

**Iran's Health Ministry Spokeswoman
Sima Sadat Lari Said on Monday
That Some 117 More Iranians Have
Died From Coronavirus Disease
Over the Past 24 Hours Bringing the
Total Deaths to 22,410**

IRAN NEWS

**Iran Is Ranked 10th Regarding
The Humber of Historical
Monuments and Sites Registered
In the UNESCO World Heritage
List and It Can Boost Iran's
Position in Tourism Industry**

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India's External Affairs Minister Due in Tehran

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will make a stopover in Iran this week as part of his key Moscow visit. During the Iran stopover, he could meet his Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif, details of which are still being decided. Javad Zarif had visited India earlier this year to be part Raisina Dialogue.

EAM will be visiting Moscow for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization or SCO meet. India, Pakistan, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are part of the SCO grouping. Iran is an observer member of the grouping.

This will be the 2nd time any top Indian minister is visiting Iran within a week. Defense minister Rajnath Singh had visited Iran over the weekend while coming from Russia and meet with Iran's Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami.

During Rajnath Singh's visit, Afghanistan and regional security were discussed in over one hour long bilateral.

The high-level visits by India to Iran are been considered as a major reached out by New Delhi to a country it considers part of its extended neighborhood. Iran plays an important role in India's connectivity project via Chabahar port that provides it link to Afghanistan and wider Central Asian region.

Tehran Denies Transfer of Russian Military Equipment to Armenia

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Iranian embassy in the Republic of Azerbaijan denied the report of some media outlets about the transfer of Russian military equipment through Iran to Armenia.

The Iranian embassy in the Republic of Azerbaijan said in a statement on Monday that the media reports about the transfer of Russian weapons and other military equipment through Iran's Nurdaz border crossing to Armenia were baseless and false.

The statement said that the news is a machination of hostile forces who oppose close relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan, with the aim of undermining the developing cooperation and friendship between the two countries.

Swiss FM Hails Fruitful Talks in Tehran



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis described his meeting with Iranian counterpart as 'fruitful'.

In a Monday tweet, Cassis wrote, "Peace, economic development and human rights - fruitful discussion with my counterpart, @JZarif."

"I'm glad we could establish together the Swiss Humanitarian Channel for the transfer of food and medical supplies to the people of Iran," he added.

Heading a delegation, Ignazio Cassis met and held talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Monday morning and later with President Hassan Rouhani.

During meeting with Cassis, President Rouhani urged Europe to stand against the U.S. unilateralism and called for boosting bilateral ties with Switzerland.

The president called on Switzerland to enhance the effectiveness of a financial mechanism it has set up for trade with Iran, so that Tehran could release part of its assets abroad.

The Swiss embassy in Tehran handles U.S. interests in Iran, since ties were cut in the aftermath of the 1979 Islamic revolution.

"Peace, economic development and human rights - fruitful discussion with my counterpart," Cassis wrote on Twitter following the talks.

Switzerland has also played a major role in prisoner swaps between Tehran and Washington.

The Swiss Foreign Minister arrived in Isfahan on Saturday morning to pay a three-day visit and meet with officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Cassis was marking 100 years of Swiss diplomatic presence in Tehran and 40 years of representing U.S. interests in the country.

On Sunday, Cassis visited the Swiss embassy foreign interests section, which has been representing U.S. interests in Iran for 40 years. Switzerland has been serving as an intermediary between the two countries since 1980 after the collapse of diplomatic relations between them.

The main aim of the visit is to strengthen relations between Iran and Switzerland, Cassis told Swiss public television, SRF. "This serves to create trust for the bilateral path between Switzerland and Iran and for the protecting power mandate - as a mediator between the United States and Iran," he declared.

On Sunday evening, Cassis opened an exhibition at the Negarestan Garden in Tehran on the history of Swiss-Iranian bilateral relations. The exhibition showcases 100 years of Swiss diplomatic presence in Iran.

UAE Expected To Make Up For Mistakes: Iran

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Foreign Ministry spokesman called on the United Arab Emirates to make up for the strategic mistake of normalizing ties with Israel.

In remarks at a press conference on Monday, Saeed Khatibzadeh said the UAE has made two strategic mistakes by normalizing ties with the Zionist regime.

Not only has the UAE made a cognitive mistake about its own and Israel's position, but it has also made a miscalculation, the spokesman added.

The Abu Dhabi government's miscalculation is that it wrongly believes it can purchase security from outside the region these days, he said.

"We have seen many cognitive mistakes and miscalculations in the region, a clear example of which was (former Iraqi dictator) Saddam (Hussein)," Khatibzadeh added.

"We seriously expect the UAE to make up for its mistakes. Iran would not joke with anybody when it comes to its national security, and this has been made clear for them (Emiratis) through certain channels," the spokesperson underlined.

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Tehran Urged to Improve Its Position in Eurasian Market

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian stated that Iran's position in the Eurasian Economic Union market of 200 million people should be further enhanced.

Ardakanian added at the meeting of the resistance economy of Yazd province on Monday: "If we do not strengthen Iran's position in the Eurasian Union, we will not have a good situation when a large number of facilities and companies come to the fore."

The official noted: "Until the next November, we have the opportunity for Iran's accession to the Eurasian Economic Union to become permanent member, but if we do not succeed in realizing the plans, accession to this union will be temporary." According to Ardakanian, thanks to the country's wealth, in the face of sanctions we have been able to achieve a lot in various fields, but in some areas, we still need a lot of effort. All forces and the private sector must take action in this area and make up for the backlogs.

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Public Culture Council Condemns Charlie Hebdo's Insulting Cartoon

TEHRAN (IFP) - The Iranian Public Culture Council, affiliated with the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, has condemned the French magazine Charlie Hebdo for republishing cartoons insulting the Great Prophet of Islam (PBUH).

In a statement released on Sunday, secretariat of the Public Culture Council of Iran condemned the French satirical magazine's move to insult Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) by republishing offensive cartoons. The Iranian council also denounced the "bitter and heinous" action from a group of malicious ignorant ill-wishers in Sweden to burn copy of holy Quran, saying such insults reveal the extent of their hostility towards Islam.

The statement has also emphasized that such sacrilegious moves will not only not harm Islam and the holy character of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), but lays bare the frustration of enemies and their failure to engage in logical discourse. The consequences of insulting the sanctities of 1.5 billion Muslims in the world will plague those who have masterminded, provoked and perpetrated such evil plot, it added. The French satirical newspaper whose Paris offices were attacked in 2015 is reprinting the controversial caricatures of Islam's Prophet Muhammad.

In an editorial last week accompanying the offensive caricatures, the paper said the drawings "belong to history, and history cannot be rewritten or erased".

Iran's National Information Network Not Based on Censorship

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - An Iranian official has assured the domestic and foreign digital platforms that they are allowed to provide services in the Iranian National Information Network without restrictions as long as they abide by the Islamic Republic's regulations and do not pose a threat to the country.

In remarks at a televised interview, director of Iran's National Centre of Cyberspace, Abul-Hassan Firoozabadi, said the National Information Network (NIN) is not based upon censorship and will not carry out any filtering policy unless the platforms violate the law and their illegal activities would cause cultural, social, political and security problems.

Like all other international networks, web contents in the Iranian Internet or the NIN will be accessible in accordance with the country's regulations and the network is not going to censor anything at the beginning, he added.

"There is no plan to shut down any foreign network or platform, unless the platform disobeys the Iranian law and causes widespread destructive security effects," he noted.

Firoozabadi also emphasized that the National Centre of Cyberspace is by no means after filtering of the foreign social networks, saying the services blocked in Iran have a record of anti-security activities, such as Twitter that took brazen acts of interference organized by the White House amid the 2009 unrest in Iran. Telegram had also promised to cooperate with Iran, but refused to do so after a whole bunch of daily complaints about the messaging service being used for fraud, wrongdoing and even terrorist operations, the official noted, describing why the messaging services have been blocked in Iran. Highlighting Iran's progress in development of telecommunication networks, the official said the Islamic Republic outperforms many regional countries in the telecommunication systems.

He finally called on the administration to push for the development of basic web-based services and let the private sector carry out projects on homegrown messengers, search engines, e-mail and cloud services.



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Returning to Normal Trade Global Priority

TEHRAN (IRNA)- Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in a Twitter message hailed his bilateral talks with Swiss counterpart in Tehran, saying returning to normal trade is a global priority.

“Pleased to host Swiss FM @ignaziocassis on centennial of diplomatic relations—ties that endure based on mutual respect,” zarif tweeted on Monday.

“Excellent talks on bilateral, regional & global issues,” he added. “While appreciating Swiss efforts to mitigate U.S. sabotage, a return to normal trade is global priority,” he noted.

U.S., European States Support Drug Smugglers

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Judiciary Chief stated that Iran has some classified information that shows the US government as well as some European countries support drug smugglers.

Delivering a speech at a summit about reviewing the ways of dealing with drug trafficking, Ebrahim Raisi referred to the role of the US government and European countries in supporting drug smugglers, saying that the increase in the production of drugs and harvesting opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan have been done with the supports of Americans.

