

Some 145 Indian Films Have Been Submitted to the 16th Resistance Int'l Film Festival Which Is Currently Underway in Tehran and at Least 10 Films Entered to the Heath Defender Section of the Festival

# IRAN NEWS

Guardian Council Spokesman of Iran Abbas-Ali Kadkhodaei Says Confession of Assassinating an Official of a Country by the President Of the United States Requires a Serious and Impartial Trial

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## DOMESTIC

Believing in People's Power, Only Way To Solve Problems



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## DOMESTIC

Tehran Calls on Tokyo For Joint investment In Chabahar

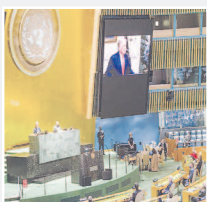


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## INTERNATIONAL

U.S.-China Tensions Take Center stage at U.N.



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## SPORTS

Nadal "Number One" French Open Favorite



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## U.S. Launched Economic War on Iran Based On Miscalculations

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – President Hassan Rouhani says the U.S. launched an all-out economic war against Iran a few years ago based on miscalculations and illusions as former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein did.

Speaking in a weekly cabinet session on Wednesday, President Rouhani noted that Iran will emerge victorious in this war.

“Two and a half years ago, the U.S. began an economic war against Iran based on illusions and wrong miscalculations. Their aim was to block all economic paths to Iran,” said the president.

He said the U.S. has failed to achieve its objectives like Saddam Hussein, who imposed an eight-year war on Iran, was unable to fulfil his goal of toppling the Iranian Establishment.

“Like Saddam Hussein, the Americans were of the conviction that they would enter Tehran a few months after launching an economic war, and they were under the delusion that a red carpet would be rolled out for them at Mehrabad and Imam Khomeini airports,” he said.

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## COVID-19 Death Toll Rises in Iran

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's Health Ministry spokeswoman says 432,798 patients have contracted the novel coronavirus so far, including 3,605 new cases identified in the past 24 hours.

In a press briefing on Wednesday, Sima-Sadat Lari said the virus has killed 184 patients since Tuesday noon, increasing the overall death toll to 24,840.

So far, she added, 365,846 patients have recovered from the disease or been discharged from the hospital.

Lari said 3,869 patients are also in critical conditions caused by more severe infection.

The spokeswoman noted that 3,828,330 COVID-19 tests have been taken across the country so far.

She said the high-risk “red” zones include Tehran, Qom, Mazandaran, East Azarbaijan, Isfahan, Yazd, Khorasan Razavi, North Khorasan, Semnan, Gilan, Zanjan, Qazvin, and Kerman provinces.

The “orange” zones also include Lorestan, Ardabil, Golestan, Markazi, Alborz, Hormozgan, Ilam, Fars, Bushehr, West Azarbaijan, Chahmahal and Bakhtiari, Kermanshah, South Khorasan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, and Khuzestan provinces, she added.

## IRGC Boosting Weapons' Capabilities



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Sating that Iran is getting stronger everyday, Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Major General Hossein Salami said that IRGC is boosting Iran weapons' capabilities.

“The U.S. has not given up on its expansionist strategy and is seeking to impose its dominance on other countries,” said Salami in a ceremony for delivering drones and choppers to the IRGC navy in Bandar Abbas.

“This is the difference between leaders who govern the world with wisdom and those who lack wisdom. Thoughtful leaders who rule the world wisely multiply their friends, but leaders lacking political wisdom who are in decline, increase their enemies,” he added.

“The U.S. president says he wanted to assassinate the Syrian President, which means the end of the political season of a power that openly wants to assassinate the legitimate president of a country,” he noted.

Referring to the role of the United States in normalizing the relations between the UAE and Bahrain with the Zionist regime, Salami said, “They make a relationship between the rulers of the reactionary regimes and the Zionists so that the Islamic Ummah will hate them.”

He continued, “Can American officials walk alone on one of the streets of a small Islamic country today? They cannot because all nations are against them.”

“We are getting stronger every day,” IRGC chief said.

Sating that even the American people are now chanting the slogan “Down with USA”, Salami said, “We see nothing in the U.S. but smoke, fire, poverty, racism, and the polarization and lack of freedom.”

“On the contrary, we are firmly and steadily increasing our power here, and we will never stop. We are increasing the range of our weapons,” he highlighted.

