

President Hassan Rouhani
Inaugurated Seven New Hospitals
Across Iran, a Sign That
Investment Has Kept Flowing Into
The Country's Health Sector
Despite Financial Costs

IRAN NEWS

Health Ministry spokeswoman
Sima Sadat Lari Said on Friday
That Some 144 More Iranians
Have Died From Coronavirus
Disease Over the Past 24 Hours

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Tehran Warns of Dangerous Washington's Defiance of Int'l Law

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran has warned against Washington's "dangerous" defiance of international law as the U.S. has signaled that it seeks to illegally extend an expiring arms embargo on Iran.

Nabi Azadi, the political adviser to Iran's Permanent Mission to Geneva, made the comments in response to earlier remarks by Washington's representative to the Geneva Disarmament Conference Robert Wood on Thursday.

The American envoy accused Iran of backing terrorism and said that Washington seeks to extend a United Nations ban on Tehran despite its expiration in October under UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which endorsed the Iran nuclear deal in 2015.

Azadi rejected the statements, saying that such a move violates Resolution 2231 and amounts to an attempt to destroy multilateral bodies such as the UN after Washington failed to gain international backing to extend the embargo at the Security Council in August.

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Russia Ready to Contribute to Dialogue Between Iran, U.S.

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov voiced readiness to provide assistance in establishing dialogue between Iran and the United States, stressing that Washington's sanctions against the Islamic Republic will never work out, Sputnik news agency reported on Friday.

"Iran has declared readiness for dialogue many times, and it is still ready for dialogue, which certainly cannot be based on the ultimatums that the U.S. side puts forward from time to time," Lavrov told Sputnik in an interview on Thursday.

"We will be ready to contribute to the establishment of this dialogue. Jointly with European nations and the People's Republic of China, we keep defending the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action [JCPOA] on settling the Iranian nuclear problem, which was approved by the United Nations Security Council back in 2015 and which the US keeps destroying as part of its policy of demonizing Iran," the Russian foreign minister added.

The UN Security Council keeps discussing the JCPOA, with "13 out of 15" countries speaking firmly against the attempts to undermine the Iran nuclear deal, according to Lavrov.

Russia's top diplomat slammed the U.S. attempts to set the dialogue on the Middle East's and North Africa's problems "on anti-Iranian track."

"This is a dead-end track. The sanctions aimed at choking Iran have never worked out and will not work out now," Lavrov stressed.

Iran Blasts "Dangerous Adventurism" Against Its Nuclear Program



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's Ambassador to the Vienna-based international organizations Kazem Gharibabadi named the early July incident that took place at the Natanz facility as 'dangerous adventurism'.

He made the remark in his report on Thursday to the seasonal session of the Board of Directors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

He said that "The fact that 22 percent of the Agency's global inspections alone is conducted in Iran, shows that Iran has the most transparent peaceful nuclear program among the Agency's Member States. Although the Agency is supposed to focus on the current activities, however, Iran has voluntarily accepted the request by the Agency to address possible safeguards issues."

"In this context, the Director General's current report depicts the extra-miles which both Iran and the Agency have taken to reach a common understanding on the issues at hand, and to find satisfactory resolutions for them. We, both, are in agreement that in order to overcome possible impediments, a conducive environment should be established for it first, which certainly comes out of mutual good-faith. The current extensive level of cooperation between Iran and the Agency has not been achieved easily, and we shouldn't allow it to be diminished simply by imprudent political interests of few."

He said it was "noteworthy that the same legal instruments which entitle the Agency to enjoy certain rights, also identify the boundaries and limitations for the assumption of such rights. In this regard, questions or requests by the Agency should be based on convincing underlying reasons, and independent information and findings. Also, the Member States of the Agency should seriously avoid exerting any pressure against it for preserving its integrity. By considering such limitations and refraining from basing the questions and requests on allegations and fabricated documents, the grounds were ready for cooperation between Iran and the Agency. In this line, since the Agency has considered and analyzed information available to it till now, therefore, does not have any further question or requests for access to locations other than those declared by Iran."

Furthermore, he went on "to emphasize that since few adversaries of the JCPOA could not find any issues in the recent years to destroy the JCPOA and cooperation between Iran and the Agency, they have tried in vain to build their arguments upon unfounded, baseless allegations. Nevertheless, it is upon the Board of Governors and the Agency's Secretariat to show necessary wisdom and foresight to avoid getting entangled in their mischief."

"It should be noted that the issues under consideration are related to the Additional Protocol in terms of requests for access; and, one should not lose sight of the fact that this Protocol is provisionally and voluntary applied by the Islamic Republic of Iran due to the JCPOA. Accordingly, I would like to note that, as quite often reiterated by the Non-Aligned Movement, there should be a clear distinction between legal obligations of Member States under their respective safeguards agreements and their voluntary undertakings, in order to ensure that such voluntary undertakings are not turned into legal safeguards obligations. In view of this, pending the resolution of these issues, they should be addressed within ongoing interaction between Iran and the Agency; therefore, there is no need for further regular reporting to the Board," he added.

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ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian



Trump's Plea to Russia And Switzerland

These days whenever to log on Instagram, one sees that President Donald Trump has fallen in love of Iran and momentarily he or his abominable State Secretary Mike Pompeo repeat the name of Iran more than 70 times a day, it means Iran has danced on their lips, minds and remarks.

Why now has Iran become so important to him? Everybody says he needs a smile of Iran to win the U.S. presidential election. One can reassure that he has launched this puppet show of Bahrain and the UAE for the sake of his presidential election, and in order not to infuriate Iran more than this, he has never talked about Iran during the ceremony for signing normalization agreement ceremony in the White House. In fact the strategy of the White House in the ceremony was intentionally to avoid arousing Iran's sentiment during this bachelorette party of Bahrain, the UAE and Zionist regime in the White House and even Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu used just one sentence against Iran which had been repeated by him once in a while in the past.

This prudence could not have happened by accident because from A to Z of this show had essentially planned by Trump's Jewish son-in-law Jared Kushner against Iran's policies in the region and especially in the Persian Gulf. Of course we should admit that the UAE officials unlike their Bahraini counterparts and Zionist elements have usually used more controlled rhetoric against Iran especially they do not want disclosure of their normalization with Zionists to be considered as an open and hostile step against Iranians and the Islamic Revolution. Maybe their joint water borders and geographical proximity and above all their trade exchanges with the Islamic Republic of Iran beside their concerns about emergence of insecurity in the Persian Gulf can be main reasons for taking such an approach.

So there is this possibility that advisors to the think-tanks which have drawn up this farce might have recommended the White House to stay away from political instigation. This indicates that the White House in the heat of the presidential election observes some important considerations.

It is necessary to remind that recently when Chief of Staff of the President Mr. Mahmoud Vaezi was asked a question on talks with the U.S., he officially announced that both Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis and even before them Japan's prime minister had brought the "dear babe" messages of the U.S., and even Lavrov openly and in an interview announced Russia's readiness for organizing talks between Iran and the U.S. if both sides are interested. Of course he ironically and delicately said that Washington's efforts for extension of embargos against Tehran would hinder any progress in organizing the negotiations.

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One Less
Marginal settlement
Hundreds of More Opportunities



- for 115 thousand people
- in next 10 months
- valued 2400 billion tomans

To Improve the Quality
and Standard of Urban Life, and Slums Upgrading

Inauguration of
12 Large Urban Projects
in Shahid Rajaei and
Shahid Bahonar towns
of Mashhad (Ghal'e Sakhteman and Ghal'e Khiaban)

President Congratulates Suga on Appointment as Japan's PM

TEHRAN (IFP) - President Hassan Rouhani has congratulated Yoshihide Suga on his election as Japan's new prime minister, expressing hope for the expansion of friendly ties between Tehran and Tokyo in all fields.

In a message on Thursday, President Rouhani warmly congratulated Suga on taking office as Japan's new prime minister.

The president also paid tribute to former Japanese prime minister, Abe Shinzo, for his "major and influential role" in

promoting relations between Iran and Japan.

"The constant consultations between the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Japan, especially in 2019 on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of establishment of political ties which was marked by reciprocal visits by the heads of the two states to their respective capitals, have opened a new chapter in the expansion of relations in all fields of mutual interest," President Rouhani added.

Iran's Health System Development on the Rise

IRAN NEWSNATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – President Hassan Rouhani , in the virtual inauguration ceremony of various Healthcare Projects across the country on Thursday via videoconferencing, said that in the current year and despite sanctions and the COVID-19 outbreak, Iran's health system development has not only decreased but also have been on the rise.

Despite all the economic pressures, the development of Iran's health care sector has been increasing in the current year," Rouhani said. "Not only has this trend not decreased, but we are determined to unveil more than 10,000 hospital beds this year and in the first months of next year."

President Rouhani on Thursday at the inauguration ceremony of national projects and infrastructure of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education and the Red Crescent in the 24th week of the opening of major national projects added: "I am very happy to inaugurate the projects today which are for the welfare of the people, especially in these special circumstances where we are fighting a dangerous virus called Corona.

The President continued: "As the Minister of Health promised to open more than 10,000 hospital beds by the end of this year and the first months of next year, today we inaugurated these projects."