“The U.S. warships in the region have expanded the U.S. support for drug trafficking gangs,” Raisi added.

He also stressed that Iran will continue to fighting with drug trafficking, saying: “International organizations have praised Iran and have given medals for its serious and efficient fighting against drug trafficking, but these are only empty words and they don’t do anything in practice.”

The United Nations has described Iran as the pioneer of fighting with drug trafficking in the world.

Meanwhile he said in response to a request from the Judiciary to continue the activities of special branches of the Islamic Revolutionary Tribunal to address cases



of economic disruptions and corrupters, the Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran agreed with the special courts to continue their activities with some amendments.

Raisi made this request in a letter referring to the continuation of the conditions announced in the judiciary letter for the establishment of special courts to fight economic corruption.

He pointed out that the legal proposals and requirements of the judiciary for a decisive, fast, legal, and fair fight against economic corruption will be submitted to the parliament soon.

Gov’t Attempting to Prevent Hardships in Country’s Strategic Fields

TEHRAN (IP) - After receiving the report of the Central Bank on the measures taken to provide the currency needed for the raw materials for drug production, the President said, “Despite all the various bottlenecks and pressures that exist in the current situation, the government is trying to prevent hardships in the country’s strategic areas”.

Speaking on Sunday in the meeting of the Cabinet’s Economic Coordination Board, Hassan Rouhani added, “Apart from livelihood and supply of basic goods and raw materials for factories, people’s health is the most important priority. In this regard, the supply of medicine is one of the main and strategic areas, and the relevant departments will not allow people to feel deficient in this regard with the planning they have done”.

Rouhani continued, “The demands of the medical staff who have been selflessly on the front lines of the fight against coronavirus in recent months will be met with the fund made for this regard, and with the plans made by the Central Bank and the Plan and Budget Organisation, all demands must be paid promptly”.

While emphasizing the support and strengthening of investment in the housing sector as propellers of the prosperity of production and employment, the President described it necessary to use different ways of public participation in financing housing production projects.

PMO Offers 80% Discount to Ro-Ro Vessels in Northern Iran

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Ports and Maritime Organization of Iran has offered an 80% discount for the ro-ro (roll on/roll off) vessels in the northern Iranian ports.

According to PMO’s Deputy Head for Ports and Economic Affairs Farhad Montaser Kouhsari, the discounts will cover the legal affairs, and tolls as well as the ro-ro vessels’ related expenses.

“The discount will be in effect for a one-year period.”

“The Move is aimed at transferring truck traffic from the country’s roads and land borders to the marine routes, as well as directing the transport of trucks, both full and empty, through the northern ports of the country to the Caspian Sea littoral states,” he noted.

Ro-Ro facilities are designed to carry wheeled cargo, such as cars, trucks, semi-trailer trucks, trailers and railroad cars that are driven on and off the ship on their own wheels or using a platform vehicle, such as a self-propelled modular transporter.

The construction operations of Iran’s first Ro-Ro facility are in the final stages at Amirabad Port in the northern Mazandaran Province.

The port is already connected to the railroad network.

Once operational, it will enable freight trains to dock near commercial ships for the loading and unloading of goods.

New Channel Created for Iran’s Export to Central Asia

TEHRAN (MNA) – Deputy Foreign Minister for the Economic Diplomacy Affairs Gholamreza Ansari said that a new channel has been created for the export of Iranian goods to Central Asia through Afghanistan.

He made the remarks on the sidelines of the 11th meeting of the Foreign Economic Relations Organization on Sunday.

“Developing economic relations with Afghanistan and resolving issues in this regard were discussed during the meeting,” he said.

Ansari further maintained that a new channel has been created to provide access to Central Asia through Afghanistan and noted, “This is a positive step that our traders can export their goods through Afghanistan to Central Asia, and this has been very much appreciated by Iranian and Afghan traders.”

Velayati Blasts French Magazine’s Blasphemy

TEHRAN (IP) - The Secretary-General of the World Assembly of Islamic Awakening called the insult of Charlie Hebdo magazine to the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) a continuation of the destructive plans against Islam by the US, Israeli regime, and the Western Front.

Issuing a statement on Saturday, Ali Akbar Velayati condemned the French magazine’s blasphemy and called on Muslims of the world to spoil the plots of those policy-makers of conspiracies against Islam.

Velayati reminded that the growth of Islam and dissemination of its message of kindness among the people of the world once again led the historical enemies of Islam to show their filthy and evil nature through the nastiest means and methods, religious terrorism and blasphemy.

The policy-making council of Friday Prayer Leaders also issued a statement of condemnation, considering the blasphemy as the sign of the arrogant powers’ passiveness before the Islamic resistance discourse, which the arrogant powers occasionally do with the purpose of taking revenge for their defeat against the freedom-seekers and followers of Tawhid school of thought (monotheism).

These movements are not only an insult to the sanctities of Muslims but also a violation of the sanctity of all monotheistic religions and divine prophets, for which all freedom-seekers are responsible.

Tehran, Kabul Call for Developing Trade Infrastructures

KABUL (IRNA) - Iran and Afghanistan convened joint committee on “transport” with the aim of developing trade infrastructures and removal of transport barriers, Afghanistan industry and commerce ministry spokesman said on Monday.

Muhammad Jawad Dabir said that during the meeting hosted by Tehran, both sides discussed important issues namely on transit and removal of border challenges aiming to develop trade. Both sides agreed to convene the joint committee every year, he added.

Both sides also agreed to develop railways, construction of border customs and road infrastructures.

Jawad Dabir noted that Afghan government has put on its agenda promoting cooperation with neighbors.

He reiterated that Kabul will make efforts to develop both transit cooperation between Iran, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan and among Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

For much of the interview, the Afghan official referred to KTAI Corridor which connects Kyrgyzstan to Tajikistan and Iran through Afghanistan, saying both sides reviewed developing this corridor.

Gov’t Adopting Action Plan to Protect Sea Environment From Oil Pollution

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran decided to adopt an action plan to cut oil pollution at sea, Deputy for Marine and Wetlands of Department of Environment of Iran Ahmadsheza Lahijanzadeh said on Sunday.

Surely, the action plan will help reduce oil pollution at sea to large scale, Lahijanzadeh said.

To enforce the action plan, Iran will make use of capabilities of maritime companies and the projects proposed by the knowledge-based companies, the official added. The Iranian plan for tackling marine pollution will help prevent incidents happening annually at high seas causing oil pollution, Lahijanzadeh noted.

About the four related projects presented by the knowledge-based companies to advance the action plan, the official said, adding that the companies are capable of manufacturing materials for cutting oil pollution at sea.

He said that Iran has applied for international permission for using such materials.

Iran-Brazil Parliamentary Friendship Group Formed

TEHRAN (IP) - The Iranian ambassador to Brazil announced the resumption of the official activities of the friendship group between the two countries in the Brazilian parliament.

Hossein Gharibi in a message on the occasion of 198th anniversary of the independence of Brazil, while congratulating the people and government of this country, announced the resumption of official activity of the friendship group between the two countries in the Brazilian parliament.

After nearly two years of stagnation and the inactivity of the friendship group since the 2018 parliamentary elections, a new group of 93 senators and representatives from various political parties and factions has begun its work.

The bilateral relations between Iran and Brazil are of special importance, especially during the post-corona period and the collective efforts of nations to eliminate economic damage and create comprehensive security in the form of multilateralism.

Relations between Tehran and Brasilia have a history of 117 years, and Iran was the first country to reopen its embassy in the new capital of Brazil in 1339 (1960).

Iran-Pakistan Military Cooperation Improves Peace, Security

TEHRAN (IP) - The Deputy Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces for International Affairs Brigadier General Qadir Nezami stated that military cooperation between Iran and Pakistan is progressing well and has accelerated in recent years.



Brigadier General Nezami stated about the level of military cooperation between Iran and Pakistan, that the most important issue in the process of military cooperation between the two countries is the border security and resolving common border challenges.

He noted that the two countries are located on the shores of the Oman Sea and the Indian Ocean, play important roles in the Islamic world, and in peace and security of the region.

“Tehran and Islamabad have common views on regional peace and security,” Nezami stressed. “Iran and Pakistan have good consultations on achieving security and stability in Afghanistan.”

On the occasion of the 55th Defence Day of Pakistan, on Sunday in Tehran, Pakistan’s Ambassador to Tehran Rahim Hayat Qureshi called Iran a “brother country,” and said “Our two countries not only share geographical borders but a common heritage and values, based upon religion, culture, traditions, and ethnicity. We have excellent defense cooperation.”

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT



PERMIT NO : 1399.2890

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY - AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 01-31-9580039

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

ITEMS	MATERIAL DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
37	PARTS FOR “ RUSTON” GAS TURBINE	563 NO

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.2 , 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 25,886 EURO or 4,830,621,348 RIAL in favor of NISOC.