IRGC chief went on to say, “Today, our navy is not just limited to the surface of the seas and it is an air-based sea force which is utilizing different kinds of drones, helicopters and seaplanes, and at the same time enjoys considerable power in the field of submarines.” Meanwhile as many as 188 Iranian-made unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) have reportedly been delivered to the naval force of the country's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC).

The delivery was made in a ceremony attended by IRGC Chief-Commander Salami, who, in a speech, reiterated that Iran has grown stronger day by day and reached self-sufficiency in the production of various pieces of equipment and military hardware.

IRGC Navy Commander Rear Admiral Ali Reza Tangsiri said in the ceremony that the new drones are able to take aerial photos of mobile and fixed naval targets during combat operations.

All the operations of the force are now being carried out using the home-made drones as the new UAVs join the fleet, he added.

Also during the ceremony, three new drones of Sepehrvertical take-off and landing (VTOL), Shahab-2, and Hodhod-4 VTOL were unveiled for the first time. According to the Rear Admiral, the three new drones can take off from naval vessels. Mohajer-6 was another drone delivered to the force. It is an all-weather pilotless aircraft able to carry four missiles and having a range of 200 kilometers. The other new products include two amphibious helicopters and four combat choppers armed with missiles.

IRGC Navy is in charge of securing Iran's maritime borders in the Persian Gulf.

## Venezuela, Iran Buck U.S. Sanctions Again to Export Crude

CARACAS (Dispatches) - After defying U.S. sanctions by shipping a cargo of oil condensate to Venezuela just last week, Iran is using the same ship to help the Latin American country export its crude.

The Iran-flagged supertanker Honey, also known as Horse, is loading Venezuela's top exported grade Merey 16 at Venezuela's government-controlled port of Jose, according to a shipping report seen by Bloomberg. The shipments give some respite to the nation's hobbled oil industry, as most shipowners avoid doing business with the country for fear of sanctions. The vessel, which just discharged 2 million barrels of Iranian condensate, turned off its satellite signal to avoid detection after the U.S. was able to intercept 1.116 million barrels of gasoline going to Venezuela in August. Bloomberg reported that the ship was discharging its contents in Venezuela last week though ship-tracking signals still show the ship off the coast of Dubai.

Venezuela, owner of the world's largest oil reserves, has been struggling to find ships willing to risk sanctions after the Trump administration announced sanctions on six vessels and its shipowners for transporting its crude. The Treasury Department eventually removed the vessels from the sanctions list without making a formal explanation but the U.S. has pursued foreign vessels carrying product to Venezuela around the world and seized more than a million barrels of gasoline while in transit.

The cargo on board of the Horse is expected to be sold in Asia, the main destination of Venezuelan crude. PDVSA declined to comment. Venezuela's information ministry and the U.S. State Department didn't return an email seeking comment. In addition to supplying condensate, Tehran has supplied 1.5 million barrels of gasoline and food. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro is also weighing the purchase of Iranian missiles. Caracas has supplied gold as payment for the assistance.

## Unilateral Sanctions Breach of Int'l Law, Crime Against Humanity

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's permanent ambassador to the UN office in Geneva has denounced unilateral sanctions against the Islamic Republic as violation of international law and “a crime against humanity,” calling on the international community to close ranks in the face of “the blatant injustice.”

Esmail Baghaei Hamaneh made the remarks at the 45th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council on Tuesday, one day after the administration of US President Donald Trump slapped a raft of new restrictive measures on Iran in support of its “maximum pressure” campaign against the nation. He slammed Washington's disregard for numerous requests from the UN chief, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and human rights bodies for lifting the sanctions, warning that such an approach is an alarm for the world and thus should be countered.

The official reaffirmed that unilateral sanctions violate international law and amount to “a crime against humanity” because of their negative impacts on ordinary Iranians. The international community must unite in the face of “the blatant injustice,” Baghaei Hamaneh added while speaking during the interactive dialog with Alena Douhan, UN special rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights.

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## Iran Only Supplies Defense Know-How To Yemen

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has only provided Yemen with the know-how in the defense sector, says the spokesman for the Iranian Armed Forces, dismissing claims about the Islamic Republic's military presence and “intervention” in the region.

“We provided them (Yemenis) with the technical experiences in the defense sector. They have learned how to produce missiles, drones and weapons in Yemen on their own,” Brigadier General Abolfazl Shekarchi said in a televised program.