He said that in the country, as a rule, 1,400 projects are inaugurated per year, he said: "This year, despite the economic pressures, we reached a very good number in terms of inaugurations."

Rouhani said that these openings took place at a time when the need for hospital beds



had been felt more than in previous days and months, adding: "The opening of eight important hospital and treatment projects in one day is a sign that the government continues to pursue the health transformation plan as an important priority."

The President added: "In my opinion, one of the honors of the 11th and 12th governments that will remain in the history of this country has been the continuous efforts of the government, the private sector and all the people to build and equip hospitals."

Furthermore, Rouhani expressed hope that the country will get through this hard situation well during the difficult days of autumn, which coincide with the outbreak of the flu and COVID-19:

Rouhani continued: "I hope we will help doctors, nurses and health defenders to pay more attention to health and treatment with the help of each other and with honor and dignity, as we have been until today and were not left behind compared with the developed countries in statistics."

The President noted: "The dedication of the country's doctors and nurses has not been less than others, and I hope that people will pay all the necessary attention to health principles so that we can spend these dangerous months with more pride."

U.S. Seeks to Normalize Arab Relations With Israel By Coercion



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Special Aide to the Speaker of Iran's Parliament in International Affairs Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said that the United States seeks to normalize their relations with Israel by using force against the Arab countries bordering the Persian Gulf.

Speaking at a meeting with the Austrian Ambassador to Iran Stefan Scholz, Amir-Abdollahian referred to the 500-year history of relations between the two countries, saying: "The historical and long-standing relations between Tehran and Vienna are good support for strengthening and consolidating cooperation."

Hossein Amir-Abdollahian criticized the arrogant behavior of the White House in showing the normalization of relations between the UAE and Bahrain with Israel, saying: "The fake show of the UAE-Bahrain compromise with Tel Aviv has only an electoral purpose, and if it were not for the arrogant and humiliating behavior of the United States, the Trump circus would not have been shown on the White House balcony."

Scholz, for his part, also emphasized Iran's stance and importance in stabilizing and securing regional equations and said: "Austria considers Iran an important country with a significant role in the region, especially in the fight against terrorism and ISIS."

The Austrian Ambassador to Iran added that the development of parliamentary relations would increase relations and cooperation between the two countries.

He said Vienna emphasizes the strengthening of interaction between the two countries through parliamentary diplomacy.

Arab Traitors to Palestine Complicit in All Israeli Crimes

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's top parliamentarian has blasted the Emirati and Bahraini rulers for betraying the Palestinian cause by signing normalization deals with Israel, saying the Arab traitors to Palestine marked another Nakba Day (the Day of Catastrophe) and are thus complicit in the occupying regime's crimes.

In a statement released on Thursday, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf warned the Arab rulers that the consequences of extending the friendship hand to the enemies of God and Muslims would be nothing but disgrace and humiliation.

"What is happening in the region and in television and election shows is nothing new to the people of the world, especially the Muslim Ummah, the Arab youth and the oppressed people of Palestine. For years, many regional governments have been passionately kissing the bloody hands of the Zionist tyrants and scratching the suffering faces of the oppressed Palestinian people," the statement added.

"What actually happened was merely putting on paper the disgrace and ugliness of the years-long enmity of some countries' rulers with the Palestinian people and the al-Quds cause. Their relations with the Zionist enemy have always been normal and friendly," it added.

The normalization deals were inked on Tuesday at the White House, where US President Donald Trump hosted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu along with Emirati and Bahraini foreign ministers, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani.

Arab rulers "marked the second Nakba Day and should know that from today on, they are officially complicit in all crimes of the criminal Zionist usurpers from the Balfour Declaration to the Nakba Day; From Sabra and Shatila [massacre] to the 22-day [Gaza] war [in 2008-9]," the Iranian parliament speaker said.

Qalibaf further echoed remarks by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, who believes there will be no solution to the Palestine issue without its people, adding, "This will be an ever-lasting rule."

"Palestine is the blood in the veins of Muslim youth; Palestine is part of the body of Islam; Palestine is the honor and zeal of the Arab youth throughout the region, and those who oppress Palestine have no sense of Islam, honor, zeal and humanity," he added.

Qalibaf concluded, "The people of Palestine and the Muslim Ummah will be victorious without any doubt and according to the inviolable promise of God."

Tehran, Moscow to Boost Technological Cooperation

TEHRAN (IP)- The Vice President for Science and Technology of the Islamic Republic of Iran Sorena Sattari and the President of the Russian Academy of Sciences Alexander Sergeev emphasized the expansion of technological cooperation.

In a virtual talk with Sergeev, Sattari expressed that the two countries have extensive and deep relations in the field of diplomacy, and it is necessary to achieve this depth and development in the field of science and technology.

He stated that the ground for the development of joint scientific and technological cooperation, especially in the field of advanced pharmaceutical technologies, is well provided with Russia.

Referring to the ability of Iranian knowledge-based companies and research institutes in the field of drug and vaccine production, Sattari noted: "Considering the

outbreak of COVID-19, Tehran is ready to cooperate with Moscow in important and significant projects to deal with the pandemic."

The president of the Russian Academy of Sciences expressed that Russian scientific institutes are ready for scientific cooperation with Iran.

He noted that Iran and Russia can cooperate in various fields, including biotechnology, minerals, and ecology of the Caspian Sea, as well as medicine, infectious diseases, and other technological fields.

Iran's ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali also stated that Iran's embassy in Moscow is ready to cooperate with Russian scientific and technological institutes.

The official announced that Iran has good potential in the field of medicine and can serve as a regional center for the development of pharmaceutical and vaccine technologies.

Zarif Advises Pompeo to Read UNSC Resolution 2231

TEHRAN (MNA) – Stating that nothing new happens on 9/20, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif advises U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to read the UNSC Resolution 2231.

In a Thursday tweet, Zarif wrote, "Wrong again, @SecPompeo. Nothing new happens on 9/20. Just **READ** Res.2231."

"Bolton—who convinced the boss to order you to 'CEASE U.S. participation'—did," he added.

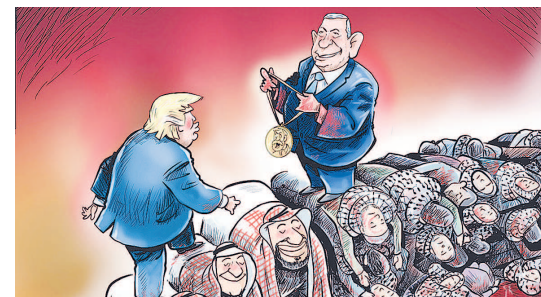
"In his words: Process is not 'simple', automatic or snappy. But intentionally 'complex & lengthy'. US is **NOT** a participant," he noted.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo claimed that Washington delivered a letter to the UN for snapback invocation against Iran to bring back sanctions in 30 days.

Referring to the process of restoration of sanctions against Iran, he added that "we are confident that the trigger mechanism will be implemented against Iran."

This is while, France, Germany and the United Kingdom (E3) announced in a statement that they will not support the U.S. in snapback invocation against Iran which is incompatible with the current efforts to support Iran nuclear deal.

Caricature on Leader's Website Satirizes Arab-Israel Peace Deals



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Ayatollah Khamenei's website has published a caricature satirizing the recent controversial Israeli-Arab normalization mediated by the United States.

The official website of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has published a caricature satirizing the recent controversial Israeli-Arab normalization deals mediated by the United States.

Leader's website (Khamenei.ir) on Wednesday posted the cartoon which shows that Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu waiting for U.S. President Donald Trump to put a medal around his neck.

Trump is seen walking on the back of the Arab rulers to get to Netanyahu, who is standing on the bodies of the Palestinian people massacred by the Tel Aviv regime.

The cartoon is depicting an earlier statement by Ayatollah Khamenei, who lashed out at certain Arab states for committing the "biggest treachery" against Arabs and Muslims in history by supporting Israel.

"The betraying Arab gov'ts should know the U.S. is not trustworthy. The US looks at them as tools for protecting the Zionist regime," reads a line on the cartoon.

Army, IRGC Ready to Give Decisive Response to Any Threat

TEHRAN (MNA) – Commander of the Iranian Army's Ground Forces Brigadier General Kiomars Heidari says any threat against Iran's interests or security will draw a decisive response by the Iranian armed forces.

Speaking during a graduation ceremony at Imam Ali (PBUH) Military University in Tehran on Thursday, General Heidari said, "All the graduates of this university are ready to exert selfless efforts to protect the country and the nation."

"We, along with our brothers in the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, will never allow anybody to undermine the integrity and security of the Islamic Republic of Iran," he stressed.

The enemies, especially the United States, have been sticking to any means to reach their ill-wished goals against the Islamic Republic since the victory of the Islamic Revolution over 40 years ago.

Iran, however, has always expressed its firm resolve to protect its sovereignty against any act of aggression, saying the Islamic Republic will not capitulate to intimidation.

Tehran, Bosnia Stress Expansion of Bilateral Ties

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran's new ambassador to Bosnia Reza Qelichkhan submitted a copy of his credentials to the Director General of Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia Mirsad Besic on Thursday.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the effects of the coronavirus outbreak on the lives and health of the people of the world, as well as the negative effects of the epidemic on relations between the two countries.

