

**Military Forces From Iran, China, And Russia Are Scheduled to Take Part in Joint Military Exercises With a Number of Other Countries In Southern Russia, Code-Named “Caucus 2020” Later This Month**

# IRAN NEWS

**Iran's Health Ministry Spokeswoman Sima Sadat-Lari Said on Friday That 115 More Iranians Have So Far Died Due to Coronavirus Over the Past 24 Hours, Bringing The Total Deaths to 22,913**

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2

## DOMESTIC

**Iran Scolds Arab Quartet Committee's 'Groundless' Allegations**  
> SEE PAGE 2



3

## DOMESTIC

**Tehran Calls for More Energy Cooperation With Kabul**  
> SEE PAGE 3



4

## INTERNATIONAL

**Deadlock in Arab League Over UAE-Israel Deal**  
> SEE PAGE 4



8

## SPORTS

**Raptors Force Game 7, Clippers Pip Nuggets**  
> SEE PAGE 8



## Tehran Urges London To Settle Debt Over Undelivered Tanks

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The Iranian Defense Ministry urges the United Kingdom to take “practical and expeditious” steps to settle a staggering 40-year-plus debt to Tehran over tanks that London had been supposed to deliver to the country.

In a statement, the ministry noted that British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace has, himself, confessed to his country's outstanding debt to Iran, adding that valid international rulings have also found the UK liable in the case, IRNA reported on Thursday.

British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace acknowledges the debt owed to Iran over a decades-old arms deal, saying the government is exploring every legal avenue to make the payment.

International Military Services (IMS), a subsidiary of the British Ministry of Defense, signed contracts in 1971 to sell more than 1,750 Chieftain tanks and armored vehicles to Iran. The deals were canceled after Iran's monarch Mohammad Reza Shah was deposed during the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Iran, however, had already paid for the tanks.

See Page 7

## Iran Test Fires Advanced Missiles in Combat Drills

### IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran test fires advanced missiles with different ranges during its annual military drill, designated Zolfaghar 99. The coast-to-sea, coast-to-air and sea-to-sea missiles, dubbed Shalamcheh, Nasr, Ghader and Dehlavieh were fired from the coastline, naval warships, helicopters and mobile launchers hitting mock enemy positions and target drones with high precision.

Speaking to Press TV, the Iranian army commanders said they have a long-term commitment to the region and its much-needed security. They also said, they share common concerns for regional security with their neighbors.

This came on the sideline of the progressive drills and after Iran's armed forces also conducted live fire and flight tests of long-range combat drones and fighter jets in the southern waters of the country.

See Page 7

## New Development Projects Inaugurated in Iran FTZs



### IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – President Hassan Rouhani on Thursday opened 58 development projects in northwest, south, center and east of the country.

The projects were inaugurated through a video conference due to the pandemic which has created headaches for holding various events and meetings worldwide.

The development projects with 437-million-euro investment are in Aras Free Zone (northwest), Kish and Qeshm Islands (south), Payam International Airport (north), Shiraz in Fars Province (south), Sarakhs in Khorasan Razavi Province (east) and Yazd (center).

After inauguration of those projects, 4,413 direct job opportunities will be created.

Sarakhs special economic zone enjoying good strategic and geographical situation has attracted attention of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member-states.

This economic zone is a golden gate to enter Central Asian countries, China and Russia.

It is also a trade bridge between Central Asian markets and Persian Gulf littoral states, Europe, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

President inaugurated two production and industrial units in the “Special Economic Zone and Payam International Airport” in Alborz Province via videoconferencing.

Inauguration ceremony National Development projects in Iran's Special Economic Zones all across Iran via videoconferencing was underway with President Rouhani in attendance.

The Managing Director of “Payam International Special Economic Zone and Airport” on Wednesday said: “These production and industrial units have been prepared to be set up with an investment of more than seven thousand billion Rials and employment of 722 people.”

During inauguration of some projects in free trade zones, Secretary of Iranian Free Zones High Council Morteza Bank said that according to the developmental policies in the free zones, since January till the end of the Prudence and Hope Government's term in July 2021, some 598 construction and developmental projects with an investment worth 55,000b tomans (\$3.4b euros) and creating 102,000 jobs will come on stream.

Bank who was speaking in the videoconference on the occasion of inaugurating the projects said that today 58 economic projects worth 4,800b tomans (some 438m euros and \$4.4m) were inaugurated in the free zones of the country which created 4400 direct jobs whose major source of investment and finance has been provided by the private sectors in free zones of Aras, Qeshm and Kish and special economic zones of Sarakhs, Payam, Shiraz, Kaveh and Yazd which were inaugurated simultaneously by the president.

He further said 12 projects out of those projects are carried out in Aras Free Zone, 11 projects in Kish Free Zone, 14 projects in Qeshm Free Zone, 21 projects in special economic zones of Payam, Sarakhs, Shiraz, Kaveh and Yazd, respectively.

Mr Bank noted that all these projects have been carried out and come on stream due to supports of private sector and investors in order to develop production, trade and exports in line with resistance economy policy of the country.

He then delved into details of the projects inaugurated on Thursday by President Rouhani, saying that Sarakhs Special Economic Zone is the gateway for Iran's economic exchanges with the Central Asian countries. He reiterate the project of linking Chabahar-Sarakhs railways and the transit roads of these two towns is in the works which is of the main levers of developing eastern part of the country.

See Page 7

## Yemen Launches Drone, Missile Attacks Against Saudi Capital

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Yemeni armed forces have launched missile and drones strikes against a strategic target in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, as they step up their campaign of retaliation against the aggressor kingdom.

Spokesman for the Yemeni Armed Forces Brigadier General Yahya Saree said Thursday that a domestically-developed Zofaqr ballistic missile and four Samad-3 drones were used to hit the “important target” in Riyadh, the al-Masirah television reported.

He said Yemeni forces will keep up their retaliatory raids against sensitive and strategic targets on Saudi soil as long as Riyadh and its allies fail to end their military campaign and siege against Yemen.

“We promise the criminal and aggressor Saudi regime painful operations as long as the aggression and siege continues,” the military official said. The attack on Riyadh followed four consecutive days of Yemeni air raids against Abha International Airport located near Saudi Arabia's southwestern border with Yemen.

The Saudi regime has not yet commented on the report, but it usually claims to have intercepted the drones and missiles fired from Yemen.

See Page 7

## ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian



## French Gov't Accomplish In Charlie Hebdo's Crime

French weekly Charlie Hebdo is a satirical weekly known as a far-rightist which hits the news-stands on Wednesdays in France. The hidden nature of this magazine is Zionist-oriented and it has a critical rhetoric and it also pursues the hypocritical anti-racism policy with announcing that it pursues anti-religion policy.

Kind of approach, attitude and articles of this magazine is against religions from Islam to Christianity and rarely against Judaism. This magazine has started its German language version since December 1, 2016 with circulation of 200,000 copies for distribution in Germany, Switzerland and Austria.

Charlie Hebdo first appeared in 1970 as a companion to the monthly Hara-Kiri magazine which was being published between 1960 and 1961 and it was banned several times. The French government first in 1970 banned Hara-Kiri and once banned it at the order of French Interior Minister for mocking the death of former French president Charles de Gaulle. In 1981 its publication ceased, but the magazine was resurrected in 1992 by some of its experienced staff under the new name of Charlie Hebdo (the name is an innuendo to Charles de Gaulle). The number of circulation of the magazine was low and public criticism about the magazine's low quality content almost closed it down till a group mostly Jews, it is better to say with Zionist intention and support, joined the magazine's staff and they published new Charlie Hebdo Weekly in 1992.

One of the known goals of the weekly is to spread hatred among ethnics in France first and Europe the next. This weekly has taken a dangerous and at the same time sacrilegious action to incite Muslims' sentiments so that one is ashamed to go through its content.

Before Charlie Hebdo commits such a flagrant offense, it was first a Danish magazine which had started such a dirty move which faced world Muslims' anger. Publication of derogatory anti-Islam cartoons first was hit the news-stands some 15 years ago by a Danish newspaper, and one year later, Charlie Hebdo continued publishing derogatory caricature. This offensive action was faced backlashes and faced Muslims' angry protests. The French weekly by publishing the offensive caricature intended to show “All Muslims are terrorists”.

See Page 7

## Iran's Trade With India, Japan, Faces Significant Drop

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - New data released by Iran's major trading partners show a significant drop in Iranian imports, as well as the nations' exports to Iran.

The Indian Ministry of Finance shared data Wednesday showing a 23-fold drop in India's imports from Iran in the first seven months of 2020.

India imported \$3.2 billion of products from Iran in the first seven months of 2019, with that figure dropping to a meager \$140 million in the same period in 2020.

India's Ministry of Finance also reported that the nation's exports to Iran also fell by 45 percent to \$1.575 billion.

For the first time, the trade balance between Tehran-New Delhi appears to be to the detriment of Iran, and India's exports to Iran have been eleven times more than its imports to the Islamic Republic.

Following China, India was previously Iran's largest oil customer, but has currently not bought any crude oil from Iran since the second half of 2019. India's total imports also nearly halved to \$88 billion in the first seven months of 2020, suggesting that India's imports of non-oil products from Iran may have also fallen sharply.

See Page 7



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# Armenia and Iran Discuss Bilateral Agenda

TEHRAN – At the initiative of the Armenian side, a phone conversation was held between the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Iran Zohrab Mnatsakanyan and Mohammad Javad Zarif.

“During the conversation a number of issues of bilateral agenda were discussed. Both sides highlighted the promotion of the dialogue based on traditional friendship and mutual trust, as well as the steps towards expanding the cooperation.