He emphasized that Iran has not supplied Yemen with missiles. “We have shared our experience and knowledge with the Yemeni people.”

Unlike what the enemy is trying to portray, Yemenis are a very cultured and smart people who have managed to manufacture missiles and the most advanced drones at the shortest possible time while they have also made great headways in the electronic warfare, the Iranian military official said.

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## U.S. Maximum Pressure On Iran Not Working

PARIS (Dispatches) - The United States' maximum pressure campaign on Iran has so far failed, France's president said on Tuesday, and he dismissed U.S. efforts to restore U.N. sanctions against Tehran because Washington had already left the 2015 nuclear deal, Reuters reported.

“The maximum pressure strategy, which has been underway for several years, has not at this stage made it possible to end Iran's destabilizing activities or to ensure that it will not be able to acquire nuclear weapons,” Emmanuel Macron said in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly.

“This is why France, along with its German and British partners, will maintain its demand for the full implementation of the 2015 Vienna Agreement and will not accept the violations committed by Iran.”

The United States on Monday slapped new sanctions on Iran's defense ministry and others involved in its nuclear and weapons programs in an effort to buttress the U.S. assertion that all United Nations sanctions against Tehran that were lifted under the 2015 accord have now been restored.

That move was rejected by key European allies - Britain, Germany, and France - as well as U.S. adversaries such as Russia and China, who are all parties to the nuclear agreement.

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# Foreign Minister Plans to Visit China

TEHRAN (IP) - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif will lead an economic and business delegation to China in the near future, the Chief of Presidential Staff Mahmoud Vaezi said.

Speaking on the sideline of the cabinet meeting, Vaezia also said that the 25-year agreement between China and Iran is an important deal and to be signed under the current government.

Iran and China have drafted a 25-year plan for comprehensive partnership.

## Believing in People's Power, Only Way to Solve Problems

**IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK**

**TEHRAN – Majlis Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said that Iran's problems must be solved by its own people.**

Qalibaf in the opening of the exhibition of the 'Sacred Defense and Resistance Achievements' and museums of the 'Sacred Defense' expressed that our task is to understand the greatness of 8 years of sacred defense and try to keep it.

"The warriors of Islam during the Sacred Defense believed that the divine traditions led to the greatness of the holy defense," Qalibaf stated.

The Speaker of the Parliament noted that the Iranian nation entered the field of Sacred Defense with all its power during the war and attacked the aggressor enemy.

Referring to the fact that Sacred Defense museums are places to display divine traditions, he highlighted that museums and exhibitions of the Sacred Defense should be held as a symbol of divine tradition and democracy of Iran to the world.

Meanwhile later speaking in an IRIB TV program, hailing martyr Lt. General Soleimani's sacrifices in defending the country against the enemy, Qalibaf noted that the first and foremost result of the martyrdom of General Soleimani was bringing down the U.S. grandeur in the world.

He referred to the significant role of the Lieutenant-General Ghasem Soleimani during the war days in defending the Iranian nation against the enemy.

Describing him as one the influential commanders of the Imposed War, Qalibaf said that, even after the imposed war, General Soleimani also dedicated most decades of his life in defending the borders of the country against terrorist groups.

Referring to the repeated failures of global arrogance in West Asia, he said, "General Soleimani defeated the United States in the Persian Gulf region for about 20 years."



He also spoke about the martyrdom of General Soleimani who lived his life gloriously and morally and his martyrdom brought about important development and changed the equations in West Asia.

Considering Martyr Soleimani as one of the impressive figures of the Resistant Front and Islamic movement, the spokesman likened the martyrdom of General Soleimani to the martyrdom of Mohamad Beheshti that result of which was the eradication of any hypocrisies in the first years of the foundation of the Islamic Republic.

"Also, the martyrdom of General Soleimani brought down the grandeur of the United States at the international level, and in the second phase of Islamic Revolution it will eradicate any westernizations in the country", Qalibaf added.

## Iranians Should Be Proud of Warriors

TEHRAN (IP) -Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Brigadier General Mohammad Baqeri said the Iranian nation should be proud of the warriors who defended the borders, religion, and ritual of the country for 8 years with no support and equipment.

He pointed out that after centuries, the world will realize the resistance of the Iranian nation in 8 years of Sacred Defense (Iran-Iraq war), and noted that this revolution would continue proudly.