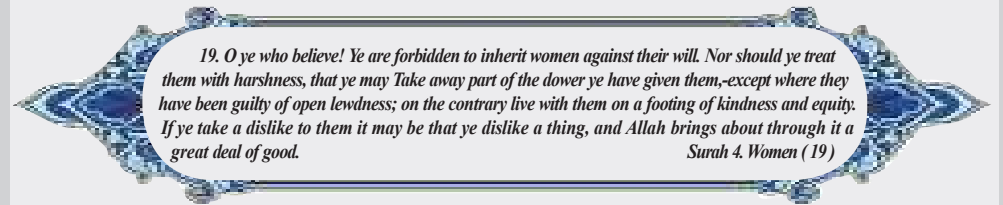
Referring to the good relations between Iran and Bosnia and Herzegovina, they stressed the need to develop cooperation. Iranian ambassador stressed Iran's support for the unity and solidarity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Appreciating Iran's support for the unity of people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mirsad Besic, for his part, said that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina will overcome difficulties.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:58
■ Evening (Maghreb)	19:23
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:27
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:51



Tehran Calls for Enhancing Barter Trade and Exports With Islamabad

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization Mr. Hamid Zadboum in meeting with Pakistan Ambassador Mr. Rahim Hayat Qureshi called for expansion of bilateral trade and removing the existing hurdles in way of it.

In the meeting, Mr. Zadboum said that Iran and Pakistan are both member states of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation. He went on to say that Pakistan is the second country that Iran is keen to have preferential trade with it, adding that both countries currently have preferential trade agreement and they are moving towards free trade agreement.

He emphasized that the fifth round of talks regarding this issue will soon be held and called for reinforcing banking and trade infrastructures for developing trade relations. Zadboum also urged Pakistan and Iranian officials for removing hurdles in way of expanding bilateral trade relations, adding that according to the conducted studies, Pakistan has the most capacity among Iran's 15 neighboring countries and it is considered as the first country for expansion of trade.

Zadboum also pointed to the reinforcement of joint border committee and to the significance of barter exports, and called for easing it by Pakistan.

He further said that the ground for barter exchanges is under supervision of central banks, stating that it is recommended that barter exports are bolstered and eased by



Pakistan's Central Bank and a workgroup is formed in the national level by both sides. He then pointed to some fields for cooperation by both countries, reiterating that these fields should be discussed in the future talks.

Zadboum also added that Iran is currently exporting some 100 megawatts of electricity to Pakistan and it is ready to increase it to over 500 megawatts. He then commemorated Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, and pointed to the cultural and language commonalities between Iran and Pakistan and called it a strong point for expansion of political, economic and trade relations.

Meanwhile Pakistan Ambassador Mr. Qureshi, for his part, said that expansion of level of trade relation needs the joint chamber of commerce of both countries to become more active especially in the border provinces, adding that hinders in way of boosting economic and trade relation between both countries are not so big or unsolvable issues.

He also announced that Iran's Roads and Urban Development Minister will meet Pakistan Commerce minister in the near future.

Iran Shipping Lines Reports \$778m In Revenues



TEHRAN (PressTV) - The Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Line Group (IRISL) says revenues of the company topped \$778 million in the year ending June 21 despite a series of harsh US sanctions seeking to choke off the country's trade.

IRISL CEO Mohammad Reza Modarres Khiabani said that the state-run shipping lines had carried more than 23 million metric tons of cargoes over the 12-month period, a sign that US sanctions had barely disrupted trade to and from Iran. "This figure has been achieved despite the oppressive sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak," said Modarres Khiabani, making a reference to lower demand for container shipping around the world as a result of the pandemic.

He said that IRISL's share of operations in southern Iranian ports, frequented by international container ships, had been around 19 percent in the year ending late June, adding that the group had less than a third of the market in northern Iranian ports over the same period. Modarres Khiabani said a key issue in IRISL's operation over the 12-month period was to comply with strict international standards on the use of new fuels for its ships.

He said the company had spent a total of \$145 million on low-sulfur fuels, half of which had been obtained through foreign suppliers, to comply with mandatory regulations of the International Maritime Organizations that came into effect in early 2020.

That caused the net profit of the IRISL to drop to just more than \$14 million, he said, adding that gross profits over the year in question had amounted to nearly \$85 million. He said shipping large cargoes of Iranian fuel to Venezuela, a country also under American sanctions, was a major victory for the IRISL, describing the conclusion of the operation in June as a historic moment for the company.

Iran Critical of World Bank Rankings

TEHRAN (PressTV) - An Iranian deputy finance minister says an announcement last month by the World Bank about data collection irregularities used in compiling the annual Doing Business reports proved Iran was right in its criticism of the body and its rankings.

Mohammad Ali Dehghan said that for years Iran was of the view that the World Bank adopted a politicized approach in issuing its closely watched annual ranking of countries' business and investment climates.

"In dealing with countries, the World Bank has some sort of playing politics and unjust approach which we have repeatedly touched upon," Dehghan was quoted by the IRIB News.

The comments came more than two weeks after the Washington-based World Bank suspended issuing its Doing Business reports to probe data collection irregularities and review processes that lead to their publication.

The announcement came after a notable economist working for the group accused the reports of being biased against certain governments. Others have raised criticism about how countries like Saudi Arabia and Jordan have sharply improved their economic situation in a matter of a year and jumped nearly 30 places in the 2019 edition of the ranking.

Dehghan said that independent trade and business groups in Iran have been repeatedly disappointed by the World Bank's refusal to consider real reforms that have taken place in the country's economy.

"We have had economic reforms in the country in recent years ... and chambers of commerce, guilds and cooperatives had relayed these reforms in written correspondences to the World Bank," he said, adding, "However, the reforms carried out were never accepted by the Bank."

Iran has managed to improve its key economic indicators over the past years despite suffering from a fresh round of American sanctions that have seriously hampered foreign investment in the country.

The country offers amenities and protections, some of them unrivaled in the Middle East, to investors who are keenly inclined to take advantage of the country's huge potential for growth once the foreign pressure on Iran is eased.

Iran Steel Production 10% Above Global Average in H1

TEHRAN (MNA) – Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Khodadad Gharibpour said on Wednesday that steel production in Iran during the first 6 months of 2020 has been 10 percent higher than the global average.

"Steel production is known as the most brilliant industrial sector of Iran and the country's steel production capacity is currently 42 million tons and this year up to 32 million tons of steel production will be produced domestically," he said.

According to the official, Iran has an annual production of 10 million tons of concentrate and 18 million tons of pellets in its current program.

According to earlier reports, statistics show large steelmakers in the country exported 1,786,611 tons of steel in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (from March 20 to August 21).



Accordingly, more than 28 percent of the said figure was produced in the Iranian month of Mordad in the current year (from July 22 to August 21).

However, 507,320 tons of steel were exported from the country from July 22 to August 21.

According to the statistical tables of the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA), the production volume of steel ingot in the first four months of the previous year (from March 21 to Jul 22, 2019) hit 8,683,000 tons at large.

With the studies made, it has been targeted that 33 million tons of steel ingot will be produced before the termination of the current year (to end March 20, 2021).

The steel industry is considered as the most important achievement of the current administration dubbed 'Hope and Prudence' which has experienced a considerable jump in recent years.

Iran-Turkey Trade Falls By 67% in H1

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The value of trade between Iran and Turkey in almost seven months of 2020 has stood at around \$4.2b and the figure shows 67 percent slump comparing to the same period in 2019.



According to the research and study department of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, the value of trade of goods between Iran and Turkey in the first seven months of 2020 stood at almost \$4.2b and it indicates a 67% fall comparing to the same period in 2019. Iran's share of imports of this amount of trade was some \$509m while its exports were around \$878m. So Iran's imports and exports with Turkey saw 82 and 37 percent fall in seven months of this year comparing to 2019, respectively.

According to this report, the trade balance between Iran and Turkey has severely weakened and the main reason behind it was the strong fall in exports of Iran's oil commodities to Turkey.

The chamber's report also blames the Coronavirus pandemic for this decline, claiming that despite downward trend of Iran's exports to Turkey between months of March and April, it began upward trend from May and in July it hit \$92m while Iran's imports from Turkey which had started a downward trend since the beginning of 2020, in June began an upward trend.

Iran's oil products exports to Turkey in the first seven months of 2020 have decreased by 99 percent as the value of oil product exports has been around \$21m in the same period.

Manager of GMIC Visits Stacker Reclaimer Installation Project



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The CEO of Manager Golgozar Mining and Industrial Company (GMIC) Eng. Jamshid Mollarahman, accompanied by some of senior officials of the company, visited two underway projects which are ready to be inaugurated officially and come on stream.

According to reports, Mr. Mollarahman visited the project of constructing the second pile of crashed iron ore and installation of stacker reclaimer.

The project is one of the biggest iron ore reclaimers in the Middle East which was implemented with an investment worth 7 million euros plus 420b rials. It faced several hurdles and woes on course of construction like international sanctions and severance of cooperation of foreign contractors as well as some hardware and software problems like shortage of executive plans and parts. But despite these woes, due to the determination of senior management and trust to the domestic specialist forces of the company and management of reforming lines, the project went on with the lower cost and it was tested and it is now ready for official inauguration.