The interlocutors also touched upon the issues of peace and security in the South Caucasus and Middle East, as well as current challenges and the international cooperation aimed at addressing them,” the foreign ministry said in a readout.

## Iran Scolds Arab Quartet Committee’s ‘Groundless’ Allegations

*IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK*

**TEHRAN - Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran Saeed Khatibzadeh has dismissed as hackneyed and groundless the allegations raised in a statement by the self-proclaimed Arab Quartet Committee.**

In a statement released on Thursday night, Khatibzadeh expressed regret over the absurd and hackneyed contents of a statement by the self-proclaimed committee of the Arab community, and advised certain regional states to focus on the fight against the real source of threat to the region, namely the Zionist regime, instead of issuing hollow statements and serving the interests of the US and the Zionist regime.

Denouncing such boring statements as moving in the vicious circle of Iranophobia and legitimization of the illegitimate Zionist regime, the spokesman said, “The groundless allegations (against Iran) are made from the viewpoint of the countries which have made the strategic mistake of establishing relations with the Zionist regime and are now hurriedly seeking to draw attention away from the source of threat in a mistaken belief.”

Khatibzadeh said the countries that have issued the statement are involved in a series of threatening and tension-creating measures in the region, including allowing the regime that has occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem) to gain a foothold in the region, suppressing the Bahraini people’s peaceful demonstrations, providing full support for



the terrorists and ISIS criminals in Iraq and Syria, and the continuation of a cruel war waged by the bankrupt Saudi-led coalition against the oppressed people of Yemen.

On the three Iranian islands of Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and the Lesser Tunb, the spokesperson said, “Iran’s activities are within the framework of exercising the country’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, as interference from the others in this issue is obviously condemned.”

The spokesperson further noted that Iran’s military power is homegrown, emphasizing that such defense capability has never posed a threat to the neighbouring countries, and advised certain regional countries not to turn into a stockpile of arms from the U.S. and others and not to purchase imported security instead of relying on national power.

“The countries that have turned a blind eye to the plots hatched by the U.S. and the Zionist regime and have betrayed the cause of liberation of holy al-Quds by announcing their relations with the Zionist regime have no right to question Iran’s honorable support for the resistance in Palestine and Lebanon,” he concluded.

## MP Criticizes French Magazine’s Sacrilege of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Chairman of National Security and Foreign Policy Commission of the Iranian Parliament Mojtaba Zolnouri slammed insulting Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and other prophets, saying such a measure on the pretext of freedom of speech hurt Muslims’ feelings.

Zolnouri made the remarks in a meeting with French Ambassador to Iran Philippe Thiébaud.

Both sides discussed bilateral and regional issues. Referring to cooperation between Iran and France and the capacities between the two states for developing relations, Zolnouri said despite the outbreak of coronavirus and its negative effects on people’s life, it is hoped that “we pass this crisis by establishing cooperation”.

He also pointed to France stance with regard to preserving Iran nuclear deal and U.S.’ anti-Iran resolution, saying the West should comply with its



commitments under the deal.

West’s lack of commitment and following the US with regard to implementing cruel sanctions against Iran will not be acceptable, he noted

He went on to say that foreigners’ intervention is the root cause of instability and insecurity in the region.

Iran emphasizes respecting territorial

integrity and no intervention in internal affairs of other countries. Thiébaud, for his part, welcomed continuation of parliamentary cooperation between Iran and France.

He described exchanging parliamentary delegations as an important factor in reinforcing cooperation between the two countries.

French diplomat stressed his country’s commitment to Iran nuclear deal, saying continuation of negotiations among all parties will result in removing obstacles.

France is against the U.S. unilateral withdrawal from Iran deal, Thiébaud reiterated.

## Implementation of Resistance Economy Policies Thwarts U.S. Plans

TEHRAN (IP) - The First Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Eshaq Jahangiri said that if it were not for the policies of the resistance economy, the Americans would achieve their goals in confronting Iran.

Jahangiri made the remarks at the ceremony of inaugurating Iran’s top cooperative projects in Tehran, saying: “By implementing the policies of the resistance economy, Iran’s food security has been ensured and its exports of non-oil goods have also been increased.”

The First Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran also said that the Coronavirus pandemic has reduced the volume of export and import of goods, but there is no problem in supplying the basic goods of the Iranian people.

Some 383 cooperative projects worth over 30 trillion rials (about \$724 million) were inaugurated in several provinces of Iran on the occasion of the Cooperatives Week (September 3-9) with Eshaq Jahangiri in attendance.

## Tehran, Baghdad to Form Joint Committee for Arba’een Ritual

TEHRAN (IP) - The Iranian and Iraqi health ministers stressed the need to establish a joint committee to hold the glorious mourning ceremony in Arba’een.

Iran’s Minister of Health and Medical Education Saeed Namaki in a telephone conversation with Iraqi Minister of Health Hassan al-Tamimi on Thursday, referred to the outbreak of the COVID-19 and the need

to follow health guidelines, saying Muslims prove to the world that they love Imam Hussain (AS) and that it is important for them to maintain the health of the people and the lovers of Imam Hussain.

Namaki also stressed the need to expand cooperation between Tehran and Baghdad to put an end to COVID-19 and hoped that in the near future, with the eradication of this disease, Muslims will be able to visit the holy shrines again.

The Iraqi minister of health also expressed satisfaction with the reduction of cases and deaths due to COVID-19 in Iran and said: “Baghdad continuously uses Tehran’s experience to manage coronavirus disease.”

Al-Tamimi said that an average of 4,000 people in Iraq gets infected with COVID-19 every day and there are problems with COVID-19 disease susceptibility.

The Iraqi minister of health appreciated the support of the minister of health of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Iraq and hoped that it would be continued during the occasion of Arba’een.

Arba’een marks the 40th day of martyrdom of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and 72 of his companions in 680 AD in a land known today as Iraq after they refused to pledge allegiance to the tyrant Yazid.

## President Calls on Muslim World to Voice Concern Over Holy Prophet Desecration



*IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK*

TEHRAN - President Hassan Rouhani slammed the Zionists and their henchmen who were behind the Holy Prophet desecration, calling on the Muslim countries to voice concern about the plots orchestrated by Zionists against the Islamic culture and values.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the National Development projects held via videoconferencing on Thursday, Rouhani pointed to the French magazine Charlie Hebdo’s blasphemy against the Holy Prophet of Islam and said the Israeli regime beguiles some Arab Muslim countries from Palestine’s issue.

The president added that the Zionists and their allies are re-creating the path of insulting the Prophet of Islam Muhammad (PBUH) by republishing caricatures in some magazines.

French weekly Charlie Hebdo has recently reprinted the blasphemous cartoons of Prophet Muhammad; the same offensive sketches that were published by the magazine in 2015.

Following the incident, millions of people across the world took part in marches to support Prophet Muhammad. Muslim countries also held similar rallies; something that conveys a strong message.

“Today, we are in a critical situation in the world. We must defend the interests of Iran, Islam, and our values well. Fortunately, across the country in the face of any incident, whether it is the Zionists’ conspiracy against the land and the people of Palestine or their conspiracy against the culture of Islam, the people always voice their support to the oppressed peoples of the world and still are standing firm against the bullying powers,” the president pointed out.

## U.S. Spends \$100b on ICBMs While Opposing Iran Defensive Missiles

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran’s foreign minister has blasted the U.S. for its “hypocritical” opposition to Tehran’s peaceful nuclear energy and defensive missile programs while spending 100 billion dollars on developing new nuclear intercontinental ballistic missiles.

In a tweet on Wednesday night, Mohammad Javad Zarif said “the U.S. insists Iran must not enjoy peaceful nuclear energy, buy any defense equipment, and build defensive missiles,” while it “spends \$100 billion on new nuclear ICBMs, builds secret ‘new’ nukes, and floods regional clients with over \$380 billion worth of arms.”

The top Iranian diplomat censured the US approach as “breathhtaking hypocrisy”. Zarif attached to his tweet an image of a recent news article that says the US Air Force has awarded a \$13.3-billion contract for nuclear missiles.

He also attached a screenshot of a CNN report with quotes from Washington Post veteran Bob Woodward’s new book “Rage”, which includes a series of interviews with US President Donald Trump.

Trump has reportedly boasted to Woodward about a new secret weapons system.

The US’ huge spending on development of new nuclear weapons, including ICBMs, comes as the White House has spared no effort in the past decade to stop Iran’s peaceful nuclear energy program, and insists that Iran abandons its defensive missile development.

## Large Number of ‘Anti-Iran Elements’ Killed in Massive IRGC Operations

TEHRAN (IFP) - The Ground Forces of Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guards Corps have carried out a series of “large-scale” operations to destroy a massive number of anti-Iran terrorist groups and their bases in the country’s northwest.

In these operations, which were carried out over the past week, the IRGC used drones, artillery and smart missiles belonging to the ground forces.

The IRGC says it has killed and injured a great number of important and prominent anti-Iran elements in these operations.

According to Fars News Agency, large quantities of weapons, ammunition and explosive traps were seized from the headquarters of these groups.

The operation, which was directly commanded by the commander of the IRGC ground forces, was one of the largest operations of the IRGC, during which heavy casualties were inflicted on “anti-Iran” elements which led to the destruction of their bases along the border.

## Tehran, Kuala Lumpur Talks on Preferential Trade Deal Make Progress

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Officials from Iran and Malaysia have made progress in negotiations on signing a trade agreement meant to boost exchanges between the two major Muslim countries.

A third round of discussions on signing a preferential trade agreement (PTA) between Iran and Malaysia was held via a video conference call, said a senior official from Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization.