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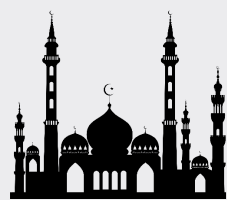
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PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:01
■ Evening (Maghreb)	19:39
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:17
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:42

5. To those weak of understanding Make not over your property, which Allah hath made a means of support for you, but feed and clothe them therewith, and speak to them words of kindness and justice.

Surah 4. Women (5)

Iran Creates 2.6 mb of Refinery Capacity in 7 Years

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Oil Minister Bijan Zangeneh said, “Thanks to the development of South Pars and the implementation of gas supply projects in the last seven years, an equivalent to 2.6 million barrels of refining capacity fuel has been distributed and consumed in the country.”

Bijan Zangeneh at a ceremony of commissioning gas supply projects in Kermanshah province, western Iran, noted that gas extraction from the South Pars joint field with 420 million cubic meters daily increase from 280 million cubic meters in 2013 has reached the current figure of 700 mcm, adding gas production from this field has increased 2.5 times.

“This means creating 2.6 million barrels of refining capacity. If we wanted to build a refinery, we would have to build 10 refineries with 260,000 barrels capacity to be able to supply the country with the amount of fuel,” he said.

He also announced that Iranian gas export has doubled over the past seven years period. Zangeneh made the remarks at opening ceremony on 151 gas distribution projects in the western Iranian province of Kermanshah.

The exports of liquid fuel have quadrupled in the mentioned period, the minister noted. Highlighting gas distribution development in Iran, the minister said the country has broken the record of daily exports of 79 million cubic meters of gas.



Daily gas production at South Pars gas field has reached 700 million cubic meters from 280m cubic meters, he said elaborating on gas development projects in the country.

South Pars gas field is shared with Qatar called North Dome by Qatar, is the world's largest gas field with an area of 9,700 square kilometers.

Iran, being among world 's top four countries which have the largest proven deposit of crude oil and natural gas, shares broad offshore field with Qatar in the southern Iranian region of Persian Gulf.

Gas distribution projects with investment of 3.3 billion euros have been inaugurated in Iran during the past few weeks, the minister announced.

In a related development, Zangeneh said in August that the value of petrochemical projects will rise to 25 billion dollars after opening 27 more projects with 17 billion dollars of investment by the end of next Iranian year (March 20, 2022).

Evaluating the Competence Of Staff Is Priority



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The center for evaluation of personnel of Hormuzgan Steel Company was held to review general and management competence of the company in presence of selected experts, officials, managers and deputies of the company by using the latest methods of evaluation.

Director of education and developing human resources of the company Mr. Amin Ranjbarfard in an interview said that evaluation of general and management competence as well as identifying the talented and efficient staff is of the main priorities of this department.

He further said that Hormuzgan Steel Company has a comprehensive development pattern for developing its staff, and the center for evaluation of the company follows this pattern and its reports are based on this process and they are used in education, training, development, capability of the staff and drawing up individual development programs.

Ranjbarfard went on to say that several factors of competence like decision-making, team work, management of the individuals, management of the staff, and commercial and leadership sense are evaluated in this center by employing different tools of for weighing and evaluation.

He also said that one of the tasks of this center is to bring up and train talented and good quality substitutes for different organizational posts in all management levels.

The process of evaluation of the staff in the company has started since four years ago and the company pursues it seriously in order to boost capability of its staff.

Gas Exports Rise Up By 88pc Growth

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Managing Director of National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) says that Iranian gas exports have risen up by 88 percent increase in past seven years.

Hassan Montazer Torbati made the remarks at the opening ceremony on 151 gas distribution projects in the western Iranian province of Kermanshah.

Torbati said that the country witnessed a record in gas exports in seven years after the development projects of South Pars gas field were carried out.

South Pars gas field is shared with Qatar called North Dome by Qatar, is the world's largest gas field with an area of 9,700 square kilometers.

Exports of gas oil, furnace oil and liquid oil have brought ten-billion forex incomes to the country in recent years and the process continues, NIGC head noted.

Referring to continuation of exports of gas to Turkey, Iraq, Azerbaijan and Armenia, the official said Iran's gas export saw 88 percent increase after it started exports to Iraq and developed South Pars field.

Daily export of gas depends on demands, the official underlined pointing to export of 30 million cubic meters of gas to Turkey and 55 mcm to Iraq per day.

Torbati added that Iran's average daily gas exports will reach 75 million cubic meters in summer.



Israel Must Pay \$ 1.1b in Oil Compensation to Iran

TEHRAN (ILNA) - A senior energy expert says Israel has been using the American sanctions on Iran to delay payments to Tehran related to a decades-old dispute over an oil pipeline company.

Gholamhossein Hassantash told the ILNA news agency on Sunday that Israel has been withholding \$1.1 billion plus interest in compensations related to its confiscation of a joint company with Iran that had been set up before the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

In a June 2016 ruling, the Swiss Federal Tribunal, which is Switzerland's highest court, rejected Israel's appeal on the case of Eilat Ashkelon Pipeline Company (EAPC), a venture set up in 1968 which had been meant to allow Iran to transfer crude from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean.

Israel has also been ordered to pay nearly half a million dollars in court costs and legal fees.

However, Hassantash said that Israelis have been delaying the payments citing unilateral sanctions imposed by the U.S. on Iran. Foreign Minister Bijan Zangeneh has reiterated that the cargo of oil tankers reportedly seized by the United States last week was not Iranian.

He said the Swiss court declared after the implementation of Iran's nuclear deal, known as JCPOA, in 2016 that Israel faces no restrictions to compensate Iran over the case.

“Israelis have been trying to delay payments to Iran as long as possible,” said Hassantash, adding, “With U.S. leaving the JCPOA resulting in the international banking sanctions, the Israelis seem to have found a pretext.”

Hassantash did not rule out that Iran might take action to force Israel to comply with the Swiss court ruling. That comes as Tehran has been tough on states and entities that are in debt to the country over deals that predate the 1979 revolution.

“I’m not aware of what the next step would be or what action one could take,” said Hassantash.

U.S. Is Iran's Main Rival in Int'l Pistachio Market

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Chairman of Iran Dried Fruit Exporters Association says currently the U.S. is Iran's main rival in the international pistachio market adding that some European traders misuse the U.S. imposed sanctions on Iran.

Mr. Mohammad Hossein Shamsfard in an interview

with ILNA pointed to the latest development in the international pistachio market, saying that last year pistachio was traded for \$8,000 per ton but this year the price has fallen to \$6,500 per ton because the U.S. has lowered the price of its product.

He noted that the U.S. with its pistachio, Turkey with its raisins and Arab countries with their dates are of major rivals of Iran in the international markets.

Shamsfard added that export of pistachio has been in good condition this year and it is still good, adding that of course one should not forget that season of harvesting pistachio has just begun and they have not been exported, and in the upcoming days exports of fresh products will start.

He claimed exporters have no major problems abroad and their major problems are in the country because of constant changes of regulations by the Central Bank which confuse the exporters.

Shamsfard added that it is predicted pistachio product to be between 200,000 to 230,000 tons this year while it was 175,000 tons last year.

He also pointed to the problems resulted by the sanctions, saying that exporters cannot get their money easily and all activities have been affected by the sanctions because exporters cannot have banking accounts in other countries.

Shamsfard noted that last year China was the main destination for Iran's pistachio and Europe was the second and Arab states were the third. He admitted some European traders misuse the U.S. sanctions and they pay the money with delay under the pretext of sanctions and Iranian exporters cannot do any or take any legal action.

He reiterated Iran's pistachio in the international market is a strong rival, dubbed the U.S., whose lowering of the price of pistachio makes Iran to suffer losses but this year it has not announced its price for pistachio yet.

Design of Sungun Concentrate Project Based on Latest Exploratory Results

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The operator of phase 3 of Sungun copper concentration plant Mr. Mehdi Foroohi says this project has been designed for boosting extractable mineral materials in Sungun Copper Complex as well as for supply of concentrate feedstock and completion of production cycle in the complex.



According to NICICO, Fotoohi pointed to the approach of the CEO of National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) Dr. Ardeshtir Saad Mohammadi which is to increase production and more boom in economic development. He further said that the phase 3 of Sungun copper condensate is like phases 1 and 2 of the complex which has been designed for arrival of 7m tons of soil per year, production of 150m tons of copper concentrate per year, and production of 1500 tons of molybdenum concentrate per year.

The operator of the phase 3 of the project also said the amount of extractable mineral materials stored in Sungun Complex is over one billion tons, adding that the main reason for implementation of this project is exactly related to storage of extractable mineral materials.

Fotoohi noted that the value of rial and forex investment of this project is around 30,000b rials for construction of stones crushing, transfer cable of materials, plant and lateral parts, noting that some 12,000b rials of budget has been estimated to be need for the project for transfer of waste water and supply of the treated water.

He reiterated that major part of main equipment of this line has been purchased, adding that mostly main parts of this project will be domestically-made and only small part will need to be imported.

Fotoohi noted that the project is currently in the excavation stage and the consultant of the project has been chosen.