Baqeri called the holding of Sacred Defense exhibitions and museums essential and went on to say that the first museum was established in Kerman by the efforts of Lt. Gen. Soleimani, and was then by Mr. Ghalibaf, the speaker of the parliament.

Emphasizing that distortions and exaggerations about sacred defense should be avoided, he added that the content of holy defense museums is essential and more attention is needed.

Opening of the exhibition of the Sacred Defense and Resistance achievements and museums of the 'Sacred defense' of 8 provinces held on Wednesday in the presence of the Speaker of the Parliament, Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, and Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Brigadier General Mohammad Baqeri in Tehran.

## Iran, Slovenia Keen on Boosting Ties

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's Ambassador to Slovenia Kazem Shafei and the country's Parliament Speaker Igor Zorcic in meeting on Tuesday stressed the need to promote parliamentary cooperation and diplomacy.

The two officials also called for enhancing cooperation in the field of parliamentary diplomacy, particularly through setting up parliamentary friendship groups.

Referring to the spread of coronavirus, Zorcic hoped that the disease would be controlled through the



discovery of its vaccine.

He also hoped that Iranian citizens would not be harmed by the sanctions amid the pandemic.

The Iranian ambassador, for his part, expressed pleasure over Slovenian officials' stance regarding JCPOA, urging strengthening EU's practical support for the deal.

He also commented on Iran's stance on regional developments, including Zionist regime's recent agreements with certain Arab states.

## Iran, Nigeria Discuss Energy Cooperation



TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran's Ambassador to Abuja Mohammad Ali Bak met and held talks with Minister of State for Petroleum Resources of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Timipre Marlin Sylva on the expansion of energy cooperation.

During the meeting which took place on Tuesday in the Nigerian capital of Abuja, the Iranian ambassador and Nigerian minister discussed topics of mutual interest.

Emphasizing the many commonalities between Iran and Nigeria in the field of energy, including the membership of the two countries in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the Assembly of Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF), the two sides stressed the need to further expand cooperation between the two countries in the field of energy.

Iranian ambassador presented his credentials to President Muhammadu Buhari in Abuja in September.

## Palestine, Most Important Issue in Islamic World

TEHRAN (IP) - The President of the National Defense University and Research Institute Ahmad Vahidi said that the importance of the Palestinian issue is becoming increasingly clear these days.

Delivering a speech at a conference that was held on publicizing ties with the Zionist Regime by Arab nations, Ahmad Vahidi said that the condition of the Islamic world has become more sensitive due to the conspiracy policies being implemented.

According to the latest poll among Arab people, 70% of them are against normalizing ties with the Zionist Regime, he highlighted. The presence of the Zionist Regime in the region is a false image, he added. Commander Vahidi noted that as long as the Palestinian nation and groups are standing beside each other, they can foil all enemies' plans.

According to Vahidi, the resistance axis which supports the Palestinian nation is powerful, and the false behavior of Arabs cannot be neglected. Addressing Arab nations, he asked this question that "are you normalizing ties with a regime which thinks is the owner of Arab lands?"

Today there is an opportunity for Islamic Nations to unite and create another stream of Islamic awakening, he concluded.

## Seoul Showing Green Light To Free Iran's \$7b Money

TEHRAN (MNA) – Referring to the discussions with Koreans over Iran's frozen money, the President's Chief of Staff noted that the Koreans are showing some green lights to fulfill their obligation and unblock Iran's fund kept by Seoul.

Speaking in the sidelines of the cabinet session of Wednesday, Mahmoud Vaezi spoke about the recent status of Iran's frozen assets which are blocked by South Korea due to the U.S. sanctions.

"We discussed the issue with the Korean authorities, he said, "Also, preparations for legal action have already begun, and we are witnessing that the Koreans are showing some green lights for fulfilling their obligation in this regard."

He also stressed that however, if South Korea doesn't take practical and necessary measures in terms of unblocking Iran's money, then the Islamic Republic of Iran will adopt its decisions.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he called the Iran-China 25-years comprehensive document as a significant one, adding, "Iran-China relations have been expanded and deepened in various political and economic sectors, and this document leads us to purposefully plan for the activities of different organs of the country in different fields."

Vaezi also told reporters that the Iranian Foreign Minister, Mohammad Javad as well as a delegation of an economic team will travel to China in the near future to discuss some issues in person.