Anvar Kamrani said that the two sides had discussed a main draft of the potential trade deal as well as issues related to the list of goods that would be subject to lower tariffs.

“It was agreed in this meeting that the lists proposed by the two sides be prepared based on national tariffs of the two countries and exchanged until October 13,” said Kamrani.

The official said the trade deal could begin to be implemented once Iran and Malaysia agree on the tariffs and the final list of the goods.

Iran has opted for an East-leaning trade policy in recent years as the country has faced growing economic pressure from Western countries.

That comes as unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States have caused a boom in Iran’s trade with countries in the region as well as those in Asia and South East Asia.

Iran signed an agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union last November to allow trade on lower tariffs. The deal has enabled Iran to significantly increase the value and volume of goods exported to countries like Russia.

Talks have been underway between Iran and countries like India and Pakistan for a PTA while search is going on for other avenues to ease Iran’s access to major markets around the world.

## Iran, Greece Expanding Parliamentary Ties

TEHRAN (IP) - The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Athens Ahmad Naderi and the Deputy Speaker of the Greek Parliament Nikitas Kaklamanis examined the latest developments in the parliamentary relations between the two countries.

The Iranian ambassador and the Greek parliament deputy speaker on Wednesday announced readiness to expand relations and exchange parliamentary delegations, as well as to hold talks through the webinar.

Naderi and Kaklamanis also discussed the latest international developments, the U.S. unilateral and illegal sanctions against the Iranian nation, the developments related to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and the sabotage and hostile actions of the United States against this international agreement.

The deputy speaker of the Greek parliament also stressed Athens’ support for efforts to preserve the JCPOA.

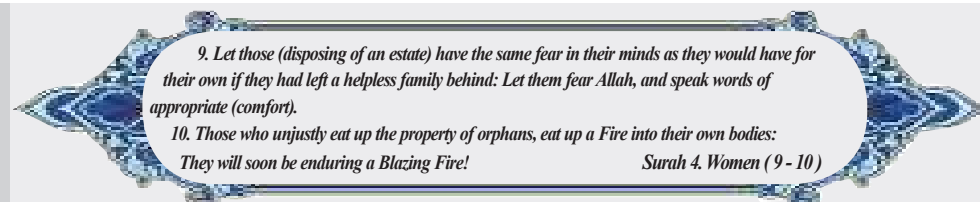
The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) known commonly as the Iran nuclear deal is an agreement on the Iranian nuclear program reached in Vienna on July 14, 2015, between Iran and the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council—China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States—plus Germany) together with the European Union.





## PRAYER TIME

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| ■ Noon (Zohr)            | 13:00 |
| ■ Evening (Maghreb)      | 19:34 |
| ■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr) | 05:21 |
| ■ Tomorrow's Sunrise     | 06:45 |



## Tehran Calls for More Energy Cooperation With Kabul

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

**TEHRAN - Energy Minister says all-out economic relations between Iran and Afghanistan must be developed, especially in the energy sector.**

Reza Ardakanian said that during his 2019 visit to Afghanistan good agreements were reached to develop relations.

"During that visit, President Ashraf Ghani issued the necessary orders to launch electricity projects, including renewables, solving banking problems, etc., but unfortunately our follow-up has reached nowhere so far," the Iranian minister said in a meeting with Afghan Ambassador to Tehran Abdulghafoor Lival.

For his part, the Afghan envoy offered to form a committee this week to implement some of the agreements between the two countries in the electricity sector.

Lival, who also chairs the Joint Cooperation Commission of the two countries, stressed the need for the two sides to take some practical steps before the sixth meeting of the Joint Cooperation Commission, which is scheduled to be held in Kabul on October 25-27.

Hailing the principled positions of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the political and security developments in Afghanistan, the ambassador said the Kabul government showed the necessary flexibility to pave the way for peace talks with the Taliban.

Meanwhile the Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister described Iran as an important trading partner and called for more activity of the Kabul-Tehran Joint Chamber of Commerce with the aim of strengthening trade relations and expanding the two countries' activities.



At the meeting of Afghan businessmen and investors in Iran on Friday, Mirwais Nab, Afghanistan's Deputy Foreign Minister, stressed the need to provide opportunities, facilities, and more work to expand trade and investment relations with Iran.

In this meeting, which was attended by Bahador Aminian, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mirwais Nab stressed the importance of effective and continuous cooperation between organizations active in the trade and investment sectors between Afghanistan and Iran and expressed hope that some existing trade problems between the two sides would be resolved.

The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Bahador Aminian, called the meeting important and valuable in order to hear the views and address the problems of Afghan businessmen in Iran, and while acknowledging some existing problems, he said that Iran has always tried to expand trade relations between the two countries.

In the meeting, several Afghan businessmen and investors talked about the challenges in trade and transit between Afghanistan and Iran, the rapid transfer of commercial goods in the port of Chabahar, and the timely issuance of visas for Afghan traders and their families in Iran, and called for more facilities.

According to the Statistics Office of Afghanistan, Iran became Afghanistan's largest trading partner in 2019, so that last year it gained the first place in exports to Afghanistan.

## Official Hails BMI Activities for Cutting Transfer Chain of Coronavirus

**IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK**

TEHRAN - Deputy Health Minister hailed Bank Melli Iran for helping severance of transfer chain of coronavirus in the country by minimizing in-person services and boosting e-banking services.



During a ceremony marking the BMI's victims of coronavirus and the 92<sup>nd</sup> foundation anniversary of the bank, Iraj Harirchi said when someone loses his life because of coronavirus, his family faces several problems, adding that besides banks' clerks and personnel who lost their lives due to this disease, several staff of the medical system also lost their loves and left others in sorrow of their losses.

He pointed to the tireless efforts of BMI's staff during the virus pandemic, adding that personnel of banks and medical organizations did not halt their activities during the pandemic and continued their services.

Harirchi reiterated that the ministry and other organs do their best to minimize the casualties of this virus in case the country faces the next waves of it.

He admitted that during the coronavirus era, economy of hospitals has been badly damaged, adding that incomes of state-run hospitals have dropped by 40 percent. He claimed health sector accounts for 8.5 percent of country's GDP.

He emphasized that all should help to make active economy of health sector.

## Iran Replaces Contractor for Railway Project Reaching Iraq

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The government has picked up a new contractor for construction of a key railway extension into the Iraqi territory with sources saying that the bidder would provide full finances worth 100 million euros for the project.

The ISNA news agency cited a senior transportation ministry official as saying on Wednesday that the selected private sector company would be quicker in finishing the 33-kilometer railway that would finally link the southwestern Iranian city of Shalamchah to Iraq's Basra.

Abbas Khatibi said that the company is planning to commission works inside Iraq to an Iraqi contractor to expedite the project and finish it on time.

Iran's First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri announced on Tuesday that the Mostazafan Foundation (MFJ) had been removed from the Iran-Iraq railway project and replaced with a company identified as Fadak Arzesh Afarinaran.

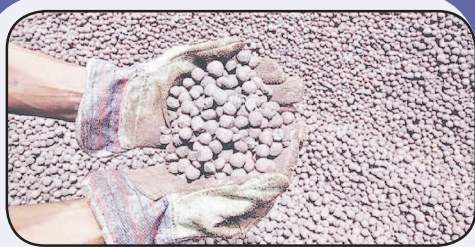
The MFJ, a large semi-government institution that has been awarded with key construction projects in Iran, had been supposed to provide 60 percent of the finances

for the railway project inside Iraq and the rest was the responsibility of the Iranian government.

Reports in July suggested that hurdles had been cleared for the progress of the Iran-Iraq railway, a project that has stalled since 2014 due to the security situation in Iraq. A 17-kilometer section of the railway inside the Iranian territory that ends in Shalamchah has already been built.

Once finished, the project would hugely boost trade and passenger travel between Iran and Iraq while it would have larger implications for countries in the region.

## Sponge Iron Production Up 8%



**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

TEHRAN- Production of sponge iron in Iran increased eight percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21) compared to the same period of time in the previous year.

According to a report by IRNA, more than 12.856 million tons of sponge iron has been produced in the five-month period of this year.

Iran's production of sponge iron has climbed six percent to 27.907 million tons in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), from 26.359 million tons in its preceding year, according to the data released by Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA).

The country's export of sponge iron has also risen 77 percent in the past year.

Meanwhile, sponge iron consumption in the country increased four percent to 26.965 million tons from 25.826 million tons on an annual basis.

Three projects each with a capacity of 800,000 tons were launched in the country during the past Iranian year.

The projects were put into operation in the southeastern province of Kerman, South Khorasan Province in the east, and Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari Province in the southwest of the country.

Iran is only second to India globally in terms of the volume of sponge iron production. The country is the 10th largest steel producer in the world.

Sponge iron is a metallic product produced through the direct reduction of iron ore in the strong state. It is a substitute for scrap and therefore is mostly applicable in making steel through the secondary route. The procedure of sponge iron making aims to expel the oxygen from iron ore.

## Jarqavieh District Telemetric Water Network Comes on Stream

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

ISFAHAN - With exploitation from the 2,000-cubic-meter reservoir of Nikabad and implementing the telemetric system and tele-control in over 600 kilometers of transfer lines and distribution network, the ground was laid for sustainable drinking water supply of towns and villages under coverage of desert areas of Jarqavieh.

The manager of Water and Wastewater Company of Jarqavieh District Mr. Javad Esmaili said that this district has some 235 kilometers of water transfer lines and 108 kilometers of it is in the urban areas and 127 kilometers in the rural areas. He added that the total length of water distribution network of the district is 378 kilometers as 168 kilometers of it has been implemented in the urban and 210 kilometers in rural areas, adding that with implementing the telemetric and tele-control system in these lines, the company can



provide sustainable drinking water for 19,119 water subscribers in towns and villages in Jarqavieh District.