This reclaimer is with nominal capacity of 3250 tons per hour of feeding stock.

The next project which was visited by Mr. Mollarahman was the construction of the central thickener of Golgozar Complex and related components. The operational capacity of this project is 400 tons per hour of dry solid.

All equipment of the project except the thickener mechanism are domestically made.

Golgozar Mining and Industrial Company has 14 mega project in hand for inauguration this year which are carried out with an investment around 22,000b tomans and they will create 4400 direct and indirect jobs.

Iran, Turkmenistan Open Border for Vehicles at Sarakhs Checkpoints

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Turkmenistan and Iran have temporarily opened a border crossing for vehicles at the border checkpoints of namesake cities of Sarakhs, Trend reports with reference to the Business Turkmenistan information portal.

Some 10 Iranian trucks will cross the border bridge 100 meters inside the territory of Turkmenistan, and trailers with cargo will be transferred from Iranian cars to Turkmen ones, which will deliver the cargo to the destination on the territory of Turkmenistan or another border of a third country. Iran and Turkmenistan kept their borders closed due to the coronavirus pandemic, however, the parties discussed issues

of increasing transport traffic during a videoconference in early May.

Earlier, Turkmenistan and Iran resumed trade at the border of namesake cities of Sarakhs. As reported, earlier Turkmenistan has allowed 30 out of 770 Iranian trucks to enter its territory said the representative of the customs service of Iran, Rouhollah Latif.

These trucks were detained on April 1 at the namesake cities of Sarakhs on the two sides of the Turkmen-Iranian border due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Earlier, a new automobile bridge has opened to connect the namesake cities of Sarakhs on the two sides of the Turkmen-Iranian border. The opening ceremony was held on June 8, 2020. This was the second joint border development project on the construction of automobile bridges between the two countries aiming to expand and develop road transportation.

Two-Thirds of Japan Public Support New PM Suga

TOKYO (Reuters) - New Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's government was backed by 66.4% of the public, Kyodo news agency said on Thursday, citing the results of its telephone poll conducted on the first two days of his administration.

Suga became Japan's first new prime minister in nearly eight years on Wednesday, pledging to contain COVID-19 and push reforms after retaining about half of predecessor Shinzo Abe's cabinet.

Asked when the lower house of parliament ought to be dissolved for an election, 55.1% of those surveyed said the election should be held shortly ahead of or at the end of its current term, which runs until October 2021.



Equal Access to Vaccines Is key to Overcoming COVID-19 Pandemic

PARIS (Reuters) - Equitable and affordable access to vaccines for all is key to overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic and supporting the global economic recovery, the G20 Finance and Health ministers said on Thursday.

"We will continue to use all available policy tools to safeguard people's lives, jobs and incomes", the group said in a statement.

"An action plan will be presented at the G20 Finance ministers and central bank governors meeting in October 2020 and to the G20 leaders' summit in November 2020."



EU Parliament Urges Arms Embargo on Saudi Arabia



BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - The European Parliament has urged the European Union member states to impose an arms embargo on Saudi Arabia over the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi and the war in Yemen.

In the EU arms export report adopted on Thursday, EU lawmakers urge all members of the bloc to "follow the example of Germany, Finland and Denmark, which, after the killing of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi adopted restrictions on their arms exports to Saudi Arabia".

The document also points out that arms exported to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, as well as other members of the Saudi-led coalition in the Yemen war, had been used in the country, "where 22 million people find themselves in need of humanitarian aid and protection".

The report also urges the remaining EU countries to impose similar sanctions to prevent further civilian suffering in the Yemen conflict.

Khashoggi, the 59-year-old columnist for The Washington Post, was killed and dismembered by a group of Saudi operatives shortly after he entered the country's consulate in the Turkish city of Istanbul in October 2018.

Riyadh offered conflicting narratives to explain his disappearance before acknowledging he was murdered in the diplomatic building in a "rogue operation".

Earlier this month, the Riyadh Criminal Court commuted death sentences and handed down prison terms of up to 20 years to the convicts, saying they were pardoned by the journalist's family. They were sentenced to death last year.

UN human rights investigator Agnes Callamard also called the Saudi prosecutor's verdict on the murder a "parody of justice" that spared "high-level" plotters.

Yemen has been in violence and chaos since 2014, when Iran-backed Houthi rebels overran much of the country, including the capital, Sanaa, and forced President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi to flee the country the following year.

The crisis escalated in 2015 when a Saudi-led military coalition launched a devastating air campaign aimed at rolling back Houthi territorial gains.

Tens of thousands of Yemenis, including civilians, are believed to have been killed in the conflict, which has led to one of the world's worst humanitarian crisis with 3.65 million internally displaced people and 15 million in need of immediate humanitarian aid.

Scores Denounce Charlie Hebdo Cartoons in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AFP) - Scores protested outside the French embassy in Iraq's capital Baghdad on Thursday to condemn Paris-based magazine Charlie Hebdo's decision to republish cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

The satirical weekly reprinted the controversial images to mark the start of the trial earlier this month of alleged accomplices to a massacre at its headquarters over five years ago.

Twelve people, including some of France's most celebrated cartoonists, were killed on January 7, 2015, when brothers Said and Cherif Kouachi went on a gun rampage at the paper's offices in Paris.



Belarus President Closes Western Borders, Puts Army on High Alert

MINSK (Dispatches) - Belarus's president, beleaguered by six weeks of mass protests demanding his resignation, has announced he is putting troops on high alert and closing the country's borders with Poland and Lithuania.

President Alexander Lukashenko's decision on Thursday underlined his repeated claim that the wave of protests is driven by the West. He faces increasing criticism from the United States and the European Union.

Protests began after the disputed August 9 presidential election. Official results gave the authoritarian leader a sixth term in office but opponents say the results were manipulated.

"We are forced to withdraw troops from the streets, put the army on high alert and close the state border on the west, primarily with Lithuania and Poland," Lukashenko said at a women's forum.

Lukashenko also said Belarus's border with Ukraine would be strengthened. "I don't want my country to be at war. Moreover, I don't want Belarus and Poland, Lithuania to turn into a theatre of military operations where our issues will not be resolved," he said.

"Therefore, today in front of this hall of the most beautiful, advanced, patriotic people I want to appeal to the peoples of Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine - stop your crazy politicians, don't let war break out!" He did not mention neighbouring Latvia, which like Poland and Lithuania is a NATO member.

Identifying officers allegedly involved in violence

Earlier on Thursday, Svetlana Tikhonovskaya, the main opposition candidate in the disputed presidential election, said activists are compiling a list of law enforcement officers who were allegedly involved in violence against protesters denouncing the results of the vote.

Nearly 7,000 people were detained and hundreds were brutally beaten by police during the first several days of post-election protests.

Human rights groups are working with opposition activists to identify the officers and officials, Tikhonovskaya said, adding the list will be shared with the US, the EU and Russia.

Turkey Says Conditions Conducive To Launching Talks With Greece

ANKARA (Reuters) - Turkey believes conditions are conducive to restarting talks with fellow NATO member Greece after Ankara's Oruc Reis seismic survey vessel left contested waters in the eastern Mediterranean, Turkish Presidential Spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said on Thursday.

Turkey and Greece have been locked in a bitter dispute over conflicting claims on the extent of their continental shelves and exploration for potential energy resources in the eastern Mediterranean. Tensions flared last month when Turkey sent the Oruc Reis to contested waters also claimed by Greece and Cyprus.

On Sunday, Oruc Reis returned to Turkey's southern province of Antalya for what Ankara called "routine maintenance", a move Greece called a positive first step in easing tensions. The two countries began talks at NATO to avoid military accidents in the region, after a small naval collision last month.

Speaking at an online panel, Kalin said Oruc Reis' return to Antalya was an opportunity to advance talks and this "should not be squandered", adding that Ankara hopes this will be "reflected positively" at a

European Union summit on Sept. 24-25.

"We want to see a new page turned in the relations between Turkey and Greece, but also in relations between Turkey and the EU," Kalin said.

"We are hopeful, we believe the climate is conducive to that at the moment and we have, I think, reached an understanding with regards to which steps we need to be taking over the next few weeks to resume these talks," he said.

On Wednesday, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said Oruc Reis' maintenance may take "a few weeks" according to the energy ministry, but added the vessel will resume its operations afterwards.

EU leaders will address the issue at the summit later this month and evaluate potential sanctions. Germany wants more time for talks with Turkey while France, Cyprus and Greece demand a punitive response to Turkey.

Turkey has two exploration vessels off the divided island of Cyprus, which has long been at odds with Ankara over oil and gas drilling. Turkey recognised a breakaway Turkish Cypriot state in the north of the island, but not the internationally-recognised Greek Cypriot government.



China Conducts More Exercises Near Taiwan

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China said on Friday it is conducting military

exercises near the Taiwan Strait, as the most senior official from the United States' State Department official to visit Taiwan in 40 years prepared to meet the island's president.

Defense ministry spokesman Ren Guoqiang told reporters the live-fire drills were in response to the "current situation" and designed to safeguard China's "national sovereignty".

