik ten Hag said as they began pre-season training.

Ziyech was one of the key figures when Ajax reached the Champions League semi-final last season and also dominated in the Dutch league, but success for the club has meant their players have been in high demand.

Last season they sold Frenkie de Jong to Barcelona and Matthijs de Ligt to Juventus, and in recent days Joel Veltman has gone to Brighton and Hove Albion and Sven Botman to Lille.

It is expected that Andre Onana, Nicolas Tagliafico and Donny van de Beek could also still leave before the new season gets underway next month.

"If you lose players who have had a big influence on the game, the playing style will change," ten Hag told Dutch NOS television on Sunday.

"You lack specific qualities. But of course the intentions remain the same. You should always set the bar higher than last season. The challenge is to get even more out of the players who are there now."

"We have put together a selection that is strong. We have two players for each position, except the left-back. We have to see if we can fill it in internally or if we have to look outside," he added.

Ajax have signed Brazilian teenage striker Antony, who signed from São Paulo for 15 million euros, but ten Hag said he will need time to adjust.

Italian Media Abuzz After Conte's Latest Outburst



ROME (Reuters) - When Inter Milan coach Antonio Conte faces the cameras after a match, it is a case of lighting the blue touch paper and standing well back.

In his first season at Inter, the 51-year-old former Juventus, Italy and Chelsea coach has railed against his own club's "poor planning" and an "insane" fixture list, and even blamed one poor performance on the opposition playing the wrong kind of football.

His latest outburst, however, after a 2-0 win at Atalanta on Saturday that clinched second place for Inter in Serie A, has led to all sorts of intrigue. "I don't think the work of the players has been recognised and I don't think my work has been recognised," he said, before accusing unnamed club members of only showing their faces when things were going well.

"We all received very little protection from the club, absolutely zero."

That left Italian media including Gazzetta dello Sport and Corriere dello Sport wondering, is he thinking of resigning? Will the club fire him? Was he referring to any particular director, such as chief executive Giuseppe Marotta, sporting director Piero Ausilio, or even club president Steven Zhang?

Conte also said nothing had changed at Inter since an interview given by his predecessor Luciano Spalletti - an apparent reference to Spalletti's claim there was a "mole" in the Inter dressing-room who leaked team gossip to the media.

Man City Could Be Tested by Counter-Attacking Real



LONDON (Reuters) - Manchester City struggle to prevent the best teams from scoring against them and their central defenders could be targeted in Friday's Champions League clash against Spanish champions Real Madrid, former England skipper Wayne Rooney said.

Pep Guardiola's City lead Real after they won the away leg of their last-16 tie 2-1 in March, before Europe's elite club competition was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rooney, who won the competition with Manchester United in 2008, said City have their best opportunity yet to lift the trophy for the first time.

"City may never have a better chance to win the Champions League," Rooney wrote in his column here for the Sunday Times.

"Sergio Ramos is suspended which is a huge loss to the Real defence and I think City will score. Whether they are solid enough at the back themselves is my only question."

"Real will target their centre halves and it's a worry that this season every other (Premier League) 'Big Six' club beat City... This shows Guardiola's team can struggle to keep the best sides out."

Rooney said he expected Real to allow City to dominate possession and then aim to hit them on the counter.

"I saw Zinedine Zidane do it in his first spell as Real coach when he played against Guardiola-style teams in big games, and it brought him successes," Rooney added.