He added that currently 98 percent of drinking water of this district is supplied via the water supply project of Great Isfahan and the remaining 2 percent is supplied through four active wells.

Esmaili said coming on stream of the 2,000-cubic-meter reservoir of town of Nikabad is very effective in fair distribution of water in the district, and construction of the reservoir played a key role in resolving the pressure drop and sometimes water outage in the district.

He added that currently there are 10 reservoirs with capacity of 10,800 cubic meters in four towns of Jarqavieh District and there are also 14 reservoirs with capacity of 2500 cubic meters in villages of the district which are in the network.

Esmaili said that water consumption per capita in the district last year was 154 liters but it has increased by 20 percent this year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

## First Center for Innovation of Mines and Mineral Industries Starts Activities

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

ISFAHAN - The first center for innovation of mines and mineral industries started its operation in presence of caretaker of Industry, Mine and Trade Ministry Mr. Jafar Sarghiniand, head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) Mr. Khodadad Gharibpoor and managers of some steel-making companies.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony, Mr. Sarghini said that mines sector is not unfamiliar with research and innovation and some actions have been taken in this regard as he can point to IMIDRO as an example. He added that mines should be directed towards innovation and research and the government will encourage and support it, and the law has seen some advantages and discounts for miners as they can get their needed cost for their researches from the government.

Sarghini added that call for new ideas in the mining sector is forever and anybody who has any idea in this sector can raise it, noting that presence of senior officials of national steel-making giants in the inauguration of this center (CIMMI) like Mobarakeh Steel Company, Khouzestan Steel Company and Chadormalu Company indicate how they attaches importance to new technologies and knowhow. He added that the ministry supports this move of IMIDRO and one can count more on this sector.

Meanwhile head of IMIDRO Mr. Gharibpoor said that today five start-up sets have

been formed and IMIDRO tries to create a technology hub and companies like Mobarakeh Steel Company, National Iranian Copper Industries Company and Khouzestan Steel Company can enter this sector to support it. He reiterated that in the current sanctions era, the country needs the knowledge-based economy and preventing sales of raw material and boosting productivity are very important.

The CEO of Mobarakeh Steel Company Mr. Hamid Reza Azimian also said that he is very happy that the first start-up center for mine and mineral industries is launched, adding that it is hoped that in the near future the center booms, and the mine and mineral industries could take the most out of this created climate.

He noted that Mobarakeh Steel Company has started a project for launching a digital center in cooperation with University of Tehran and he hopes the center would come into operation in 8 months.



TEHRAN - Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company (CMIC) in its weekly meeting decided to distribute shares of its new privately held company (Ltd) with its workers and staff which is to be set up soon.



The CEO of the company Eng. Naser Taghizadeh in meeting with managers and senior officials of the company said that one of the goals of the company is both to boost productivity in production and continuing its developmental projects, and providing its staff and personnel with cost of living and planning for their future.

He said he had earlier announced that the company had on the agenda a plan for constructing houses for its workers and staff in two towns of Ardekan and Bahabad, and he was proud to announce that the company had another plan for the future earning and income of its staff.

Taghizadeh noted that to this end, the company is to launch a limited company in cooperation with its affiliated companies and all workers and staff of Chadormalu Company and all staff and workers of these companies can have shares of the newly-established company.

He said this action can both help the company to continue its growth and development and guarantee the income-generating and welfare of the staff.

He noted that in the first step, the operation for iron ore exploitation and processing from the small mines would be handed over to this new company for implementation.



## Journalist Found Decapitated In Eastern Mexico

MEXICO CITY (Dispatches) - A journalist was found decapitated Wednesday in a violence-plagued area of eastern Mexico, police said, the latest in a string of killings in one of the world's most dangerous countries for reporters.

Julio Valdivia of the newspaper El Mundo de Veracruz is the fifth journalist slain in Mexico this year, according to media watchdog Reporters Without Borders (RSF).

Hugo Gutierrez, security minister and head of the police in eastern Veracruz state, condemned the "cowardly murder" of the 41-year-old reporter.



## Deadlock in Arab League Over UAE-Israel Deal



CAIRO (AFP) - Arab foreign ministers failed to reach agreement on a draft resolution condemning last month's normalisation deal between the United Arab Emirates and Israel, the Arab League said.

"The meeting saw a serious and comprehensive discussion but no consensus was reached on the resolution proposed by the Palestinian delegation," the League's assistant secretary general, Hossam Zaki, told a Cairo news conference.

No replacement resolution was adopted by ministers during their Wednesday videoconference, Zaki added. "The Palestinian side preferred not to release a draft resolution without including the concepts it was putting forward," he said.

Palestinian foreign minister Riyad al-Malki had urged fellow ministers to take "a position that rejects this step (normalisation), otherwise our meeting will be considered a blessing or collusion with it, or a cover for it and this will not be accepted by the State of Palestine".

The UAE's normalisation of relations with Israel, which has already seen the opening of phone and air links, broke with years of Arab League policy on the Middle East conflict and was condemned by the Palestinians as a "betrayal".

In 2002, the 22-member bloc adopted a Saudi-proposed peace plan, renewed as recently as 2017.

It offered normalisation only in return for a full Israeli withdrawal from the territories it occupied in the Six-Day War of 1967, a Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital and a just solution for Palestinian refugees and their descendants, who now number more than five million, according to the United Nations.

The Arab plan has been pushed aside by the Trump administration, which after several delays unveiled a controversial peace blueprint of its own in January.

It promised U.S. blessing for Israel's eventual annexation of swathes of the occupied West Bank, including the strategic Jordan Valley and all Jewish settlements.

The UAE government hailed a clause in its U.S.-brokered normalisation deal that appeared to put any Israeli annexations on hold.

But Israel retorted that any delay would be short-lived and that its annexation plans remained on the table.

Zaki stressed that "the rest of the decisions regarding Palestine did not change the basic tenets established previously... such as the rejection of the so-called U.S. peace plan... and the rights of Palestinian refugees."

But he said nothing about any League policy on its members following the UAE down the path of normalisation.

Trump will host a signing ceremony for the agreement on September 15.

The UAE will be only the third Arab country to sign a deal with Israel after Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994.

## EU Prolongs Sanctions Over Russia's Crimea Annexation

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - The European Union prolonged its travel bans and asset freezes over Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea for another six months, until March next year, EU governments said on Thursday.

"Today the Council decided to extend the sanctions targeting persons and entities that continue to undermine or threaten the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, for a further 6 months until 15 March 2021," the EU said in a statement.

"The existing restrictive measures provide for both travel restrictions and the freezing of assets, and will continue to apply to 175 persons and 44 entities," it said.



## Turkey Blasts Arrogant Macron Amid Eastern Med Crisis Talks

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey has condemned Emmanuel Macron over "arrogant" remarks made with "colonial reflexes" after the French president intervened in a brewing crisis between Ankara and Athens over Eastern Mediterranean exploration rights.

In a statement on Thursday, the Turkish foreign ministry said Macron endangers EU interests with his "individual and nationalistic stance".

Macron seeks "to give lessons by speaking pedantically with his old colonial reflexes", the statement added.

Earlier on Thursday, Macron stepped up anti-Turkey rhetoric amid his discussions with Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. Both Macron and Mitsotakis are attending a MED7 summit on the French island of Corsica along with the leaders of Portugal, Spain, Italy, Cyprus and Malta. Macron urged Europe to adopt a "united and clear voice" on its policy towards Turkey, declaring Ankara is "no longer a partner" in light of its conduct in the Mediterranean and Libya.



### Greece Races to Shelter Migrants After Lesbos Camp Fire

ATHENS (Dispatches) - Greek authorities were racing to shelter thousands of asylum seekers left homeless on Lesbos after the island's main migrant camp was gutted by back-to-back fires.

The migration ministry on Thursday said a ferry had been sent to temporarily accommodate hundreds of people, ahead of the expected arrival of European Commission vice-president Margaritis Schinas to inspect conditions on the island.

The first fire late Tuesday at Moria camp, Greece's largest and most notorious migrant facility, sent thousands fleeing for safety into surrounding olive groves.

Nobody was seriously hurt, but the blaze initially destroyed the official part of the camp, which housed 4,000 people, ministers said. Another 8,000 lived in tents and makeshift shacks around the perimeter and many were badly damaged.

A second fire late Wednesday destroyed most of the remaining camp, the ministry said in a statement. "Today all necessary actions will be taken to immediately shelter families and vulnerable persons to begin with," the ministry said.

Two Greek navy vessels will provide additional sleeping berths, the ministry said.

Migration minister Notis Mitarachi on Wednesday said asylum-seekers had started the fire because of quarantine measures imposed after 35 people at the camp tested positive for the novel coronavirus.

Officials have declared a four-month emergency on Lesbos and flown in additional riot police.

European countries from Germany to Norway -- along with EU chiefs -- have responded with offers of help, amid calls for urgent reform of the bloc's asylum system.

Since becoming one of the main gateways into Europe for migrants and asylum-seekers in 2015, Greece has built dozens of detention centres around the country.

But with European nations accepting only a small trickle of refugees, thousands remain trapped in the Greek camps indefinitely, in usually dismal health conditions.

## Police Killing Sparks Riots Across Colombia

BOGOTA (Dispatches) - The death of a Colombian man after being repeatedly shocked with a stun gun by police who restrained him has sparked riots and protests throughout the Andean nation. The protests continued into Thursday morning and killed at least seven and wounded more than 150, the country's defense minister said.