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT



PERMIT NO : 1399.2932

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY - AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 31-32-09999-9009-7

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

ITEMS	MATERIAL DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
01	DRILL PIPE 2-7/8" OD,10.4 #,S-135,RANGE 2,2-7/8" IF CONN	31000 (FEET)

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 6,229 EURO or 1,649,503,800/- RIAL in favor of NISOC.

Tender documents including the materials through technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via:

www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN

PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL

NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

Bldg, No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex, kony-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran

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UK PM Gives October 15 Deadline for Brexit Deal

LONDON (Dispatches) - British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has given an October 15 deadline for a post-Brexit trade agreement with the European Union, brushing off fears about “no-deal” chaos if talks fail.

The eighth round of negotiations resume in London this week, with both sides talking increasingly tough, amid accusations of intransigence and political brinkmanship.

The UK’s chief negotiator, David Frost, did little to raise expectations about a breakthrough, promising no compromise on London’s red lines, in a rare newspaper interview published on Sunday.



India Reports Global Daily Record Of New Coronavirus Cases

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - India added more than 90,000 cases of the novel coronavirus on Sunday, a global daily record, according to data from the federal health ministry.

There were 90,632 new cases in the 24 hours to Sunday, according to the data from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, while the number of deaths rose by 1,065 to 70,626.

The country is set to pass Brazil on Monday as the second most affected country by total infections and will be behind only the United States, which has 6.4 million cases and nearly 193,000 deaths. Coronavirus cases in India have reached 4.1 million and about 3.2 million affected people have been treated so far, the government data showed.



Scores of Protesters Detained in Belarus



MINSK (Reuters) - Security forces in Belarus detained scores of protesters and were filmed beating a man as he lay on the street, as the authorities launched a crackdown on mass demonstrations against President Alexander Lukashenko.

Nearly a month after an election which Lukashenko’s opponents say he rigged, tens of thousands of people marched through Minsk, many decked out in red-and-white opposition colours and shouting “go away!” and “you’re a rat!”.

The authorities had laid barbed wire on the streets, and deployed military vehicles, prisoner vans, water cannons, helmeted riot police and plain clothes officers with masks and truncheons to try to contain the demonstrations.

At least 100 people were detained, the Russian news agency Interfax quoted the government as saying, while the human rights group Spring-96 put the figure at more than 200. Local media also showed protests and detentions in other cities.

A witness said the harsh treatment of the protesters appeared to mark an escalation by the authorities after weeks of comparative restraint, although the violence was not as widespread and indiscriminate as in the protests’ first days.

Footage from local media outlet TUT.BY showed a masked man beating a protester as he lay on the ground. Plain clothes officers could be seen smashing the glass door of a cafe to get at protesters sheltering inside.

“We ran into a cafe to hide from the riot police, they broke the glass, burst inside, pulled out three people, beat at least one,” Evgeny, a 28-year-old protester, said while waiters cleaned up the smashed glass.

A witness described helmeted security forces and men in plain clothes detaining at least two dozen protesters near President Alexander Lukashenko’s residence, and beating and kicking another man as he lay on the ground.

Some protesters left chanting “we’ll be back”.

An ambulance arrived at another cafe, where another witness said a man had been beaten by men with truncheons and could only walk with difficulty.

TUT.BY described people jumping into the Svislach River to escape the police in Minsk. Protests also took place outside the capital. In the city of Brest near the Polish border, video footage from TUT.BY showed women shouting “shame” at masked members of the security forces who dragged people away.

Internal Affairs Minister Yuri Karayev defended the actions of the security forces.

“They talk about the brutality of the Belarusian police, and I want to say this: there are no more humane, restrained and cool-headed police anywhere in the world,” he said, according to the official Belta news agency.

Typhoon Hits South Korea After Sparking Landslides in Japan

SEOUL (Dispatches) - A powerful typhoon lashed South Korea on Monday after smashing into southern Japan with record winds and heavy rains that left four people missing in a landslide.

Half a million people were without power after Typhoon Haishen roared past Japan’s southern-most main island of Kyushu, ripping off roofs and dumping half a metre (20 inches) of water in just a day.

Rescue workers were picking through mud and detritus after a hillside collapsed in rural Miyazaki.

Dozens of police officers were on their way to help, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters in Tokyo. At least two other deaths had been reported during the storm, he said, although the causes were not immediately known.

Haishen, which came on the heels of another powerful typhoon, crashed into Okinawa on Saturday and moved northwards throughout Sunday.

Around 1.8 million people were told to seek shelter, for fears that the 200 kilometre-per-hour (135 mile-per-hour) winds would wreak havoc on Japan’s wooden housing stock.

Portland Police Arrest Dozens on 100th Day of Protests

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Protesters in Portland threw rocks and firebombs at police who in turn made more than 50 arrests and used tear gas on the 100th day of demonstrations in the Oregon state against racism and police brutality.

Police described what they called “tumultuous and violent conduct” by protesters on the city’s Southeast Stark Street.

One of the firebombs caught a community member on fire and he was taken to hospital, Portland police said in a statement, adding that a sergeant was also struck by a commercial-grade firework that injured his hand.

“This is a riot. Police are giving announcements to disperse. People are throwing Molotov cocktails,” Portland police said on Twitter.

Police said officers used tear gas among other crowd control measures to disperse the gathering, which the Oregonian newspaper had estimated to be about 400.

Portland has seen nightly protests for more than three months that have at times turned into violent clashes between demonstrators and officers, as well as between right- and left-wing groups.

The nightly protests were sparked by the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May after a white police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

Floyd’s death triggered similar protests nationwide, but it is in Portland - a city of 650,000 of which more than 70 percent are white - that activists have remained on the streets practically every night, demanding racial justice and police accountability.

President Donald Trump has cast the city as being under siege by “thugs” engaged in “domestic terrorism”. though the demonstrations have been peaceful for the most part.

Tensions escalated again last weekend after a man identified as a supporter of a right-wing group was shot and killed.

Turkey Begins Military Exercises in Northern Cyprus

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey’s armed forces on Sunday began annual exercises in the breakaway republic of Northern Cyprus - an entity recognised only by Ankara - as tensions continue to rise with Greece in the eastern Mediterranean.

Turkey’s hunt for gas and oil reserves in waters claimed by Greece has put a huge strain on the relationship between the two NATO members. As tensions run high, the Turkish military began its exercises called “Mediterranean Storm” with the Turkish Cypriot Security Command, Vice President Fuat Oktay said on Twitter.

“The security priorities of our country and the TRNC [Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus] are indispensable, along with diplomatic solutions in the eastern Mediterranean,” Oktay said.

The Turkish defence ministry also tweeted the military exercises, which last until Thursday, continued “successfully”. Cyprus is divided between the Greek Cypriot-run south - an EU member state - and the Turkish Cypriot north.

Turkey has stationed tens of thousands of troops in the north of the island since its 1974 invasion, which followed a coup engineered by military rulers in Greece.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and

European Council President Charles Michel discussed developments in the eastern Mediterranean on Sunday during a phone call. The Turkish leader “invited EU institutions and member states to be fair, impartial, and objective and to act responsibly on regional issues, particularly the eastern Mediterranean”, the president’s office said in a statement.

Michel said on Friday that European Union leaders will decide on a “carrot and stick” approach to Turkey when they meet on September 24-25, proposing a conference to defuse tensions. Erdogan on Saturday raised the stakes by warning Greece: “They will either understand the language of politics and diplomacy, or on the field through bitter experiences.”

France said Turkey’s escalating conflict with Greece and Cyprus will be the main subject at this month’s European Council meeting, when sanctions will be considered against Ankara. Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said he and his counterparts in other EU countries had already discussed “the range of reprisals we could take with regards to Turkey”.

Turkey embarked on a military-backed hydrocarbon exploration venture in waters between Greece and Cyprus on August 10, ratcheting up tensions in a strategic corridor of the Eastern Mediterranean.



Hong Kong Police Fire Pepper Balls At Protesters

HONG KONG (Reuters) - Police fired rounds of pepper balls at protesters in Hong Kong on Sunday and arrested almost 300 after demonstrators took to the streets to oppose the postponement of legislative elections and a new national security law imposed by China.

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam postponed the Sept. 6 election for seats in the Asian financial hub’s Legislative Council for a year in July because of a spike in coronavirus cases.

The move dealt a blow to the pro-democracy opposition which hoped to win a historic majority in the Council, where only half the seats are directly elected and the other half are appointed members who mostly support Beijing.

“Today is supposedly our voting day, we need to resist to fight back for our vote,” said a 70-year-old woman surnamed Wong as she marched with other demonstrators.

The poll would have been the former British colony’s first official vote since Beijing imposed new security legislation in late June. The government insists there was no political motive behind the delay.

Thousands of police were stationed around the bustling Kowloon peninsula as hundreds of marchers waved placards and chanted popular anti-government slogans such as “liberate Hong Kong”. These slogans are now banned under the new security law. Police said they arrested 298 people, mainly for illegal gatherings, in a notice on their Facebook page.