Beijing claims Taiwan as its own and has been alarmed by the increasing willingness of the US to defy China's attempts to isolate the democratically-ruled island. Last week, it held two days of mass air and sea drills.

Keith Krach, undersecretary of state for economic growth, energy and the environment, arrived on the self-ruled island on Thursday and is due to attend a dinner with President Tsai Ing-wen on Friday evening. He will also go to a memorial service for Taiwan's former president Lee Teng-hui on Saturday.

Ren gave few more details about the drills, which he said began in the Taiwan Strait on Friday and involved the People's Liberation Army's eastern theatre command.

"They are a reasonable, necessary action aimed at the current situation in the Taiwan Strait and protecting national sovereignty and territorial integrity," Ren said, adding that Taiwan was an internal Chinese affair.

"Recently the United States and Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) authorities have stepped up their collusion, frequently creating disturbances," Ren said, referring to Taiwan's ruling party.

When U.S. Health Secretary Alex Azar visited the island last month, Chinese fighter jets briefly crossed the midline of the Taiwan Strait.

Krach's visit was swiftly condemned by China, which balks at any recognition of Taiwan and has mounted a decades-long policy designed to marginalise the island on the diplomatic stage, which has intensified since Tsai first won office in 2016. She was returned for a second term in a landslide in January.





Velenjak Apt (\$2300)
250sq.m, 3bdrs
S/p, Sauna
J, balcony
marble fl
Nice view
Fully Furn

Shanon (adviser)

Zaferanieh Villa (\$8000)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
green yard
balcony, pkg
S/q, & F.F

Parsian

Apt Velenjak (\$2600)
300sq.m, 4bdrs, S/pool
Sauna, Jacuzzi, pkg lot
green yard, balcony, F.F

Sa'adat abad (\$1800)
2bdrs, S/p, J
F.F

bldg Andarzgoo (\$15000)
8storey, total 20bdrs, S/pool
S, J, green yard, pkg lots
Brand new, & Semi Furn

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(\$2600) 4bdrs, S/p, F.F

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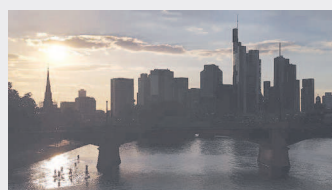
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German Economy Likely to Shrink Less This Year

BERLIN (Reuters) - The German economy will likely decline by 5.5% this year due to the coronavirus pandemic, the IfW economic institute said on Thursday, meaning the slump would be less dramatic than during the 2009 financial crisis.

IfW, one of the Germany's leading institutes and part of a group that advises the government, revised up its forecast from June, when it had predicted a decline of 6.8%. In 2009, Europe's largest economy contracted by 5.7%.

"The German economy is on the road to recovery," IfW said. It cautioned that a further improvement will be more difficult to achieve, pointing to a prolonged crisis in some sectors and a surge of new coronavirus infections overseas.



Developing Asia's Economic Growth to Contract in 2020

SINGAPORE (Dispatches) - Economies across developing Asia will contract this year for the first time in nearly six decades but recovery will resume next year, as the region starts to emerge from the economic devastation caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, according to a report released by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2020 Update forecasts -0.7% gross domestic product (GDP) growth for developing Asia this year—marking its first negative economic growth since the early 1960s. Growth will rally to 6.8% in 2021, in part because growth will be measured relative to a weak 2020. This will still leave next year's output below pre-COVID-19 projections, suggesting an "L"-shaped rather than a "V"-shaped recovery. About three-quarters of the region's economies are expected to post negative growth in 2020.

"Most economies in the Asia and Pacific region can expect a difficult growth path for the rest of 2020," said ADB Chief Economist Yasuyuki Sawada. "The economic threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic remains potent, as extended first waves or recurring outbreaks could prompt

further containment measures. Consistent and coordinated steps to address the pandemic, with policy priorities focusing on protecting lives and livelihoods of people who are already most vulnerable, and ensuring the safe return to work and restart of business activities, will continue to be crucial to ensure the region's eventual recovery is inclusive and sustainable."

A prolonged COVID-19 pandemic remains the biggest downside risk to the region's growth outlook this year and next year. To mitigate the risk, governments in the region have delivered wide-ranging policy responses, including policy support packages—mainly income support—amounting to \$3.6 trillion, equivalent to about 15% of regional GDP.

Other downside risks arise from geopolitical tensions, including an escalation of the trade and technology conflict between the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC), as well as financial vulnerabilities that could be exacerbated by a prolonged pandemic.

The PRC is one of the few economies in the region bucking the downturn. It is expected to grow by 1.8% this year and 7.7% in 2021, with successful public health measures providing a platform for growth. In India, where lockdowns have stalled consumer and business spending, GDP contracted by a record 23.9% in the first quarter of its fiscal year (FY) and is forecast to shrink 9% in FY2020 before recovering by 8% in FY2021.

Subregions of developing Asia are expected to post negative growth this year, except East Asia which is forecast to expand by 1.3% and recover strongly to 7.0% in 2021. Some economies heavily reliant on trade and tourism, particularly in the Pacific and South Asia, face double-digit contractions this year. Forecasts suggest that most of developing Asia will recover next year, except for some economies in the Pacific including the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Samoa, and Tonga.

The inflation forecast for developing Asia is revised downwards to 2.9% this year from 3.2% forecast in April, due to continued low oil prices and weak demand. Inflation for 2021 is expected to ease further to 2.3%.

The update to ADO 2020 features a theme chapter, Wellness in Worrying Times, which discusses the importance of wellness as communities recover from COVID-19's toll on physical and mental health. The chapter explains that wellness can be an engine of inclusive economic growth if the region leverages its rich wellness traditions, and appropriate policies are promoted by governments.

Bank of Spain Downgrades Economic Forecast

MADRID (Dispatches) - Recent developments in the way the Covid-19 pandemic is playing out may force the Spanish government to update its economic forecasts.

While a May projection that Madrid sent to Brussels envisioned a 9.2% drop in economic output in 2020, the Bank of Spain on Wednesday released a more pessimistic outlook that places the decline somewhere between 10.5% and 12.6%.

This is down from the central bank's own previous forecast, which had expected gross domestic product (GDP) to retreat by 9% to 11.6%.

Although the end of the lockdown in Spain had created hopes of a strong recovery, fresh coronavirus outbreaks and travel restrictions imposed in late July put the brakes on economic activity, particularly in the hospitality industry.

The short- and medium-term economic outlook continues to be highly dependent on epidemiological developments, in respect of which there remains a high degree of uncertainty

"The third quarter has gone from more to less, and that means that the beginning of next year will be worse," said Óscar Arce, the Bank of Spain's director general for economics, statistics and research.

Under the two scenarios considered by the banking supervisor, in 2021 the economy could rebound either by 7.3% in the better situation, or by 4.1% in a scenario of more intense coronavirus outbreaks in the short term.

"The main difference between these two scenarios stems from the assumptions regarding the course of the pandemic over the coming quarters, which, in turn, determines the degree of severity of the containment measures that may be necessary and their consequent impact on economic activity," said the Bank of Spain in a release.

Scenario 1 would only require containment measures of limited scope and affect mostly hospitality services, while in scenario 2 the restrictions required could have a greater impact on the service sector, but also affect other productive sectors.



Int'l Media Forum Held On Occasion of 25th Anniversary of the Permanent Neutrality Of Turkmenistan

ASHGABAT (Dispatches) -

On Wednesday, September 16, the international media forum dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the permanent Neutrality of Turkmenistan and the election of our country as Vice-Chairman of the upcoming 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly was held in the building of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan. The session was held in the format of a video conference.

The International media forum was organized by the Turkmen side together with the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU).

The meeting was attended by the heads and representatives of a number of ministries of Turkmenistan, diplomatic missions and representative offices of international organizations accredited in the country, representatives of the national media, heads of authoritative foreign public and television and radio broadcasting organizations, as well as more than 300 correspondents of news agencies from over 65 countries of the world.

The participants especially noted the importance of the next delegation to Turkmenistan of the Vice-Chairmanship of the session of the United Nations General Assembly, where our country has a positive experience. As you know, Turkmenistan took part in the 58th, 62nd, 64th, 68th and 71st sessions as Vice-Chairman.

Delegates from Turkmenistan and foreign countries who spoke during the meeting highlighted the status of the country's permanent Neutrality, which was recognized by the United Nations by relevant resolutions. In this context, the participants expressed the success and effectiveness of Turkmenistan's foreign policy pursued under the wise leadership of President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov.

In particular, Ibrahim Eren, Acting President of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), Director General and Chairman of the Turkish Television and Radio Broadcasting Corporation "TRT", stated during his speech that from the very beginning Turkmenistan has chosen this political course to promote global peace and stability, and to reinforce the importance of coexistence and sustainable development.

In his speech, Javad Mottaghi, Secretary General of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) noted that, being a new phenomenon in international legal practice, Turkmen neutrality became the basis for a new concept of cooperation and preservation of peace on earth.