Javier Humberto Ordonez, a 46-year-old lawyer and father of two was allegedly violating coronavirus social distancing rules when he became involved in an altercation with police in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

In a video posted on social media by friends who were with him, Ordonez can be heard shouting, "please, no more, I'm suffocating" as two police officers continued to restrain him with their knees on his back and repeatedly tasing him. Ordonez was taken into police custody early on Wednesday where family members have alleged he faced more police abuse. He died in hospital soon after. Colombia had a six-month coronavirus pandemic lockdown that began in late March, with the harsh restrictions eased two weeks ago.

Protesters took to the streets in Bogota on Wednesday afternoon, destroying the small police station that the responsible officers belonged to in the Engativá neighbourhood, in the west of the city. Violence continued and spread into the early hours of Thursday.

Bogota's Mayor Claudia Lopez called the police brutality "unacceptable", but also condemned the violence in Bogota that resulted in deaths.

"Yesterday, Bogota woke up with reason, in pain, protesting the death of a citizen because of police abuse," the distraught looking mayor said in a Twitter video posted early on Thursday. "But today we wake up with not only one, but three dead, killed in protests and extended violence ... destroying Bogota is not going to fix the police."

Colombia's defence minister, Carlos Holmes Trujillo, said on Thursday rioting had killed seven people in Bogota with more than 150 civilians and police injured across Colombia.

As the news of the alleged police brutality spread, protesters took to the streets on Wednesday night not only in Bogota, but also in the cities of Medellin, Pereira and Ibagué, attacking police stations and public transport infrastructure. "The reports of the events that occurred in the last hours reveals atrocity and vandalism. These events cast a shadow over society since they claimed human lives," Trujillo said.

The government announced the two officers involved have been suspended pending an investigation, and an autopsy on Ordonez would be carried out.



## Pompeo Urges Southeast Asia to Shun South China Sea Firms

HANOI (AFP) - Washington's top diplomat urged Southeast Asia on Thursday to cut ties with Chinese companies helping build islands in the South China Sea, weeks after the US blacklisted two dozen firms working in the disputed waters.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's comments came at a regional Asian summit overshadowed by the US-China rivalry over a range of issues, from trade to the coronavirus. Tensions are also simmering over the South China Sea, with the U.S. last month sanctioning 24 Chinese state-owned companies it said had helped Beijing's military buildup in the resource-rich waterway.

Pompeo said it was time for Southeast Asian governments to reconsider their own relationship with firms working in the sea. "Don't just speak up, but act," he told the 10 foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) during an online summit.

"Reconsider business dealings with the very state-owned companies that bully ASEAN coastal states in the South China Sea.

"Don't let the Chinese Communist party walk over us and our people."

This year's ASEAN summit comes days after Beijing launched ballistic missiles in the South China Sea as part of live-fire exercises.

Vietnam, which is chairing the summit, expressed "serious concern" about recent militarisation of the sea. "This has eroded trust and confidence, increased tension and undermined peace, security and rule of law in the region," said Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh.

But the Philippines already said last week it would not follow the US lead because it needed Chinese investment, even as a fresh dispute between the two nations over Scarborough Shoal -- one of the region's richest fishing grounds -- hangs over the talks.

And Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi laid blame on the United States for tensions, claiming Washington was "becoming the biggest driver" of the waterway's militarisation.

China claims the majority of the South China Sea, invoking its so-called nine-dash line to justify what it says are historic rights to the key trade waterway.





**Shanon**  
(adviser)

**Elahieh Apt (\$2000)**  
250sq.m, 4bdrs  
S/p, Sauna  
J, balcony  
fireplace  
Fully Furn

**Elahieh Villa (\$5000)**  
1000sq.m  
5bdrs, S/p  
S, J, & pkg  
green yard  
Fully Furn

**Parsian**

**Aghdasieh Apt (\$2200)**  
220sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, F.F

**Apt (\$2700)**  
**Zaferanieh**  
220sq.m, 3bdrs  
S/pool, Sauna  
Jacuzzi, pkg  
L.balcony  
F.F

**Jordan Apt (\$1600)**  
180sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, F.F

**bldg (\$8000)**  
**Farmanieh**  
4storey, 15bdrs  
S/pool, Sauna  
Jacuzzi, pkgs  
green yard  
Semi Furn

**Sa'adat abad**  
150sq.m, 2bdrs  
S/p, F.F (\$1500)

**Jordan Office**  
300sq.m, 5bdrs  
(\$30 per sq.m)

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## UAE Aviation Authority Committed to Boeing 737 MAX Return

DUBAI (Reuters) - The United Arab Emirates civil aviation authority on Thursday said it was monitoring the certification process of the Boeing BA.N 737 MAX and was committed to seeing its safe return to service.

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Boeing in July completed certification test flights on the 737 MAX, a key milestone toward the plane's return to service.

The best-selling plane has been grounded globally since March 2019 after two fatal crashes in five months killed 346 people. Emirati carrier flydubai is a major buyer of the jet.

The General Civil Aviation Authority is working closely with the FAA, Boeing and local operators on resolving issues related to the MAX, GCAA Director General Saif Mohammdd al-Suwaidi said in a statement.



## Kazakhstan on Course of Progress and Development Under New President

By: F. Taherpoor

TEHRAN – Kazakhstan Ambassador in Tehran Mr. Ashkat Orazbay on Wednesday and during a press conference delved into details of Kazakhstan President's reform programs who announced during his second state-of-the-nation address.

Mr. Orazbay said that new Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev on September 1 and in his second state-of-the nation speech outlined seven reform areas for economic and social recovery of Kazakh nation. The speech was focused in large part on injecting a note of optimism after a tough year due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The ambassador said that Kazakh President's speech was focused on 11 issues. The president has said, "In such difficult conditions, our main task is to maintain social and economic stability, employment and income for the population. Two packages of emergency anti-crisis measures have been adopted. More than 4.5 million Kazakhs, who temporarily lost their income, have received assistance in the amount of 42,500 tenge (\$1.1billion). More than 450 billion tenge (\$1.1 billion) have been allocated for these purposes. In neighbouring states and even in other developed countries this kind of assistance has not been provided. Over a million people have received food and household packages."

A new model of government, economic development in the new reality, balanced development of the territory, the social well-being of citizens is a top priority, accessible and quality education, development of the healthcare system, ecological and protection of biodiversity, a fair state that protects the interests of citizens, digitalization is a basic element of all reforms, civil participation in governance of the state, and new quality of the nation were reforms area which were raised by the Kazakh President in his speech who also gave some details of the government's programs for carrying out those reforms.

The ambassador further to the president's speech and said Mr. Tokayev in his speech said, "No aspect of socio-economic development can be successfully implemented without the rule of law and guaranteeing the safety of our citizens.

A "Listening State" is, in fact, essential to the concept of building a "Fair State". It is not enough just to hear and see the problems of citizens, the main thing is to respond to them both correctly and objectively.

There is a lot of work ahead to develop new standards for serving the interests of citizens. The law enforcement and judicial systems play a key role in this respect. Reforms are absolutely necessary here.

Reality is changing rapidly. The more security forces rely on best practices, the more likely they are to fit into the context of international practice.

The current situation in the country imposes new requirements on law enforcement agencies, which must meet the demands of citizens."

On the development of the healthcare system, Kazakh President said, "The pandemic crisis has taught us a lot. For example, to appreciate the work of a doctor. But health workers were once on the periphery of state attention.

It goes without saying that given the importance of the medical profession, it must be supported financially. I instruct the allocation of 150 billion tenge (\$357 million) for the payment of incentive bonuses to medical workers for the second half of the year under the soon-to-be revised budget.

We are doing this now during the crisis, and we must continue to do so on a systematic basis. By 2023, wages for medics and health care workers will be twice the national average wage.

The issues of the supply of medicines has been resolved, but the domestic pharmaceutical industry needs to be set on a secure footing. All basic medicines and medical devices must be manufactured in Kazakhstan. This is a national security issue. From next year I expect concrete results in this area.

Another issue is the development of medical infrastructure.

By the end of the year, 13 new hospitals focusing on infectious diseases will be built in various regions of the country. And by 2025, 20 modern multi-functional healthcare facilities will be commissioned. This means an inflow of about one and a half trillion tenge of investments in health care.

On the initiative of the Leader of the Nation, two multi-disciplinary medical centres will appear in Nur-Sultan and Almaty. They will become the flagships of our medicine, growth points for innovation and the development of applied medical science.

The government will have to radically reconsider approaches to the organisation of primary health care. It should become more mobile and accessible to a wide range of the population, including those living in the countryside.

Measures should be taken to revive the transportation of medicine to remote regions. To create effective rural health care within three years, we will need to provide all rural villages with feldsher-obstetric stations and medical outpatient clinics.

Measures for the further development of national health care will make it possible to fully equip all medical organizations with the necessary equipment, to update the hospital beds fund by 50%, replace outdated infrastructure, and increase life expectancy to 75 years."

Kazakhstan Republic will mark its Independence Day in December.

## EU Considers Legal Action Against Britain Over Breaking Brexit Deal

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - Britain and the European Union will hold emergency talks on Thursday over Prime Minister Boris Johnson's plan to undercut parts

of the Brexit divorce treaty, with Brussels exploring possible legal action against London.

After Britain explicitly said it would act outside international law by breaching the divorce treaty, EU negotiators are trying to gauge how to deal with London.

European Commission Vice President Maros Sefcovic will meet British counterpart Michael Gove in London at 1200 GMT alongside scheduled trade talks between chief negotiators Michel Barnier and David Frost.

If the EU is unhappy with what London says, it could use a part of the Withdrawal Agreement to take legal action against Britain, though there would be no resolution before the end-of-year deadline for Britain's full exit.