Several well-known activists were arrested during the demonstration including Figo Chan, the vice-convenor of the Civil Human Rights Front and former legislator Leung Kwok-hung, also known as “Long Hair”, according to a post on Chan’s Facebook page.

Anti-government demonstrations have declined this year mainly because of limits on group gatherings, imposed to counter the spread of coronavirus, and the security law, which punishes actions China sees as subversive, secessionist, terrorist or colluding with foreign forces. Critics say the law aims to quash dissent in the city, while supporters say it will bring more stability after a year of often-violent anti-government and anti-China unrest.





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J, balcony
marble fl
Fully Furn

Shanon (adviser)

Niavaran Apt (\$5000)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
S, J, & pkg
marble floor
Fully Furn

Parsian

(\$2400)
Nice view
Gheitarieh
220sq.m, 3bdrs
S/pool, S, J
gym, & F.F

Farmanieh Apt (\$2300)
220sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, F.F

Jordan (\$1700)
150sq.m, 2bdrs, F.F

(\$10000)
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EEC Eyes to Grant Uzbekistan Observer Status

TASHKENT (Dispatches) - At a meeting of the Council of the Eurasian Economic Commission, a draft decision of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council on the issue of granting Uzbekistan the status of an observer state at the EAEU was considered, Trend reports via press service of the EEC.

The final decision will be made by the heads of state of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

Earlier, the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev addressed the President of Belarus, Chairman of the SEEC Alexander Lukashenko with a request to consider the issue of granting the country the status of an observer state under the EAEU.



Pakistanis in Tehran Mark 55th Anniversary of Defense Day

By: F. Taherpour

TEHRAN – Pakistan Embassy in Tehran on Sunday, September 6, held a ceremony to mark the 55th Anniversary of the 1965 Pakistan-India War, Defense Day.

In a ceremony which was held at Pakistan Ambassador's Residence, Pakistani nationals gathered to mark the day in style where several distinguished guests, diplomats and military officials were present.

After recitation of some verses of the Holy Quran, Pakistan Ambassador Rahim Hayat Qureshi delivered a speech on the occasion of this day.

In his speech addressing the participants, Mr. Qureshi said, "Today we are celebrating our 55th Defence Day of Pakistan that is traditionally commemorated on September 6 to recall with pride the sacrifices rendered by our valiant Armed Forces in the war of 1965 in defending our beloved motherland. This was not by the force of arms but by the forces of dedication, professionalism and above all, honor."

He then added, "The Armed Forces of Pakistan are known for their high standards of commitment, proficiency and professionalism. With a humble beginning at the time of Pakistan's independence in 1947, they are now a formidable force to safeguard Pakistan's national interests, and counter threats to our national security."

The Ambassador further noted that Pakistan has also contributed significantly in global campaigns against piracy through participation of its Navy in Combined Maritime Forces. Pakistan Navy has the honor to be the only regional Navy to have contributed in such efforts.

This celebration and remembrance, however, is not just limited to a single day but rather its symbolism spreads wide and far. It is an emblem of our desire to have peaceful coexistence with honor and dignity, Mr. Qureshi added.

The Pakistan Ambassador concluded his speech by saying, "Last but not least, something related to our brother country of Iran. Our two countries not only share geographical borders but a common heritage and values based upon religion, culture, traditions and ethnicity. We have excellent defense cooperation."

Then Pakistan's defense and army attache Brigadier Imran Kashif Chaudhry in a speech highlighted some braveries of Pakistan Army. He said, "6th September is a landmark in the history of Pakistan. Today's date of 6 September marks the 55th Anniversary of the 1965 Pakistan-India War, when the valiant Armed Forces of Pakistan successfully repulsed the enemy's aggression and defended the Homeland. Therefore, Defence Day of Pakistan signifies courage, bravery, passion and sacrifice. Today in this beautiful evening in Tehran, this glorious day is being observed to pay tribute to the country's martyrs and to honor their supreme sacrifices and to reaffirm commitment to defending Pakistan against all threats. We salute the gallant sons of soil who laid down their lives while defending Pakistan, and pay respect to their families for unparalleled sacrifices, they rendered for the nation. We also salute the courage and resolve of the mothers, fathers and families of our martyrs who demonstrated unsurpassed national spirit and perseverance. As Pakistan is moving towards the path of progress, we shall always remember supreme sacrifices of these sons who laid down their lives for our prosperous tomorrow."

He concluded his speech, saying "In the end I would like to say a few words about Pak-Iran relations in Persian Language. Islamic Republic of Iran is surely one of the most important neighbors of Pakistan and we accord great importance to our relations with Iran in different areas, particularly in the defense sector. Defense and military cooperation between Pakistan and Iran have seen considerable improvement in recent years which can be gauged from regular exchange of visits at various levels during the past few years. Improvement in bilateral."

Portugal's Exports and Tourist Arrivals Drop in Second Quarter

LISBON (Dispatches) - Portugal's record economic contraction in the second quarter saw exports of goods and services plunge by 40% as the coronavirus eroded revenue from overseas tourists, a breakdown of official GDP data showed.

Data from the National Statistics Institute (INE) confirmed its previous estimate that, between April and June, gross domestic product shrank 16.3% from a year earlier and 13.9% from the preceding quarter. It gave a breakdown of GDP components such as domestic and external demand.

Tourism is classified as an export under Portugal's GDP calculations because the sector brings in money from overseas. It was the sector worst affected by the pandemic.

The number of foreign tourists visiting Portugal in July was down 83% from a year earlier to around 305,800, while in June the fall was of 96%.

Portugal's unemployment rate rose to 8.1% in July from 7.3% in June, according to INE.

Exports of goods and services fell by around 40% from a year earlier to 13.3 billion euros in the second quarter of 2020, the data showed. Exports of just services, which are predominantly tourism-related, plunged 56% to around 3 billion euros. Private consumption dropped by around 14% to 28 billion euros in the second quarter from a year earlier and investment fell nearly 11% to around 9 billion euros, together accounting for most of the steep GDP contraction.

"It was a brutal stop that the Portuguese economy had and we are still only seeing the tip of the iceberg," President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa told reporters after the data was released. Though tourism activity picked up in July from the previous month, according to a separate INE release, the coronavirus outbreak still devastated the industry as travel restrictions kept visitors from Britain - Portugal's largest market - away until late August.



France Set to Close GDP Gap on Germany With Public Sector Rebound

PARIS (FT) - France is set to close the economic gap with Germany that opened up because of differences in how the countries measured the impact of the coronavirus lockdown on their public sectors, according to economists.

The French economy shrank almost 19 per cent in the first six months of the year, dragged down by the sharp drop in activity in its vast public sector, while Germany's contracted 11.5 per cent in the same period. Gilles Moëc, chief economist at French insurer Axa, said the drop in public sector activity was "a significant issue" after it knocked 2.5 percentage points off the country's gross domestic product in the second quarter, while it boosted Germany's economy 0.3 per cent.

Assuming French government activity has returned to pre-pandemic levels, Mr Moëc estimated it would "mechanically lift French third-quarter GDP by 3.9 per cent", adding: "This would offset quite some of the differential with Germany."

France and Germany suffered record GDP contractions in the second quarter as offices, factories and schools were closed and their healthcare systems prioritised coronavirus patients. But France's lockdown was more severe and lasted longer than Germany's.

During France's six-week lockdown, many of its millions of public sector employees could not go to work or do their jobs remotely at home. France's public sector accounts for more than a fifth of its economy, one of the largest proportions in Europe.

Insee, the French statistics agency, assessed that non-healthcare public sector employee numbers fell 25 per cent during the lockdown — reducing input — even though they continued to be paid.

Idle Money in S. Korea Surpasses W1,200tr Mark

SEOUL (Dispatches) - The volume of short-term floating capital in South Korea surpassed the 1,200 trillion won (\$900 billion) mark, as the government seeks to funnel the liquidity into a 20 trillion fund tied to the Korean New Deal package, data showed Sunday.

The amount of cash and other short-term capital totaled 1,273.6 trillion won as of end-June, data compiled by the Bank of Korea and the Korea Financial Investment Association showed.

By asset, the M1 money supply, which is essentially cash, came to 1058.1 trillion won, while money market accounts reached 135 trillion won. Money held in brokerages came to 46.2 trillion won.

The total volume has been gaining a monthly average of some 42 trillion won since March, when the figure came to 1,148 trillion won. It used to gain around 20 trillion won monthly, previously, prompting concerns from onlookers over the flow of excess liquidity into either the heated housing or stock markets.

The increase in the volume of idle money here followed the central bank's decision to slash its benchmark interest rate to the record-low of 0.5 percent, to provide cushion for the market hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

But this in turn dragged down yields on fixed deposits offered by commercial lenders. Such low-risk investments offered by commercial banks have been a popular option here for decades, but the Bank of Korea's latest move pushed most of the lenders' yields on 1-year fixed deposits under 1 percent-mark.

Despite government efforts to cool down the real estate market with a series of tough measures, apartment prices in Seoul have yet to display solid signs of stabilization. The market price of large-sized apartments in Seoul surpassed the 2 billion won mark in August, according to the monthly housing price trend report released last month by KB Kookmin Bank.