As part of his speech, Shashi Shekhar Vempati, Chief Executive Officer of the Indian Broadcasting Company Prasar Bharati, underlined that the Neutrality of Turkmenistan is of great importance in the international arena and the policy pursued by the President of Turkmenistan fully coincides with the course of strengthening good neighborliness in the region and around the world.

Nedra Weerasinghe, director of MTV Channel (Ptv) Limited (MBC / MTV) from Sri Lanka, also shared her vision of the peculiar aspects of the positive Neutrality policy and noted that Neutrality will help to consolidate the position of the fairway in International forums that play an important role in protecting values and common interests of humanity.

Emmanuel Dupuy, President of the European Institute for Prospects and Security, paid attention to the important role of the neutral status of Turkmenistan in the region which can become a source of consolidation for the Central Asian countries and a platform for accelerated integration in the region.

During the speech of the Chairman of the National TV and Radio Company of Uzbekistan, A. Khadzhaev, it was noted that this Forum, without a doubt, was one of the important events, designed to reaffirm the aspirations of Turkmenistan to further strengthen stability and peace, socio-economic prosperity, as well as the development of diplomatic relations with the countries of the world and good neighborly relations in the region.

During their speeches, Neda Berger, Chairman of the Turkmen-Austrian Society, B. Amansaryev, Chairman of the State News Agency of Turkmenistan, A. Kakaev, Deputy Chairman of the State Committee of Turkmenistan on Television, Radio Broadcasting and Cinematography and K. Rejepov, editor-in-chief of the newspaper "Turkmenistan" also spoke about the uniqueness of Turkmenistan's permanent neutrality, its role in promoting international humanitarian cooperation, and it was noted that peacefulness, equality, non-interference in the affairs of other states, non-participation in military blocs, the implementation of mutually beneficial cooperation are integral components of the policy of positive neutrality.

U.S.-China Investment Flows Slide to Nine-Year Low as Bilateral Tensions Escalate

HONG KONG (Reuters) - Investment between the United States and China tumbled to a nine-year low in the first half of 2020, hit by bilateral tensions that could see more Chinese companies come under pressure to divest U.S. operations, a research report said.

Investment, both direct investment by companies and venture capital flows, between the two countries fell 16.2% to \$10.9 billion (8.44 billion pounds) in January-June from the same period a year earlier - also hurt by the coronavirus pandemic, according to figures from consultancy Rhodium Group.

That's a far cry from half-yearly totals of nearly \$40 billion seen in 2016 and 2017.

Citing national security risks posed by Chinese technology firms, U.S. President Donald Trump's administration has sharply expanded actions to hobble Chinese companies.

This has included putting telecoms giant Huawei Technologies Co Ltd on its trade blacklist, threatening similar action for Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corp 0981.HK and ordering TikTok owner ByteDance to divest the short-form video app.

ByteDance is currently seeking approval for a deal with Oracle Corp that is structured as a partnership rather than an outright sale.

"At a time of rising discomfort with US-China technology integration numerous other companies - both Chinese firms operating in the U.S. and U.S. firms with a presence in China may be forced to divest," the report said.

It added that the U.S. treatment of ByteDance and the broader shift away from U.S.-China technology integration may lead to policies which make it more difficult for U.S. tech firms to operate in China.

Investment by U.S. firms in China in the first half tumbled 31% to \$4.1 billion, while investment by Chinese companies in the United States rose 38% to \$4.7 billion, the report said. That was mostly due to one deal - a Tencent Music TME.N -led consortium's purchase of a minority stake in Universal Music group for \$3.4 billion.

IFC Warns of Asia-Pacific Financial Crisis

JAKARTA (Reuters) - The Asia-Pacific region risks a damaging financial crisis from a surge of non-performing loans caused by rising insolvencies, a senior official from the World Bank Group's private sector arm said on Thursday.

In an interview with Reuters, Alfonso Garcia Mora, Vice President for Asia and the Pacific of the International Finance Corp (IFC), said bankruptcies were expected to rise by 30% because of the economic crisis

caused by the new coronavirus pandemic.

While many firms have been given moratoriums on their loan repayments, many central banks are not requiring financial institutions to regularly monitor these firms' solvency. This, said Garcia Mora, was "very dangerous".

"What can happen is that when the bank opens their books in six months, or in 12 months, they will realise that their non-performing loans ratio is not 2% but 20%," he said.

"This is why I am very concerned about the sequencing of this crisis. We started with a health care crisis, that's clear. We went into an economic crisis, and we might end up in a financial crisis."

About 50% of firms will not have enough income to service their loans in the coming year, Garcia Mora said, citing an analysis by the World Bank and the Bank for International Settlements.

With a few exceptions, Garcia Mora said the region's judicial systems were unprepared for a leap in insolvency cases. There was also a lack of simplified methods for smaller firms to declare bankruptcy and start again, he said.

"We will have probably many zombie firms around that will not be able to liquidate," he said. "There are other cases where we will need to liquidate firms that should not be liquidated."

In its most recent forecasts in June, the World Bank estimated that the Asia-Pacific economy would contract by 0.5% in 2020, its lowest rate since 1967.

Globally, the World Bank has estimated 100 million people to fall into "extreme poverty", where they earn \$1.90 a day or less. About half of the newly poverty-stricken will come from the Asia-Pacific, mostly in South Asia, Garcia Mora said.

Iran, Turkey Discuss Ways to Boost Transportation Cooperation

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - In a post on his Twitter, Farazmand said, “(In a meeting with) Turkey’s Transport and Infrastructure Minister Adil Karaismailoglu, ways to promote cooperation (between the two countries) in the railroad, land and air transportation were explored”. During the meeting, both sides also said that regular

business flights between the two countries will resume in the near future and under health protocols amid the COVID-19 crisis.

Iran has put forward a proposal to set up a new railroad line with Turkey, Minister of Roads and Urban Development Mohammad Eslami said in August.



Global Recession Not as Deep As Expected

PARIS (Dispatches) - The global recession this year will not be as deep as expected as a result of countries’ efforts to counter the economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic, the OECD said.

But the recovery next year will also be more modest than anticipated, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development said, projecting a contraction of 4.5 percent in global economic output this year and a return to growth of roughly 5.0 percent in 2021.

In its previous set of forecasts in June, the Paris-based OECD had been expecting the global economy to shrink by 6.0 percent in 2020 and return to growth of 5.2 percent next year.

“After the initial bounce-back in many activities following the easing of confinement measures, there are some signs from high-frequency indicators and business surveys that the pace of the global recovery has lost momentum since June, particularly in many advanced economies,” the OECD said.

It pointed out, however, that “the economic outlook remains exceptionally uncertain, with the Covid-19 pandemic continuing to exert a substantial toll on economies and societies”.

In the second quarter of 2020, global output more than 10 percent lower than at the end of 2019, “an unprecedented sudden shock in modern times”, the OECD said.

The extent and timing of the pandemic shock differed across the major economies, but all experienced a sharp contraction in activity as necessary containment measures were implemented.

Global trade collapsed, declining by over 15 percent in the first half of 2020, and labour markets were severely disrupted by reductions in working hours, job losses and the enforced shutdown of businesses.

“Without the prompt and effective policy support introduced in all economies to cushion the impact of the shock on household incomes and companies, the contraction in output and employment would have been substantially larger,” it said.



Looking at individual economies, China was expected to be the only one to expand in 2020, with projected growth of 1.8 percent.

India, on the other hand, would see its economy shrink by 10.2 percent.

The United States, the world’s biggest economy, would fare better than the global average, with a projected contraction of 3.8 percent this year.

Germany would perform better than the eurozone as a whole, with its economy set to shrink by 5.4 percent, compared with a contraction of 7.9 percent for the single currency area.

The French economy was set to shrink by 9.5 percent, Italy’s by 10.5 percent and Britain’s by 10.1 percent, the OECD predicted.

Future growth prospects would depend on factors including the severity of new virus outbreaks, the type of restrictions imposed, vaccine deployment and the effects of fiscal and monetary policy actions on demand, the OECD said.

Disaster Risk Reduction Mainstreaming in Development Plans

TEHRAN (APDIM News) - The devastating toll that disasters, such as the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, impose in terms of loss of lives, livelihoods and developmental gains brings to light the urgency to understand the multi-dimensional aspects of disaster risk and the importance to adopt a risk-informed approach towards national development plans and policies.

The Plan and Budget Organisation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (PBO) organized an online workshop on “Disaster Risk Reduction Mainstreaming in Development Plans” on 14 and 15 September 2020 in cooperation with the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and with the support of the CIMA Foundation. The workshop, which was attended by planning managers and officers from all major ministries and administrations in Iran, offered an opportunity to discuss approaches and options to mainstream risk reduction across the national development planning process. This is especially timely as Iran is in the process of kick-starting the development of its 7th Five-year National Development Plan (2022-2026).

At the opening of the workshop, Mr Amir Amini, Head of the Secretariat for the Development of the 7th Five-year National Development Plan and Development Programs in PBO referred to the positive and effective role of this workshop on the preparedness to minimize the costs of disaster in various sectors.

The UN Resident Coordinator in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ms. Ugochi Daniels, stated in the opening session: “The Islamic Republic of Iran’s institutional capacity and preparedness to respond is significant. Climate and weather-related wide-scale hazards are a relatively new phenomenon and the country is striving to improve its capacities to reduce the risk and negative impacts of such disasters in the future.”