"The dispute-settling mechanism under the Withdrawal Agreement is there," an EU diplomat dealing with Brexit told Reuters.

Two EU officials also involved in the talks said the Commission would analyse Britain's proposed Internal Market Bill - overriding parts of the Withdrawal Agreement - once it is passed to take into account any amendments before making a final decision on the legal case.

The British government says its planned law merely clarifies ambiguities in the Withdrawal Agreement, but also says its main priority is the 1998 Northern Irish peace deal.

Europe's leaders have been handed an ultimatum: accept the treaty breach or prepare for a messy divorce when Britain disentangles itself from the EU at the end of the year.

Britain signed the treaty and formally left the EU in January, but remains a member in all but name until the end of 2020 under a status quo agreement.

Sterling was flat at \$1.2999 though overnight sterling implied volatility rose to 13%, its highest since March 26, and the FTSE 100 share index slipped.

Talks on a trade deal have snagged on state aid rules and fishing.

Without an agreement, nearly \$1 trillion in trade between the EU and Britain could be thrown into confusion at the beginning of 2021, a further economic blow as they deal with the coronavirus pandemic.

The latest dispute centres on rules for Northern Ireland, which shares a land border with EU member Ireland. Under the 1998 Good Friday peace agreement that ended decades of violence, there must be no hard border in Ireland.

To ensure that, Britain's EU divorce agreement calls for some EU rules to continue to apply in Northern Ireland. But Britain wants power to override many of them, acknowledging this would violate international law.

U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi said any potential U.S.-UK trade deal would not pass the U.S. Congress if Britain undermined the 1998 agreement.

## Saudi Arabia Squeezes Aramco as Low Oil Prices Roil State Budget

RIYADH (Dispatches) - The world's biggest oil company is getting squeezed by its main shareholder, the Saudi Arabian government.

Even with crude dropping to \$40 a barrel this week and its cash flow plunging, Saudi Aramco is trying to pay a \$75 billion dividend this year, almost all of it to the state. Concerns are mounting, including among global fund managers who bought into the company during a record initial public offering last December, that Aramco is putting strategic projects on ice and racking up debt too quickly.

Aramco has been the country's cash cow for decades. But the pressure it faces has been thrown into sharper relief by the coronavirus-induced collapse in energy demand - Brent crude fell another 5% on Tuesday - and now that it's a listed firm with shareholders from New York to Tokyo.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the 35-year-old de facto ruler, has pledged to diversify the kingdom from oil and spend billions developing everything from futuristic cities to tourism and financial services. For that, he needs Aramco's money.

"The crown prince has basically decided the company is a piggy bank he can raid to fund his other projects," said Jean-Francois Seznec, a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council of Washington's Global Energy Center, and a Middle Eastern specialist. "It will limit how much they can invest in things like maintaining the oil fields and developing new technologies."

The government has previously leveraged Aramco's balance sheet to bolster its own finances. But it hasn't happened to this extent for at least 20 years, according to one banker who's worked with the company since the 1990s.

Fitch Ratings Ltd. estimates the Saudi budget deficit will rise to 15% of gross domestic product in 2020, one of the widest levels in the Middle East. The government's revenue fell almost 50% year-on-year in the second quarter.

Aramco promised to pay \$75 billion annually to investors for five years after the IPO. Eager to attract foreign funds and achieve a world record valuation of \$2 trillion, the government even said last year it may forgo its own portion of the dividend and maintain it for others if oil prices fell.

Instead, the axe is falling elsewhere. Aramco has slashed capital expenditure by tens of billions of dollars, laid off hundreds of mainly foreign workers and shuffled its top management as part of a plan to sell some assets.

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## BP Books Oil Tanker for Storage At Lowest Rate This Year



SINGAPORE (Reuters) - Oil major BP BPL has provisionally chartered a supertanker to store crude oil off Malaysia at this year's lowest rate yet, according to industry sources and data on Refinitiv Eikon.

The charter is the latest in a flurry of ship bookings made by oil majors and trading houses after tanker rates plunged. A resurgence in coronavirus cases, poor weather and the end of the northern hemisphere's summer driving season have slowed global oil trade and shipping demand. BP chartered very large crude carrier Gene at \$20,500 per day for three months and has the option to extend another three months at \$22,000 per day, one of the sources said.

"It is the cheapest rate so far," he said.

BP declined to comment. The sources declined to be named as they are not authorized to speak to media.

The tanker is expected to arrive at Linggi port on the west coast of peninsular Malaysia later on Thursday, data on Refinitiv Eikon showed.

The daily rate for chartering VLCCs for six months hit a high of \$120,000-\$130,000 in April as traders rushed to store oil for later sales after a collapse in oil prices and demand in the second quarter. More than 1 billion barrels of oil entered storage over the second and third quarter. The trading strategy, known as a contango play, relies on a wide spread between prompt and future months to cover storage costs.

Such storage plays are starting to look "marginally open", a Singapore-based crude trader said. However, Citi analysts said: "Much of the recent temptation to lease vessels for storage reflects more the decline in freight rates than a return to super contango." Ashok Sharma, managing director of Singapore-based shipbroker BRIS Baxi, said the leases are more like replacing "expensive tonnage chartered earlier in the year ... with cheaper tonnage."



## Iran to Connect Power Networks With Azerbaijan, Russia Soon

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Minister of Energy Reza Ardakanian said the electricity network of Iran, Russia and Azerbaijan will be connected in a couple of months once the synchronization studies are completed.

Ardakanian told IRNA that the Iranian electricity network could synchronize to other networks either through

Azerbaihan or Armenia and Georgia. Iran welcomes either of the two routes which gets ready first, the minister said, adding that three countries have agreed on a single company to carry out the project in Iran-Azerbaijan-Russia route.

According to the minister, the company has already started work on the project.



## Power Sector Transformation Will Get World One Third of Way to Net Zero

LONDON (Reuters) - The transformation of the power sector will only get the world one third of the way to a goal of achieving net zero emissions by mid-century, a report by the International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Thursday.

Global carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions are expected to fall this year by 8% from 2019 - their lowest level since 2010 - as slower economic growth due to the COVID-19 pandemic slashed energy demand.

However, the trend is not forecast to continue.

The transport, industry and building sectors currently account for more than 55% of CO2 emissions from the energy system and that is expected to grow due to more vehicles being electrified, metals recycling and heat production for industry and homes, the IEA said.

Electricity generation would need to be around 2.5 times higher in 2050 than it is today, requiring a rate of growth equivalent to the entire U.S. power sector every three years.

Annual additions of renewable electricity capacity, meanwhile, would need

to average around four times the current record, which was reached in 2019, the report said.

The report analysed more than 800 technology options to examine what would need to happen for the world to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.

The IEA said between a third and a half of cumulative emissions reductions needed come from technologies which are not commercially available today - for example, low-carbon hydrogen, which is produced by electrolysis powered by renewable energy, and technology to capture carbon emissions released to the atmosphere and store them.

A large amount of additional power generation is needed for low-carbon hydrogen, which is increasingly being viewed as a way for industries such as steel to decarbonise.

The global capacity of electrolyzers needs to grow to 3,300 gigawatts (GW) from 0.2 GW today. To produce enough hydrogen to reach net zero emissions, the electrolyzers would consume twice the amount of electricity which China generates, the IEA said.

### French Gov't Accomplish...

FROM PAGE 1

This weekly in an article on the occasion of re-printing its derogatory caricature rudely emphasized that it would never retreat and would not budge an inch.”

Republication of that offensive cartoon happened on Saturday, September 5, which was brought from the digital version of the weekly into the printed version and it was distributed in the news-stands and infuriated millions of Muslims and wounded their hearts and souls.

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei in a statement condemned this painful action. All organizations and personalities also condemned it and called it one of the methods of Zionists for fight with the daily growth of Islamic thoughts in the biggest phenomenon, dubbed Islamic Revolution, and warned of its dire consequences. The world witnessed staging protest rallies against this dirty act. On Wednesday and at Imam Hussein Square (A) of Tehran, people gathered to stage a protest gathering in condemnation of this French weekly rudeness and they condemned Charlie Hebdo's act in a statement with one prelude and five articles as some part of the statement reads as follows:

“1- We strongly and whole-heartedly express our hearty hatred and anger toward this offensive insult to the word of Allah and sacred realm of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the western countries, and strongly condemn humiliating silence of French officials under pretext of freedom of expression especially French President's unacceptable justifications for this horrible sacrilegious act.

2 – With full awareness and not being negligent about anti-human plots of the enemy No.1 of the humanity, we still consider the Great Satan and criminal U.S. and its illegitimate child, fake and child-killer Zionist regime as the mother of all corruptions of the century and we consider whatever action that is geared towards Islamophobia and adversarial moves targeting billions of freedom-seeking people's sanctities to be an outcome of their hostile policies and sinister plots.

3- We call on all international communities and all freedom-seekers and Muslims in the world and the Islamic Republic of Iran's statesmen especially its Foreign Ministry, by taking strong and decisive stand against the shameful insults regarding the most sacred of all sanctities, the Word of God and Prophet (PBUH), take strong and decisive action and not to be content only with minimum condemnation.

4- Unforgivable betrayal of the doomed UAE leaders and allies of the Great Satan against Islam and Muslims for normalizing humiliating ties with the fake regime and usurper of first Qibla of Muslims is strongly condemned and we warn of repetition of such a crime and unforgiveable betrayal by any other unwise leader of Arab countries.

5- By practical commitment to the progressive principle of Velayat-e Faqih, we consider the secret of grandeur and power of the country of Imam Zaman (A) and bliss of all in the full obedience to the valuable recommendations of great and respected leader of Islamic ummah, and we announce our readiness to fight to death to protect insight, awareness and performing our duties.”