The nation's benchmark Kospi has been on a bullish run for some time, driven by tech companies and initial public offerings of major firms here, including gaming firm Kakao Games.

President Moon Jae-in asked government officials on Thursday to help funnel the nation's floating capital into the 20 trillion won "New Deal Fund," which aims to attract private and retail investors to fund projects under the economic package. Tax benefits would be offered to those who decide to invest in certain projects.



Financing Economic Recovery

By: Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana

As the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the length and breadth of Asia and the Pacific, finance ministries are continuing their relentless efforts to inject trillions of dollars for emergency health responses and fiscal packages. With continued lockdown measures and restricted borders, economic rebound seems uncertain.

Compared to 2019's economic situation, over the past six months, countries in Asia and the Pacific have been experiencing sharp drops in foreign exchange inflows due to declines in export earnings, remittances, tourism and FDI. This is worrying as policymakers are tackling difficult choices over how to prioritize development spending, while continuing to expand their squeezed fiscal space.

The United Nations is contributing through a global initiative on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond, co-convened by Canada and Jamaica, to articulate a comprehensive financing strategy to safeguard the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Governments are united together to ensure that adequate financial resources are available to steer an inclusive, sustainable and resilient post-COVID recovery. In the Asia-Pacific region, several countries have already adopted financing plans in three key areas. They aim to address the challenge of diminished fiscal space and debt vulnerability; to ensure sustainable recovery, consistent with the ambitions of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda; and to harness the potential of regional cooperation in support of financing for development.

The development arm of the United Nations in our region, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has recently launched its first-ever Regional Conversation Series on Building Back Better. We are joining forces with ministers, decision makers, private sectors and heads of international agencies to share collective insights in sharing pathways to resilient recovery from ongoing health pandemic and economic collapse.

To improve the fiscal space and manage high levels of debt distress, a growing call for extending the debt moratorium under global initiatives like the Debt Service Suspension initiative (DSSI) is timely. Central Banks can continue to keep the balance right of supporting the economy and maintaining financial stability. This further

involves enhancing tax reforms and improving debt management capacities, while using limited fiscal space to invest in priority sectors. Exploring sustainability-oriented bonds and innovative financing instruments options such as debt swaps for SDG investment should be explored further.

In addition to economic considerations, the policy paradigm and financing architecture for recovery plans must mainstream affordable, accessible and green infrastructure standards, while promoting social equality and environmental sustainability principles as enshrined in the Paris Agreement. As we scale up the use of digital technology and innovative applications, the financing support of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) must go hand in hand with these national job-rich recovery strategies.

The Regional Conversation on Financing for Development highlighted that no country could take this agenda forward alone. Regionally coordinated financing policies can restart trade, reorganize supply chains and revitalize sustainable tourism in a safe manner. Thankfully, several countries in the region have valuable experiences to share.

Across Asia and the Pacific, governments must pool financial resources to create regional investment funds in areas such liquidity funds for sustainability, funds for resilience and travel funds to relaunch our economies. Strengthening regional cooperation platforms to ensure that all countries receive an equitable number of doses of the vaccine on short notice to everyone everywhere is particularly essential. Without an end to the pandemic, the economic and social costs can't be contained.

Through ESCAP, we can scale these efforts across the region, working closely with our member States, the private sector and innovators to build a collective financing response to mobilize the necessary additional resources. Together, we can chart financing strategies of Asia and the Pacific which can enhance societal well-being and economic resilience to future pandemics and crises.

Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana is the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific



25th Iran Oil Show To Be Held in October

TEHRAN (Shana) -- The 25th International Exhibition of Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemicals will be held from October 12 to 15.

According to the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), the announcement of the headquarters of the International Exhibition of Iranian Oil states reads: "The event will be held from 12 to 15 October, 2020."

Based on the decisions taken in cooperation with non-governmental trade unions

in the Exhibition Policy Council, this special edition of the expo will be held especially for oil and energy specialists.

To this end, only senior, middle and operational managers of the public sector, managers of the private and cooperative sectors, distinguished professors and students of the country's universities, political officials and guests of exhibitors and specialized professional associations will purposefully participate in the course.



Street Kids Are Whole World's Problem

VENICE (AFP) - It took Majid Majidi four months and nearly 4,000 auditions to find the dynamic street children stars of "Khorsid" (Sun Children), the Iranian director's latest movie premiering Sunday in Venice.

But the five kids lucky enough to be cast -- one of whom accompanied Majidi to the prestigious Venice film festival on the Lido -- are just a handful of the world's 152 million street children who face a grim future without society's intervention, the director said.

"The whole world has this problem -- kids who have to work to be able to live and let their families live," Majidi said.

"Many of these kids are selling items in the streets, or underground. They have the worst conditions but it's not limited to Iran, it's everywhere, unfortunately."

Despite the heavy subject matter, an adventure story plot and Majidi's ability to find humanity and humour in the face of adversity help highlight the spirit, intelligence and potential of Majidi's young subjects.

In the film, 12-year-old Ali (Rouhollah Zamani) and his three friends help support their families through odd jobs, even stealing a tyre or two. One day, they are told a hidden treasure is buried underneath a school for street children. To dig for it, they must enrol.

Majidi said he deliberately sought a light touch, even including unexpected moments of humour that had the audience cheering at a press screening.

"The topics are already very sad, very heavy. So in order to be able to keep the viewers engaged, you don't need to force them into a heavy, sad situation," Majidi told AFP, speaking through an interpreter.

"I wanted to do a mixture of light and heavy and play between those so people can stand to watch this misery."

The film is one of 18 in competition for the festival's top prize, the Golden Lion. Just before departing for the festival, lead actor Zamani tested positive for coronavirus and could not travel, Majidi said, adding that the youngster was fine, though disappointed.

Actress Shamila Shirzad, 13, made the trip, however. In the film, Shirzad and her younger brother played roles that differed little from their actual lives. As Afghans



without papers in Tehran, they worked selling items in the subway while living under the constant threat of their family being sent to a refugee camp.

"I was born in Iran and started working when I was five and went to school," where Majidi found her, she said at a press conference.

Some three to four million Afghans are currently living in Iran, their situation worsened by their illegal status and the prejudice they face, said the director, whose 2001 film, "Baran" focused on Afghan refugees in Iran.

Majidi cautioned that the plight of street children was not limited to one country or region, saying the world could not afford to ignore these kids' potential.

"These (children) are supposed to be the future of humanity, and what is happening to the future of humanity is disastrous," Majidi said.

Responsibility goes "beyond the state," he said. "The responsibility is to understand and be aware of the children's situation, and that concerns us all, not just those who govern us."

COVID-19 Vaccine Developers Prepare Joint Safety Pledge

LONDON (Reuters) - Several COVID-19 vaccine developers, including Pfizer Inc PFE.N, Johnson & Johnson JNJ.N and Moderna Inc MRNA.O, plan to issue a public pledge not to seek government approval until their vaccine candidates are proven to be safe and effective, the Wall Street Journal reported on Friday.

The companies would pledge to adhere to high scientific and ethical standards in the conduct of clinical studies and in their manufacturing processes, the Journal report said, citing the draft of a joint statement that is still being finalized.

The companies might issue the pledge as soon as early next week, the report added, citing two people familiar with the matter.

The news comes amid rising concerns that political pressure ahead of the Nov. 3 election could weigh on the safety and effectiveness of a potential vaccine for the respiratory illness.

White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said on Thursday that even though the stakes are high for President Donald Trump, who is squaring off against former Vice President Joe Biden, there is no political pressure on the U.S. health regulator to quickly approve a vaccine.

AstraZeneca Plc, Pfizer and Moderna are among those farthest along in the race to develop vaccines to prevent COVID-19 infection or limit its severity, with their candidates in late-stage clinical trials.

Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson did not immediately respond to Reuters request for comment.

China Wants to Decouple From U.S. Tech, too

LONDON (FT) - It was perfect ju-jitsu. After weeks of watching US president Donald Trump pressure Chinese tech company ByteDance to sell its social media app TikTok to Microsoft, Beijing struck back, using one of Mr Trump's own weapons of choice — export controls. Chinese authorities expanded the Middle Kingdom's list of controlled exports to include algorithms, which are of course TikTok's main asset.

As the mother of a teenager who spends too much time watching 15-second bursts of physical comedy on the app, I can tell you that they are very good at keeping you hooked.

The move is in large part political. TikTok is hardly as strategic as, say, the 5G equipment maker Huawei. Yet as one Chinese investor put it to me, it wouldn't do for Beijing to allow the Trump administration to appear to "force a liquidation sale" of the viral video app, even at a time when Chinese authorities are clearly keen to avoid any build up of tensions between the countries before November elections.

But the use of export controls by Beijing to potentially thwart a deal also underscores that it is not just America, but also China, that is moving to decouple its technology industry. Already, emerging nations represent a larger export market for China than the US, according to Gavekal Dragonomics/Macrobond data. Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative and its trade-based diplomacy in places such as Africa and the Middle East,



combined with the rise of the digital renminbi, will make it ever easier for China to grow its exports to places other than the US.