In his opening remarks, Mr. Ali Gholampour, Director of Environmental Development Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran said that the outcomes of this workshop could be shared with other countries in the region bilaterally or through APDIM and elaborated on the significant role APDIM can play as a facilitator for regional cooperation in the region. He further echoed the support and encouragement of the Government of Islamic Republic of Iran to APDIM to continue to provide its services to the countries in the region.

Director of APDIM, Ms. Letizia Rossano in her opening remarks said: “I am delighted that APDIM could contribute to this important work with the Plan and Budget Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Ensuring that risk reduction is mainstreamed across national development planning is a core message of the Sendai Framework and a pre-requisite to safeguarding development gains”. Ms Rossano further noted that APDIM will be gathering important learnings from this process to share with other countries in the region.

Dr Roberto Rudari, Research/Program Director at CIMA research Foundation appreciated the strong understanding from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the need to mainstream disaster risk in their National Development Planning and added: “Iran would be one of the leading countries to connect disaster risk reduction and sustainable development.”

Germany Pushes Up 2021 Debt Plans to Around 100b Euros

BERLIN (Reuters) - German Finance Minister Olaf Scholz plans to take on net new debt of around 100 billion euros (\$117.92 billion) next year to sustain Berlin’s fight against the coronavirus pandemic, four people familiar with the matter told Reuters on Thursday.

The plans underline an increased readiness in Berlin to boost borrowing after a source told Reuters earlier this month that Scholz had initially been eyeing additional debt of at least 80 billion euros in his draft 2021 budget.

The pandemic plunged Europe’s largest economy into its deepest recession on record in the first half of the year. Berlin unleashed an unprecedented array of rescue and stimulus measures, financed with record new borrowing of some 218 billion euros, to help companies and consumers through the crisis.

Scholz said in a Reuters interview last week that he was planning to take on substantial additional debt next year to finance further measures and sustain the



recovery, but declined to give an exact figure.

Four people familiar with the draft budget said on condition of anonymity that Scholz was eyeing net new debt of at least 95 billion euros. Two of them ruled out the possibility of it exceeding 100 billion euros.

The step would require another suspension of Germany’s constitutionally enshrined debt limits after Berlin already abandoned them this year. Scholz is determined to stick to the fiscal rules from 2022 onwards, which would allow net new debt but to a lesser extent.

The plans also highlight Scholz’s determination to move Germany further away from its former image as Europe’s austerity champion and secure Berlin’s new role as the biggest spender in the euro zone’s struggle to recover from the COVID-19 outbreak.

Scholz is expected to present the draft budget and his debt plans for 2021 next Wednesday. Lawmakers will debate the package and have to approve it by December.

European New Car Sales Fall by 17.6% Year-on-Year in August

BERLIN (Reuters) - European car registrations dropped in July and August but not as steeply as in previous months, industry data showed on Thursday, pointing to a slow recovery in Europe’s auto sector that was hit hard by the coronavirus crisis.

In July, new car registrations dropped by 3.7% year-on-year to 1,281,740 vehicles in the European Union, Britain and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries, statistics from the European Automobile Manufacturers’ Association (ACEA) showed.

Sales fell by 17.6% in August to 884,394 vehicles, when all countries in the region, except Cyprus, recorded losses compared to the previous year. Registrations in Germany and France fell sharply while they edged down in Italy, the data showed.

That came after bigger declines in sales of 24.1% in June and 56.8% in May.

Volkswagen Group’s sales decreased by 24.2% in August, while Renault RENA.PA and PSA Group reported drops of 22.8% and 19%, respectively.

Luxury automaker BMW BMWG.DE posted a 6.3% rise in registrations while rival Daimler’s sales declined by 17.4%.

In the first eight months of the year, sales dropped by around a third as the coronavirus lockdown forced carmakers to close showrooms across Europe.



Iran Blasts...

FROM PAGE 1

The Iranian diplomat further stressed that “The Islamic Republic of Iran places great importance on nuclear security. In this context, I would like to draw your attention to an important matter and refer to the recent explosion in Shahid Ahmadi Roushan nuclear facility (Natanz) which was the result of sabotage as already declared. We warn against any such reckless and dangerous adventurism. Such malicious acts should be condemned strongly by the Agency and its Member States. In several General Conference resolutions, it is highlighted that any armed attack and threat against nuclear facilities dedicated for peaceful purposes and are under the IAEA safeguards, is considered as the gross violation of the provisions of the UN Charter, international law and the Statute of the Agency. In addition to protecting its nuclear facilities in any way it deems necessary, Iran reserves its right to take appropriate actions against such threats. I would also like to emphasize that such malicious acts will not negatively affect Iran’s nuclear program, but will only serve as an incentive to accelerate its development.”

Trump's Plea to Russia...

FROM PAGE 1

That Mr. Trump for official meeting with Iranians has repeatedly turned to the cameras or in the virtual space has said he will sign deal with Iran after the November presidential election can be considered as the message of resistance to the enthusiast supporters of negotiations inside Iran. The White House with plea, either with mediation or without mediation, thinks of restoring security in the region and to dispatch its companies, which have left out of Iran’s market due to the Zionist pressures or wrong strategies, to the region. But it is totally a phantom because first, Iran does not consider Trump “trustworthy”, and secondly, Trump without taking a long step of repentance has not created a climate for winning the heart of Iran. The white House’s mistake lies in this point that it has prolonged the lifting the sanctions against Iran until its presidential election time which could be a step towards good behavior for attracting the consent of Iran, and it cannot now take any action and step until after the presidential election.

In fact one should say that the U.S. is the most maleficent country in the world which wrongly stepped out of the JCPOA and even lost the support of its aligned countries. Of course I think Trump will still take the rein in the office for the second term, and these messages are just for this issue that he wants to stop amazingly confronting with the Islamic Revolution of Iran and to act for his own and country’s interests by reducing military expenses because of the U.S. troops’ presence in the region.

Trump like Barack Obama after the elections for his second term needs less the Zionist regime and undoubtedly he attaches great importance to his country’s interests. Of course this remark is embedded in this framework provided that there is no undertaken ground to be provided to keep Trump or either Joe Biden for diplomacy confrontation with Iran. Islamic Iran definitely analyzes and interprets its own interests for protecting the revolutionary values. So, it will shun any effort for negotiations of any kind either proposed by Trump or Biden unless it gains some lucrative concessions which can safeguard the fundamental values of the Islamic Revolution.

Tehran Warns of...

FROM PAGE 1

Azadi said U.S. President Donald Trump’s repeated threats of using force against Iran are provocative and in violation of the UN Charter about prohibition of threat or use of force or serious threat to international peace and security.

The Iranian representative warned against serious consequences of Washington’s irresponsible policies and illegal actions, saying that Tehran will swiftly respond in kind to any act of aggression against the nation, sovereignty, territorial integrity and its national interests.

Azadi also slammed U.S. accusations of terrorism, saying Washington is the one which is supporting terrorists.

The Iranian representative referred to remarks made by Trump and Former U.S. secretary of state Hillary Clinton admitting to the US role in creating terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda and Daesh.

Also replying to remarks made by Saudi Arabia’s representative to the conference, Azadi called for Riyadh’s full transparency and cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) alongside ending its five-year war on Yemen.

Last month, reports emerged indicating that Saudi Arabia had been engaged in “undeclared” nuclear activities.

A clandestine Saudi nuclear program has been confirmed by satellite images showing a checkpoint, towering security fences, a big building about 150 feet on a side and pools for the collection of uranium waste; a typical blueprint for yellow-cake mills.

Reuters reported on Thursday that Trump plans to issue an executive order allowing him to impose US sanctions on anyone who engages in arms deals with Iran despite the upcoming expiration of the UN arms embargo.

The report cited four sources familiar on the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity. Earlier this week, U.S. Special Representative for Venezuela and Iran Elliott Abrams and U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that Washington would be seeking to reimpose UN sanctions, including the arms embargo, despite failed attempts at the UN Security Council.



Middlesbrough Boss Warnock Tests Positive for COVID-19

LONDON (Reuters) - Middlesbrough manager Neil Warnock has tested positive for COVID-19, the Championship (second-tier) club said on Thursday. Middlesbrough said in a statement that Warnock, 71, will self-isolate in line with government and league protocols. "Neil is in good spirits and we look forward to welcoming him back after his period in isolation," the club said.

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Tsonga Ruled out for Rest of 2020 Due to Back Injury

ROME (Reuters) - A lingering lower back problem has forced Jo-Wilfried Tsonga out of his home Grand Slam at the French Open and the rest of 2020, the former world number five said on Wednesday. The 35-year-old Tsonga has not played since lower back pain forced him to retire from his first-round match at the Australian Open in January against Alexei Popyrin while trailing 6-7(5) 6-2 6-1.

8 IRAN NEWS

SPORTS

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 19, 2020

Tottenham, AC Milan Win Europa Qualifiers

LONDON (Dispatches) - Tottenham needed two late goals to secure a 2-1 victory over nine-man Lokomotiv Plovdiv in Europa League qualifying, while AC Milan and Rangers also advanced.