It seems the French Government to shut down this magazine for one year because in the past the weekly has been closed down due to its insult to former French President De Gaulles and if this government does not close the publication for its desecration by resorting to false pretexts like freedom of expression, it is undoubtedly the accomplice of Charlie Hebdo's crime and it should wait for its consequence and punishment.



### Iran Test Fires Advanced issiles...

FROM PAGE 1

According to the commanders, the home-made missiles can destroy their targets from hundreds of kilometres away and the ranges will be enhanced. They said they will carry out more drills with more sophistication and greater composition in the near future. Iran regularly holds military exercises to showcase its military might, while marching toward self-sufficiency in military equipment.

The Iranian military also said it had warned the U.S. to take its drones out of the area in which the army is conducting a military exercise.

The Spokesman for the Army's “Zulfaqar 99” Joint Exercises said on Thursday that during the wargames, the Iranian forces have witnessed different and concentrated activity of American drones to gather information from the exercise area.

“These activities were detected by the army's signal detection systems, and the drones were warned by the air defence,” added Rear Admiral Shahram Irani.

He noted that after they understood the surveillance, reconnaissance and defence systems of the army are prepared, the Americans were forced to take their drones out of the area.

Over the past years, Iran has made major breakthroughs in its defense sector and attained self-sufficiency in producing military equipment and hardware despite sanctions and economic pressures imposed on the country.

Iranian Army forces held the second day of large-scale naval exercises with drone and cruise missile strikes in the country's southern waters.

The Army's coastline missile sites fired the Qader anti-ship cruise missile, successfully destroying a mock enemy vessel more than 200 kilometers from the coast on Friday. The Nasr anti-ship cruise missile was also fired from Iran's Najm missile boat, destroying its designated target in the country's southern waters.

The Kaman-12 drone, which is the Iranian Army's first combat drone, also conducted surveillance operations within the perimeter of the maneuvers.

The three-day exercises, dubbed Zolfaqar-99, kicked off on Thursday under the command of the Army's Zolfaqar base, with observers from the Khatam al-Anbiya Air Defense Base in attendance.

The drills cover an area of two million square kilometers in the eastern waters of the Strait of Hormuz near the Persian Gulf, Makran coast, the Sea of Oman and the northern Indian Ocean up to 10 degrees north.

Speaking on Friday, spokesman for the drills Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said that the Army was simulating various and complex real war scenarios, “many of which cannot be made public due to reservations”.

Addressing the use of cruise missiles during the Friday drills, Irani said the force's cruise missiles have been designed to deliver a large explosive impact and conduct operations in electronic warfare environments.

“The Iranian Army's navy, disposing various naval cruise missiles capable of attaining different ranges, has the capability to direct effective missile fire from its coastal, marine and submarine units,” he added.

## Tehran Dismisses Reports on Canada's Complaint Lodged on Iran

TEHRAN (MNA) –Foreign Ministry spokesman dismissed media reports regarding Canada's complaint lodged against Iran over the Ukrainian plane incident.

Anyone familiar with the basics of international law knows that a Canadian court has no authority to deal with what happened outside its jurisdiction.

Saeed Khatibzadeh in reaction to some media reports, that Canada has lodged a complaint against Iran and has submitted it to the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the Ukrainian plane mishap, added, “We were informed of the issue on the media. It is obvious that Iranian Foreign Ministry has not and will not receive such a complaint.”

Regardless of whether this published report is true or not, everyone who is aware of the provisions of international law knows that a Canadian court has no authority over what happened outside its jurisdiction.”

“This case is being pursued carefully and seriously at the same time in two directions of talks with Ukrainian government and judicial proceedings inside Iran,” Khatibzadeh added. As to the Ukrainian government, this issue has been negotiated within the framework of international treaties and conventions accepted by the Islamic Republic of Iran, he said, adding, “A delegation from Ukraine will soon come to Iran to continue these negotiations”

This case is being investigated by a competent and authorized court in the Islamic Republic of Iran and it is obvious that any person, whether legal or real entity, can file a complaint with it, he continued.

Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Khatibzadeh emphasized, If the Canadian government really wants to help the bereaved families of the incident, it must stop these shows which bear special political motivation.”

The Tehran-Kyiv flight was unintentionally shot down by an Iranian air defense unit shortly after taking off from Tehran on January 8, killing all 176 passengers and crew members on board. The Iranian operator had mistaken the Boeing jetliner for a cruise missile.

### New Development...

FROM PAGE 1

Mr Bank also said that job creation in Payam Special Economic Zone has been quintupled and attracting investment has been twentyfold.

Earlier President Rouhani ordered the opening of new oil export terminal with relatively large storage and bunkering facilities near the mouth of the Persian Gulf.

The terminal opened in Qeshm Island, located in the Strait of Hormuz off the Iranian southern coast, would significantly boost Iran's capacity for export while increasing the capacity for ship bunkering in the region.

“Today an important zone for exports of oil products was opened in Qeshm where ships will be able to dock for bunkering,” said Rouhani of the the Deyrestan oil terminal while using a video conference call to open the facility.

A report on the website of Qeshm Free Economic Zone said that the Qeshm Oil Investment Company had spent some \$150 million euros to launch the oil terminal. The report said the facility would have a final storage capacity of 6.5 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude and condensates once the second and final phase of the project is launched in early 2021.

Deyrestan currently has six storage tanks which are linked to a nearby refinery via a 22-kilometer pipeline, it said.

Meanwhile Rouhani opened the new oil export terminal during a ceremony to launch dozens of construction and development projects in the Iranian special economic zones (SEZ). His office said the 58 projects opened in eight SEZs across Iran on Thursday had cost more than \$650 million, including finances provided by private investors.

### Iran's Trade With...

FROM PAGE 1

Iranian customs have not published detailed statistics on Iran's non-oil foreign trade since March 2019. Still, data released in 2018 shows that Iran's non-oil exports to India totaled more than \$2 billion.

The decline in Iran's total exports to \$140 million in the first seven months of 2020 shows that in addition to the cessation of oil exports, sales of Iranian non-oil goods to India have also fallen sharply.

China, Japan, South Korea, and Turkey have also released seven-month trade reports with Iran. For the first time, Iran's seven-month trade balances with all of those nations have been negative.

Iran's exports to Turkey dropped from \$3 billion to \$580 million, and Iran's imports from the nation also fell by 31 percent to \$1.12 billion, indicating that Turkey's exports to Iran have been twice more than its imports from its Iranian neighbors.

At the same time, Iran's exports to South Korea fell from \$2.1 billion to below \$7 million, and its imports fell from

\$282 million to \$105 million, showing that Iran's exports to South Korea have become almost non-existent.

Iran's exports to Japan also fell from about \$1.2 billion to \$22 million, though the nation's imports from Japan also increased by 32 percent to \$45 million.

Before U.S. sanctions were imposed on Iran, Japanese and South Korean exports to Iran were significant. In 2018, South Korea's exports to Iran amounted to \$2.3 billion, and Japan's were \$725 million.

As Iran's largest trading partner, China still maintains a large trade volume with Iran, but Iran's seven-month exports to China also fell 61 percent to \$ 3.5 billion. Iran's imports from China decreased by six percent during the same period to \$5.12 billion.

Moscow is also one of Tehran's major trade partners, but Russian customs reported only four-month trade figures related to Iran in May. Cuba and Iran are the only countries that the Russian report is silent about concerning their annual trade with Moscow.

### Tehran Urges London...

FROM PAGE 1

International arbitrators ruled in 2008 that Britain owed the debt that is estimated to stand at £400 million. A previous international ruling had also found that Iran had a right to claim interest on the debt.

The Iranian Defense Ministry's statement said the IMS' refusal to clear the arrears had compelled Iran to resort to international arbitration, adding that the company was still in default of its obligation, although the verdicts have found it liable to pay the debt. “The relevant authorities in Britain have been trying to shun their responsibility as a liable party on the international arena, especially in the eyes of the Iranian nation,” the statement said.

To try and rationalize their refusal to pay their debt, it added, the UK officials have been citing the United States' illegal and oppressive sanctions that have come to target the Islamic Republic. “London is expected to take practical and expeditious steps [in this regard] in order not

to further prolong the Iranian government and nation's dissatisfaction and consternation against England,” the ministry said.

The ministry, meanwhile, denied any link between the case and the issue of Nazanin Zaghari, who was arrested for spying by Iran's intelligence authorities at Imam Khomeini International Airport in April 2016 as she was trying to leave for the UK.

Zaghari was put on trial and handed a five-year jail term after being found guilty of spying and spreading propaganda against the Islamic Republic.

Western media sources have claimed that she used to work for the Thomson Reuters Foundation and was on vacation in Iran when she was arrested. Some of the same outlets have also been trying to establish a link between her case and the issue of the debt.



## Napoli President De Laurentiis Tests Positive for COVID-19

ROME (Reuters) - Napoli president and owner Aurelio De Laurentiis has tested positive for COVID-19, the Serie A club said in a statement on Thursday.

The club said he returned a positive result in a test carried out on Wednesday, but gave no further details. De Laurentiis took part in a Serie A assembly on Wednesday alongside officials from other leading Italian clubs. The charismatic 71-year-old has resurrected Napoli since buying them in 2004 after they had been declared bankrupt and relegated to the third tier of Italian football.

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## ATP Adds Four Events To 2020 Calendar

LONDON (Reuters) - Four new tournaments have been added to the provisional ATP calendar for the remainder of the 2020 season, the men's Tour announced on Thursday.