The Trump administration has tried to offset these efforts by denying Huawei the US-made chips and software that it requires for its ambitious global 5G rollout. But no expert that I've spoken to on the topic thinks that this will

prevent China from executing a longer term decoupling from the US tech ecosystem. If anything, the restrictions have only sped up China's efforts to develop its own chip industry.

Meanwhile, the Chinese have been able to access things such as US patents, scientific papers, and even American corporate innovations. That includes groundbreaking work on artificial intelligence, some of which has been published or developed open-source. This is happening at the same time as China's own legal protections around things like intellectual property and patents have been getting stronger by some measures.

That raises an interesting question: America is still home to the most cutting-edge technological innovations, but which country will be better at inventing the new new thing in the future?

You could argue, as Chinese technologist and venture capitalist Kai-Fu Lee has, that it will be easier for China to ramp up innovation using its existing resources, and slap its own consumer brands on products churned out by an already robust and largely self-sufficient manufacturing industry.

Certainly, it sounds simpler than what the U.S. is now trying to do, which is rebuild the supply chains it has spent the past several decades outsourcing to the East. That is the advantage of having a coherent national industrial policy, as China does. The U.S. abandoned such planning decades ago with the rise of neoliberalism, which held that capital, goods and labour should flow freely without any government restriction.

The problem is that the free market first approach doesn't work quite as well in a crisis. Right after the pandemic began, for example, I interviewed the chief executives of numerous apparel companies, who were ready and eager to retool to make masks in order to fill the shortage in hospitals. They were the ones prodding the White House to help them co-ordinate these efforts, rather than the other way around. Nobody in the administration had a clue about what manufacturing resources might be immediately available to fill the PPE gaps, or how to better deploy them in a crisis.

The Trump administration's mishandling of the pandemic has, of course, been singular. But over the past few decades, U.S. policymakers have turned a blind eye as parts of the industrial supply chain were outsourced, downsized, or monopolised. They gave little thought to what the ramifications might be in a time of emergency. The focus on economic efficiency rather than resiliency led American companies to retrench in recessions with mass firings, rather than using such periods to retrain and retool, as other countries, most notably Germany, have done.

Indian Diamond Exporters Looking Beyond China

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India's diamond exporters are growing wary of the Chinese market owing to the rising tension between the two countries over the border issue and the move by Chinese authorities to carry out raids at Indian diamond facilities following the recent arrest of a local couple on the charge of smuggling diamonds.

China and Hong Kong are the major markets for Indian diamonds, accounting for 30% of India's diamond exports. Exporters have started looking at new markets such as Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Taiwan and Thailand to export diamonds, said industry executives.

They said in order to evade customs duty of 4%, diamonds are often smuggled from Hong Kong to mainland China which is a hub of manufacturing of diamond-studded jewellery.

"The escalation of tension between India and China is a matter of concern to the exporting community," Vipul Shah, managing director of diamond exporting firm Asian Star, told ET. "We are also getting information about raids in China. All these factors are creating an air of uncertainty among the diamond trade. We are looking at newer Far Eastern markets to boost our sales."

Besides, diamond traders are uncertain about the Chinese market ahead of the US presidential election as they feel US President Donald Trump might take some tough stance against China as part of his election agenda.

India's diamond trade witnessed a revival in Chinese demand in July and August. "Since China had lifted lockdown much earlier, the demand for diamond went up," said Mavji Patel, managing director of Kiran Gems, a leading diamond exporter.

However, Patel too said that if the tension between India and China escalates it will have an impact on diamond exports. He also said that since international exhibitions and shows are not taking place, it is becoming difficult to showcase products. "Sales are happening online. In gems and jewellery trade it is important that buyers see the products physically before placing orders," he said.

Meanwhile, gems and jewellery exports are projected to fall 25-30% year-on-year in this financial year as the first quarter was a "complete washout" due to the lockdown imposed to curb the outbreak of Covid-19, according to the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council. Exports of gems and jewellery from the country nosedived 41.85% in the first four months of this fiscal to Rs 25,797 crore. Exports of cut and polished diamond fell 41.66% while exports of studded gold jewellery plummeted 60.65% in April-July.

UAE Expected...

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He also described the Islamic Republic of Iran's support for Palestine and all oppressed people as an indispensable principle, saying Tehran welcomes the vigilance of Palestinians.

The United Arab Emirates and Israel announced in August they have reached a deal that will lead to a full normalization of diplomatic relations.

The move has drawn strong criticism from many Islamic countries and regional organizations.

He also said Iran would give a proportionate response if signatories to the Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), fail to fulfill their commitments under the agreement.

Khatibzadeh said parties to the nuclear accord are also supposed to comply with the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

"If any signatory wants to breach Resolution 2231 or renege on its obligations under the JCPOA in any form or shape, Iran will give a proportionate response," the spokesman said in a weekly press conference, reacting to the UK defense chief's comments.

He said in case of any such violation, Iran will withdraw from the JCPOA.

"Iran has clearly said that the breach of Resolution 2231 by signatories to the JCPOA would mean an end to Iran's presence [in the nuclear deal.] Naturally, they know this, and would not play with the last remaining chances to preserve the JCPOA," he added.

However, he said the remaining parties to the JCPOA acted unanimously in opposition to United States' efforts to reinstate a UN arms embargo and international sanctions on Iran.

"Whatever Britain has done so far has been in line with [the stance adopted by] other signatories to the JCPOA at the UN Security Council and the JCPOA Joint Commission," he noted.

"Well, they know that they have strict commitments under the JCPOA and UNSC Resolution 2231, and that the timeline of all events has been clearly mentioned in UNSC Resolution 2231," he said.

Tehran Urged to...

FROM PAGE 1

During his visit to Yazd province, 14 projects in the electricity industry, including the 230/63 kW substation in the Khezrabad district of Ashkzar city (central Iran), were put into operation.

In addition, simultaneous with the inauguration of this substation and via video conferencing, 8 small-scale power plants with a capacity of 16 MW and 3 solar power plants with a capacity of 18 MW, and with a total investment of 303 billion Tomans were put into operation in the presence of the Minister of Energy.

At the inauguration ceremony of these projects, Ardakanian noted that at the end of the nineteenth week of the "A B Iran" program (the acronyms A and B stand for water and electricity in Persian), out of a total of 250 promised projects, 105 projects, including 100 construction projects and 5 mechanism projects with an investment of 22,800 billion Tomans has been completed in 21 provinces.

The Iranian Energy Minister emphasized that it has been promised that people will feel safe and secure in terms of access to high quality, healthy and sustainable water.

Tourism Companies Exempted From Paying Rent for Lockdown Period

TEHRAN (IRNA)- Minister of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Ali-Asghar Mounesan said on Monday that Government has decided to zero the rent of the tourist sites for the tourism companies for lockdown and recess of the tourism activities until the end of 1399 (20 March, 2021).

Mounesan said that the bill to exempt the tourist sites rented by the private sectors, from paying their rent until the end of the current Iranian year was passed in the cabinet on Sunday.

He said that thanks to the lockdown many businesses were hit, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism had requested the government to extend the exemption to the end of the year.

The appraisal of the loss of the tourism sector due to the coronavirus outbreak show a 12-billion-toman loss until Iranian month of Mordad 30 (August 21), which has increased unemployment in this sector as well, he said.

He added that the government will do its best to help the tourism industry to pass through the lockdown period.

Wolves Sign Left Back Marcal From Lyon

LONDON (Reuters) - Wolverhampton Wanderers completed a second signing in as many days when they secured the services of Brazilian left back Marcal from Olympique Lyonnais on a two-year deal, the Premier League club announced on Sunday.

Wolves did not disclose the fee paid for the defender but British media reported the English club paid around two million euros (\$2.37 million) for the 31-year-old.

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Roglic Takes Tour Lead As Pogacar Grabs Stage

PARIS (Dispatches) - Slovenians took the laurels on the Tour de France on Sunday as rookie Tadej Pogacar won a Pyrenean mountain slog and his compatriot Primož Roglic grabbed the overall lead.

Overnight leader Adam Yates of Britain made a valiant effort to keep hold of the yellow jersey but fell gradually away on the final climb as the gradient hit 12 percent.

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SPORTS

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

Gasly Wins Crazy Italian Grand Prix

MONZA (Dispatches) - Pierre Gasly secured a maiden Formula One triumph on Sunday when he won a tumultuous Italian Grand Prix for the Alpha Tauri team after crashes, penalties and safety cars had tipped expectations upside down at Monza.

The first French race winner in 24 years seized his opportunity and resisted late pressure from Carlos Sainz of McLaren to claim his team's second victory with Lance Stroll finishing third for Racing Point.

"It was such a crazy race," said Gasly.

It was the Alpha Tauri outfit's second win on Italian soil – the first having been scored for them when they raced as Toro Rosso by Sebastian Vettel, his maiden F1 win in a rain-hit race in 2008. Pole sitter Lewis Hamilton was on his way to a comfortable win before a 10-second stop-go penalty for taking a pit stop when the pit lane was closed, pushed the Mercedes world champion to the back of the pack. The six-time champion eventually ended up in seventh place.