Tottenham scored twice in the final 10 minutes to avoid a humiliating Europa League exit to Lokomotiv Plovdiv as Jose Mourinho's men came from behind to beat the nine-man Bulgarians 2-1 on Thursday.

Harry Kane's penalty and Tanguy Ndombele's winner five minutes from time ensured the 2019 Champions League finalists did not fall at the first hurdle of their Europa League campaign to a side that have never progressed beyond the qualifying stages of European competition.

"I think it was a helluva experience for the players. Sometimes in football miracles happen and when you play a knockout, one-leg it is the perfect scenario for a miracle to happen," said Mourinho.

"Everyone on their side had the moment where they dream and we had the moment where we believed a nightmare could arrive."

Mourinho named a strong side featuring Kane, Hugo Lloris and Son Heung-min with just four changes from Sunday's 1-0 defeat to Everton to start their Premier League campaign.

But there was more evidence why Spurs are desperate to secure Gareth Bale's return on loan from Real Madrid as they struggled to break Plovdiv down and went behind to Georgi Minchev's header 19 minutes from time.

The tie swung back in Spurs favour nine minutes later when Momchil Tsvetanov punched clear off his own line and the referee had no option but to point to the spot and send Tsvetanov off. Birsent Karagaren was then also shown a second yellow card before Kane dispatched the spot-kick into the top corner.

Ndombele has struggled for game time under Mourinho despite being the club's record signing.

But the Frenchman, who was introduced on the hour mark, proved the match winner by bundling home from close range.



A trip to Macedonia next week to face KF Shkendija faces Mourinho's men in the third qualifying round, by which time they may have Bale to call on with the Welshman expected to complete his move back to the Premier League on Friday.

"For me, at this moment, until I'm told Gareth Bale is a Tottenham player, I still think and feel and respect the fact that he's a Real Madrid player, so I'm not going to comment on a Real Madrid player," added Mourinho.

Milan beat Shamrock Rovers 2-0 in Dublin with Zlatan Ibrahimovic scoring the opener in the first half before Hakan Calhanoglu completed the victory in the second. All qualifying games in UEFA's club competitions are being played without fans in the stadiums because of the pandemic.

Also Thursday, Dennis Man converted the decisive penalty in a shootout after scoring a hat trick to help Romania's FCSB beat nine-man Backa Topola in Serbia in a game that finished 4-4 after 90 minutes and 6-6 following extra time. FCSB had only 14 players available due to coronavirus infections and most of its coaching staff quarantined.

Rangers routed Lincoln Red Imps 5-0 in Gibraltar. Norway's Rosenborg advanced with a 5-1 victory at Latvia's Ventspils and Spanish side Granada won 4-0 at Albania's Teuta.

Tottenham In Talks Over Bale Signing



LONDON (Dispatches) - Gareth Bale's agents are talking to Tottenham about a deal that would see the Real Madrid forward return to his former club.

Bale has been frozen out by Real manager Zinedine Zidane and the Wales star said earlier this month that he was open to joining a Premier League side.

It had been reported in England that Tottenham and Manchester United were interested in signing Bale.

Now Tottenham have opened discussions with Bale's representatives about a potential move, likely to be a loan but with a permanent deal not ruled out at this stage.

"Gareth still loves Spurs," Bale's agent Jonathan Barnett told BBC Sport Wales on Tuesday.

"We are talking. It's where he wants to go."

Bale has two years left on a contract that pays him around £600,000 per week at Real.

It has been reported the Spanish club would be willing to pay some of that salary to finally move on from their troubled relationship with the forward.

Neymar Banned Two Matches

PARIS (Dispatches) - Neymar received a two-match ban Wednesday for his red card against Marseille as the French league announced it would open an investigation into accusations of racism by the Brazil forward against Alvaro Gonzalez.

Angel Di Maria will also be summoned to the league's next disciplinary commission meeting on September 23 over claims he spat at Marseille defender Gonzalez during PSG's 1-0 loss which ended with a mass brawl and five players sent off.

Neymar was sent off for slapping Gonzalez on the back of the head and accused the Spaniard of calling him a "monkey". Gonzalez denies the allegation. "We know there was an exchange of words."

But right now, there isn't enough certainty to call in the players," said Sebastian Deneux, president of the disciplinary commission.

He said the investigation would study the footage further to determine whether there was enough evidence to substantiate the claims of racist abuse.

The goal will be to establish "what was actually said and what was actually heard", Deneux added, while insisting the commission would only rule on "objective, tangible elements."

The probe could also potentially interpret whether Neymar made homophobic remarks to Gonzalez, as reported by Spanish media.

PSG defender Layvin Kurzawa incurred a six-match ban for kicking out at Marseille left-back Jordan Amavi, who was hit with a suspension of three games after he too was dismissed.

Leandro Paredes was banned for two games after he was sent off for a clash with fellow Argentine Dario Benedetto, who was also red-carded and will be suspended for Marseille's game with Saint-Etienne on Thursday.



The 41-year-old, who also played for both AC Milan and Inter Milan, was among a group of recipients of the UEFA Pro license along with former Paris Saint-Germain

Pirlo Gets Coaching License in Time for New Season

TURIN (Dispatches) - Andrea Pirlo has been awarded his coaching licence just days before Juventus open their bid for a 10th consecutive Serie A title, the Italian Football Federation announced on Wednesday.

Former Italy and Juventus star Pirlo was promoted to the top job in Turin last month just a week after being appointed coach of their under-23 side.

midfielder Thiago Motta, who briefly coached Serie A club Genoa last year.

Italy's 2006 World Cup winner Luca Toni also received the licence along with Vincenzo Italiano, coach of newly promoted Serie A side Spezia Calcio, and former Sierra Leone international Mohamed Kallon.

Pirlo received 107 out of 110 after his oral validation of his 30-page thesis, entitled "The football that I would like".

Divided into three parts -- offensive phase, defensive phase, transitions -- the thesis has been published on the FIGC website.

His introduction cites "the teams that inspired me in shaping my idea of football".

These include the Barcelona of Johan Cruyff and Pep Guardiola, Louis van Gaal's Ajax, Carlo Ancelotti's AC Milan and Antonio Conte's Juventus.

Safety Car Re-Starts Putting Drivers at Risk



LONDON (Reuters) - Six-times Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton has called for a rethink on how races are re-started behind the safety car because he fears drivers are being put at risk.

Sunday's Tuscan Grand Prix at Mugello was stopped twice due to crashes, the first time after a four-car pile-up when backmarkers accelerated too soon.

Valtteri Bottas had been leading for Mercedes and controlling the pace, backing the pack up and delaying his getaway for maximum effect.

Hamilton, who took his 90th career win at the Italian circuit, told reporters the safety car lights were being turned off, effectively handing over control to the race leader, later and later.

"They're obviously trying to make it more exciting but ultimately today you've seen they've put people at risk, so perhaps they need to rethink that," said Hamilton, who felt Sunday was "a little bit over the limit."

Red Bull's Alex Albon agreed it had been dangerous.

"I think tracks like this are always going to be difficult as well, with long straights but definitely something could have been done better," he added.

Ferrari-owned Mugello was being used for the first time as a grand prix venue.

Bottas said Mercedes had expressed some concern before the race, but to no effect.

"They said basically they're going to keep doing it because it's better for the show. I think that was the reply," added the Finn. Asked whether safety was being compromised for the show, Hamilton said he did not want to overstep the mark. "They definitely need to take into account the safety aspect because today wasn't particularly safe with the restart," declared the Briton.

Race director Michael Masi said there was no need for a review of safety car re-starts. "From an FIA perspective, safety is paramount. Full stop," he added.

FIFA Estimates Covid-19 Will Cost Global Football \$11b

ZURICH (Dispatches) - FIFA put the cost of Covid-19 on football around the world at \$11 billion in lost revenue.

The pandemic has already led to over 150 football associations to seek financial help from the \$1.5 billion emergency relief fund set up by football's governing body.

Olli Rehn, chairman of FIFA's coronavirus steering committee, laid bare for the first time the true financial impact the virus has had on the game through fixture list chaos, empty stadiums and loss of TV rights revenue. "It's a huge number and it covers the football economy in its entirety, including all youth academies," Rehn, a Finnish politician and governor of the Bank of Finland, told a press conference.

"That is why this Covid-19 relief fund is not time-bound - they may request loans later on if they need to," Rehn, who is also independent deputy chairman of the FIFA Governance Committee, said.

He said that while Europe was hit hardest in terms of absolute cost, it was the associations outside Europe which "have suffered more".

"In particular in South America, many on account of their relative means and the spring to autumn season," he said. Last month European Club Association chairman Andrea Agnelli predicted lost revenue of four billion euros over two years for its member clubs.

Each national association can request a FIFA grant of \$1million (\$2mn for confederations) plus \$500,000 for women's football. Loans are available to national associations up to a maximum value of \$5mn (\$4mn for confederations).

Rehn was at pains to stress that unlike in the past it was imperative the money made available by FIFA "is being used for the right purposes".

"Corruption has no room in football," he stated.

"Good governance is at the heart of this Covid-19 relief fund," he said.