The German city of Cologne will host back-to-back ATP 250 events on indoor hard while Sardinia will stage a claycourt event and Nur-Sultan in Kazakhstan will host an indoor event. The events will be on single-year licence as the ATP offers professionals the opportunity to earn money and ranking points in the wake of the coronavirus shutdown.

8 IRAN NEWS

SPORTS

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 12, 2020

## Raptors Force Game 7, Clippers Pip Nuggets

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Jaylen Brown and Jayson Tatum combined to score 60 for the Celtics, while Kyle Lowry was the top-scorer for the Raptors with 33 points.

Game 7 between the Raptors (in frame) and the Celtics will take place today and the winner will advance to face the Miami Heat in the conference finals.

OG Anunoby nailed a go-ahead 3-pointer with 57.5 seconds left in double overtime as the Toronto Raptors held on to beat the Boston Celtics 125-122 Wednesday night to force Game 7 in their Eastern Conference semifinal series near Orlando.

Norman Powell completed a three-point play for a four-point lead with 38.8 ticks remaining and added two more from the line in the final five seconds as Toronto held off a late Boston push. Six Raptors scored in double figures, led by Kyle Lowry with 33 points. Powell had 23 and Fred VanVleet 21. Jaylen Brown had 31 points and 16 rebounds to lead the Celtics, and Marcus Smart had 23 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists in his second career triple-double. Jayson Tatum (29 points, 14 rebounds, nine assists) fell an assist short of his first triple-double. Kemba Walker scored just five points on 2-of-11 shooting.

Game 7 will take place today. The winner will advance to face the Miami Heat in the conference finals. Tatum hit a 3-pointer to get Boston within one with 6.2 seconds left in the second overtime. After Powell's two free throws, Smart missed a chance at a game-tying triple with 1.5 seconds to go.

The Raptors led 106-104 in the first overtime before Lowry fouled Brown with 18.9 seconds remaining. Brown made both free throws, and Powell missed a 3-pointer with a second left as the game continued.

Down by seven early in the fourth quarter, the Celtics rode a 12-4 spurt to an 89-88 lead. Lowry answered with a pair from deep, and the Raptors led 94-89 with 6:20 remaining.

## Serena, Medvedev Move Into Semifinal

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Serena Williams battled into a U.S. Open semi-final showdown with Victoria Azarenka as top men's seeds Dominic Thiem and Daniil Medvedev booked their spots in the last four.

Williams, seeded third, came from a set down to overcome unseeded Bulgarian Tsvetana Pironkova and keep alive her bid for a 24th singles Grand Slam title at Flushing Meadows.

Later, Azarenka blew away Belgium's Elise Mertens as she continues her hunt for a first Grand Slam title in seven years.

Williams' comeback included two astonishing shots with her left hand that contributed to winning points.

"At that point I was fighting so hard. I was just trying to do everything I can whether righty or lefty," she said.

A sluggish start saw the American lose the first 6-4, but she fought back to take the next two 6-3, 6-2, in 2hr 12min inside Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"I never give up and you know I just gotta keep going," Williams added. Williams smashed 20 aces, the most she has had in eight years, taking her tally for the tournament to 64 so far.

The record for the most number of aces in a US Open in the women's singles is 70, set by Williams in 1999 when she won for the first time.

"Sometimes when I'm serving, I just tell myself, I don't care if my arm falls off, I'm going to keep serving," she said.

Williams is looking to match Margaret Court's record for the most number of singles Grand Slam wins.

It has been more than three years since she won her 23rd at the 2017 Australian Open -- when she was already pregnant with daughter Olympia.

Williams has come close since, reaching four major finals only to come away empty handed.

In the last four she will renew her rivalry with former world number Azarenka who demolished Mertens 6-1, 6-0 in just 1hr 13 min.

Williams defeated Azarenka in the final of the US Open in 2012 and 2013.



ahead 67-62 with 6:58 left in the third quarter. Toronto hadn't led since 11:01 of the first prior to the stretch. The Raptors ended the third up 81-77.

The Celtics rode a 7-0 run early in the second quarter to the game's first double-digit lead, 36-25. Boston entered the half up 52-48. Kawhi Leonard recorded 30 points, 11 rebounds, nine assists and four steals to lead the Los Angeles Clippers to a 96-85 victory over the Denver Nuggets in Game 4 of the Western Conference semifinal series on Wednesday night near Orlando.

Montrezl Harrell added 15 points, and fellow reserve Lou Williams tallied 12 as the Clippers took a 3-1 lead in the best-of-seven series. Game 5 is today. Nikola Jokic had 26 points, 11 rebounds and six assists for Denver, which failed to reach 100 points for the second time in the series. Jamal Murray had 18 points and seven assists, Michael Porter Jr. scored 15 points, and Gary Harris scored 10 for the Nuggets. Denver also dug itself a 3-1 deficit in the first round against the Utah Jazz before winning three straight to claim the series.

Ivica Zubac had 11 points and nine rebounds, and Marcus Morris Sr. also scored 11 points for Los Angeles, which shot 41.8 percent from the field and was 8 of 28 from 3-point range. Paul George scored 10 points. The Nuggets shot 39.7 percent from the field, including 9 of 27 from 3-point range.

Denver recovered from an early 17-point deficit to knot the score at 48 after scoring the first eight points of the third quarter.

But Leonard and Patrick Beverley scored baskets to start a 21-5 burst. Williams ended the run with a floater to give Los Angeles a 69-53 advantage with 3:33 left in the third quarter.

## Malan Replaces Pakistan's Azam At Top of T20I Rankings



DUBAI (Reuters) - England's Dawid Malan has leapfrogged Pakistan's Babar Azam to become the best Twenty20 international batsman in the world, based on the latest International Cricket Council (ICC) rankings.

Malan, 33, enjoyed a fruitful series against Australia, scoring 66, 44 and 21 in three games to guide England to a 2-1 series victory.

The Yorkshire batsman, whose previous best ranking was second in November last year, is now eight rating points ahead of Azam, while Australia skipper Aaron Finch, who amassed 125 runs in the series, remains third.

Jonny Bairstow and Jos Buttler also made strides in the rankings, with Bairstow moving up three spots to reach a career-best 19 and Buttler rising from 40 to 28 after scoring 121 runs in two matches.

Australia, who had slipped to second in the T20 team rankings after falling 2-0 down in the series, regained top spot after defeating England by five wickets in the final match on Tuesday.

The two sides were to lock horns in a three-match one-day international series starting Friday.

## Liverpool Don't Need to Spend Like Chelsea



Chelsea, owned by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich, have spent around 200 million pounds (\$259.88 million) to bring in Timo Werner, Kai Havertz, Hakim Ziyech and Ben Chilwell, while Thiago Silva and Malang Sarr arrived on free transfers.

Premier League champions Liverpool, who finished 33 points ahead of Frank Lampard's side last season, have signed only left-back Konstantinos Tsimikas from Olympiakos Piraeus.

LONDON (Reuters) - Spending huge amounts of money in the transfer market, like Chelsea have done this summer, does not guarantee success as clubs must do the hard work on the training ground to integrate new signings, Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp has said.

"We live in a world at the moment with a lot of uncertainty," Klopp told BBC. "For some clubs it's less important how uncertain the future is: those owned by countries, oligarchs, that's the truth. We're a different kind of club."

"We got to the Champions League final two years ago, we won it last year, and became Premier League champions last season by being the club we are."

"We cannot just change overnight and say, 'So now we want to behave like Chelsea'. They are signing a lot of players. That can be an advantage but that means they have to fit together pretty quickly."

"You cannot bring in the 11 best players and hope a week later they play the best football ever. It's about working together on the training ground."

Liverpool begin their title defence against newly-promoted Leeds United on Sept. 12 while Chelsea face Brighton & Hove Albion two days later.

## Vettel Signs for Aston Martin

ROME (Dispatches) - Former world champion Sebastian Vettel has signed for the renamed Aston Martin team for the 2021 season "and beyond", the ambitious British Formula One outfit announced Thursday.

The 33-year-old German won four consecutive titles from 2010 to 2013 with Red Bull before joining Ferrari, but the Italian team has not renewed his contract.

Signing Vettel was "a clear signal" to the racing world, said Racing Point, which will take the Aston Martin name next year after Canadian billionaire owner Lawrence Stroll's investment in the British brand.

Vettel will drive alongside Stroll's son Lance and replace Mexican driver Sergio Perez who announced on Wednesday he will leave Racing Point at the end of the season.

"It's a new adventure for me with a truly legendary car company. I have been impressed with the results the team has achieved this year and I believe the future looks even brighter," said Vettel.

"The energy and commitment of Lawrence (Stroll) to the sport is inspiring and I believe we can build something very special together."

He added: "I still have so much love for Formula 1 and my only motivation is to race at the front of the grid. To do so with Aston Martin will be a huge privilege."



## AFC Cup Cancelled, Champions League Further Delayed

KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Asia's football body on Thursday cancelled this year's AFC Cup because of the coronavirus pandemic -- and also announced further delays to Champions League matches in what it said were "tough times" for the sport.

The Asian Football Confederation had hoped to restart its long-delayed Cup competition next month in four host countries, but following a meeting of the executive committee Thursday they blew the whistle on the plans.

"These are tough times for everyone connected with football -- and sport in general," said AFC president Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim al-Khalifa.

Officials also said some matches in the Champions League -- the region's showpiece tournament, which resumes next week in Qatar -- would be further delayed.

The single-leg final will now take place on December 19. Officials previously said it would take place on December 5.

East Zone group matches, originally scheduled from mid-October to early November, will now be played from November 15 to December 13.

Officials had already announced that West Zone group games will be in Qatar this month, while matches in two of the East Asia groups will be played in Malaysia.

Other venues are yet to be announced.