Gasly, who was dropped by Red Bull to rejoin the junior sister team last year, jumped for joy as he leapt from his car, was the first French driver to win a Grand Prix since Olivier Panis was triumphant at the 1996 Monaco Grand Prix.

"Honestly, it's unbelievable," said the 24-year-old from Rouen.

"I don't think I'm realising what's happening right now. We've been through so much in the past 18 months. I have no words." The Ferrari-bound Sainz said he was "halfway disappointed" with his first podium finish.

"You wouldn't believe I would have a chance at victory, but in a normal race I think I could have finished second behind Lewis."

Stroll said: "It's been a couple of years since I was on the podium so it's good to be back."

Lando Norris came home fourth in the second McLaren ahead of Valtteri Bottas of Mercedes and Daniel Ricciardo of Renault.

Despite the penalty, Hamilton still managed to extend his record run to 41 successive points finishes.



He has a 47-point lead over Bottas in the championship.

Hamilton also had the fastest lap of the race on Sunday as he finished ahead of Esteban Ocon in the second Renault, Daniil Kvyat in the second Alpha Tauri and Sergio Perez in the second Racing Point. Ferrari endured another torrid weekend with last year's winner from pole position Charles Leclerc walking away after surviving a high-speed crash that led to the decisive 25-minute red-flag interruption.

Four-time champion Vettel, who is leaving Ferrari after this season, retired after a brakes failure while Max Verstappen of Red Bull also retired with engine problems.

On a sunlit afternoon in the old royal park, conditions were perfect -- with an air temperature of 28 degrees and the track at 45 -- as the lights went out and Hamilton sped clear from his record 94th pole position. Behind him, Bottas struggled to depart and dropped to sixth on the opening lap as Sainz and Norris took second and third.

Verstappen also had a poor start and fell from fifth to eighth.

Ferrari's miseries, especially those of Vettel, were exposed on lap six when he pulled up at the first chicane with brake failure, smashing through the signage on the run-off area.

His left rear brake was ablaze seconds earlier. A safety car was deployed on lap 20 when Kevin Magnussen pulled up close to the pit lane entry.

Hamilton pitted immediately from the lead, but Sainz and the rest, bar Giovinazzi, stayed out -- their teams obeying a signal that the pit lane was closed. Hamilton missed it.

This left Sainz in the lead for McLaren before the pit lane reopened -- Magnussen's Haas car having been pushed to safety -- and both Sainz and Norris pitted. Hamilton led, but was aware he faced a possible penalty, before the safety car came in on lap 23.

Zverev Rolls Into U.S. Open Quarters

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Alexander Zverev slammed down 18 aces en route to demolishing Alejandro Davidovich Fokina 6-2 6-2 6-1 in the fourth round of the U.S. Open on Sunday.

After an early break for the 2-1 lead, the 23-year-old German never let his Spanish opponent get a foothold in the match. He produced 39 winners and dropped just one service game during a ruthless performance.

Davidovich Fokina grabbed a 2-0 lead in the second set but the advantage was shortlived as Zverev broke back before racing away with the set. He sealed it with an ace.

The Spaniard barely had a chance to make an impact on the world number seven's serve, the fastest clocking at 139 mph, just shy of his personal record of 142 mph.

Davidovich Fokina, who took a medical time out to treat a foot problem, tried to rattle Zverev by attempting some drop shots but the fleet-footed fifth seed moved nimbly around the court.

"I'm in the quarter-finals and that can only be a good thing," said Zverev, who reached the Australian Open semi-finals earlier this year. "I've been waiting for this moment for six months."



Babos Slams Injustice Of U.S. Open Exclusion

NEW YORK (AFP) - Hungary's Timea Babos slammed the "injustice" of her exclusion from the US Open on Sunday, a day after she and doubles partner Kristina Mladenovic were kicked out of the tournament.

Top seeds Babos and French partner Mladenovic were told on Saturday they would not be allowed to take part in the doubles after New York officials ordered Mladenovic to quarantine. Mladenovic was one of several players who was in contact with player Benoit Paire, who was withdrawn on the eve of the competition last Sunday after testing positive for coronavirus.

In a post on Instagram, Babos, who had no contact with Paire and was not required to undergo quarantine, said she had been left distraught by her and Mladenovic's exclusion. "I'm at home. I'm sitting in my kitchen and crying," Babos wrote. "I'm just starting to realise what happened and I don't understand. It's terribly unfair."

"I don't see any reasonable reason why it turned out like this."

Babos pointed out that Mladenovic had taken multiple tests for COVID-19 in the past week and all had come back negative.

"Let's look at the facts: Benoit Paire's positive test dated back ten days before (after 4 negatives) and in recent days his results were negative," Babos said. "The others close to him have never tested positive. Kiki (Mladenovic) has had 11 -- repeat 11 -- negative tests for Covid-19. And yet, we were locked up," the 27-year-old Hungarian added.

Catlin Clinches Andalucia Masters With Highest Winning Score

MADRID (Dispatches) - John Catlin of the United States clinched the Andalucia Masters at Valderrama on Sunday with the highest winning score on the European Tour since 1992.

The American golfer ended the tournament with a two-over par 286 to edge former world number one and two-time major winner Martin Kaymer by one shot.



Back to School for Suarez in Bid for Juventus Move

MILAN (Reuters) - Barcelona forward Luis Suarez is due to sit a language test on Monday in a bid to obtain Italian citizenship that would enable him to move to Serie A champions Juventus, Italian and Uruguayan media said Sunday.

There have been widespread reports that Juventus are chasing the 33-year-old Uruguayan who, if the moves go through, would line up alongside defender Giorgio Chiellini, the Italy defender he famously bit in a World Cup match in 2014.

However, Juventus have already used up their limit of two non-EU signings following the arrival of Brazilian midfielder Arthur Melo and U.S. international Weston McKinney and would only be able to add Suarez if he can obtain an EU passport.

The media reports said that Suarez is eligible for Italian naturalisation as his wife is a citizen of the country, although it was not clear how the process, which usually takes several years, would be completed in one month.

The Uruguayan television program Polideportivo, as well as several Italian newspapers, said on Sunday that Suarez would take a level B1 Italian test -- regarded as lower intermediate and the minimum level required -- on Monday.

The new Serie A season starts on Sept. 19 although the transfer window does not close until Oct. 5.

Mancini Will Rotate Team to Reduce Injury Risk

ROME (Reuters) - Italy coach Roberto Mancini will rotate his team for the Nations League match against the Netherlands on Monday in a bid to reduce the risk of injury to his players.

Mancini's side drew 1-1 at home to Bosnia on Friday and he said he was reluctant to make players play twice in four days, at the start of the new season.

The opening Nations League matches are being played before the start of the new domestic seasons. "It's likely we will change a lot of players," he said. "Some of them have only had two training sessions and they arrived at our training camp without having played a game. It's an anomalous situation."

"I don't want us to have any injuries -- it's unthinkable, for example, that a player like Stefano Sensi can play two games in four days," he added. Inter Milan midfielder Sensi picked up a series of injuries last season.

Mancini expressed faith in Moise Kean, 20, and Nicolo Zaniolo, 21, who were dropped from his squad last year after arriving late for a training camp.

"Both Zaniolo and Moise Kean have really matured recently and I hope they continue like that as they are on the right path," he said. "They will make us and their clubs happy."

"Nicolo can play both as a right-sided attacking winger and in a three-man midfield, and he has enormous margin for improvement."



Raptors Knot Up Series With Celtics at 2-2

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Toronto Raptors beat Boston Celtics 100-93 in Game 4 of its Eastern Conference semifinal series, while Denver Nuggets overcame Los Angeles Clippers. Pascal Siakam scored a series-best 23 points, Kyle Lowry added 22 and the Toronto Raptors evened its best-of-seven Eastern Conference semifinal series with a 100-93 win over the Boston Celtics on Saturday night near Orlando.

Serge Ibaka scored 18 points and Fred VanVleet 17 as the Raptors knotted the series after falling behind 2-0. Siakam and Lowry each had double-doubles with 11 rebounds apiece.

Jayson Tatum had 24 points and Kemba Walker 15 for the Celtics, who lost their second straight after six consecutive wins to begin the playoffs.

Siakam, Lowry and VanVleet each played north of 40 minutes for Toronto, while Tatum, Walker and Marcus Smart did the same for Boston. Game 5 will take place on Monday.

Shooting 28.3 percent from three-point range through the first three games, the Raptors went 17-of-44 (38.6 percent) from deep in the win. Conversely, the Celtics only hit seven of their 35 such chances (20.0 percent).

A Lowry three-pointer gave Toronto an 85-75 lead with 10:53 remaining in the fourth quarter. Boston got within five, 91-86, on a Jaylen Brown three, his first hit from deep in 10 chances.

Lowry responded with a three, and the Raptors led 94-86 with 4:44 to go. Toronto went up 98-87 on two Lowry free throws with 2:20 left and held on.