## Iran, Pakistan Consult on Expanding Diplomatic Ties

**IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK**

TEHRAN - The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Islamabad and the Spokesman for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan discussed ways to develop bilateral relations, in particular, increasing interactions between the two country's Foreign Ministry spokesman's offices.

Mohammad Ali Hosseini, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Islamabad, and Zahid Hafeez Chaudhry, Spokesman for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, met on Tuesday to discuss ways to develop bilateral relations and regional and international affairs.

Hosseini praised the principled stance of Islamabad in support of Iran's nuclear program and the anti-sanctions stance of the Pakistani Prime Minister, referring to the failed U.S. actions against the Iranian people to reinstate the UN Security Council sanctions resolutions.

The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Islamabad also stressed the need for stability in defending the Palestinian cause.

## Martyr Soleimani's Case Not to Be Closed Till Criminals Revenged

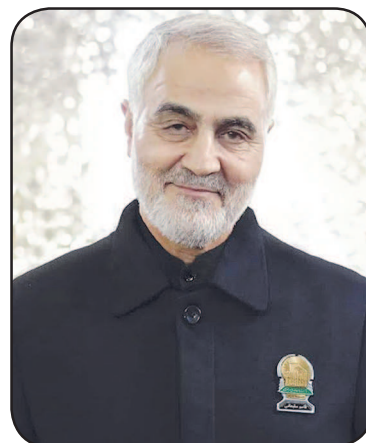
TEHRAN (MNA) – Prosecutor General warned that the case of the assassination of the Lt. General Soleimani, as one of the heinous crimes of the United States, will be open until the perpetrators of this crime are avenged.

Speaking in a video conference meeting, Mohammad Jafar Montazeri stressed on the necessity of recognizing the enemy, adding, "In 1980, the United States provoked Saddam to launch a military attack on Iran in order to defeat the newly established Islamic Republic of Iran and disintegrate Iran, however under the wise leadership of the of Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Revolution, as well as the sacrifices of the Iranian youth, this conspiracy was severely defeated."

"Today, the intention of the enemy is to harm the country and the Islamic Revolution through imposing economic sanctions", he added.

He also referred to the failure of the enemy at the UN Security Council in restoring anti-Iran sanctions, adding that all pressures imposed by the enemy will have no result except for making the Iranian nation more and more powerful.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Iran's Prosecutor General considered the assassination of Lenient General Soleimani as one of the heinous crimes of the United States, stressing that the case of this assassination will be open until the perpetrators of this crime are avenged.



## Gen. Soleimani Assassinated to Prevent Further Humiliation of U.S.

**IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK**

TEHRAN - The Minister of Defense of Iran Brigadier General Amir Hatami expressed that the enemy's goal in assassinating Lt. Gen. Qasem Soleimani was to prevent further humiliation of the United States in the region.

Iran's defense minister stated in a video conference on Tuesday that the memory of the martyred commander Qasem Soleimani will always be alive on in the hearts of the world's freedom-seekers.

"The right to prosecute the murderers of Martyr Soleimani remains strong and this fear will always remain with the criminals," he added.

Stating that the holy defense of the Iranian nation, unlike other battles of Iran in the past, brought glory, honor, and pride for the country, Hatami noted: "The current situation of Iran in various scientific, political, and especially defense fields is such that despite the cruel threats of the hegemonic system, Iran can detect and thwart any threat at the starting point, even outside its borders."

Pointing out that the objective example of Iran's sovereignty has been revealed to everyone at different junctures, Hatami stated: "When the enemy occupied a large land by creating terrorist groups, Iran was able to overcome the enemies and eradicated terrorism with the help of the armed forces and the people of Syria and Iraq, with its own design and the inspiration of the Holy Defense."

Iran's defense minister expressed that the resistance will continue until the enemy is expelled from West Asia and the region is cleansed of the filth of the existence of the Great Satan (the U.S).





## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:56
■ Evening (Maghreb)	18:16
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:31
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	05:55

26. Allah doth wish to make clear to you and to show you the ordinances of those before you; and (He doth wish to) turn to you (In Mercy): And Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.  
27. Allah doth wish to Turn to you, but the wish of those who follow their lusts is that ye should turn away (from Him),- far, far away.  
Surah 4. Women (26 - 27)

## Tehran Calls on Tokyo for Joint investment in Chabahar

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

**TEHRAN – Deputy Head of Deputy Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) for International Affairs Mohammad-Reza Karbasi in a meeting with the new officials and former head of Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) in Tehran called for boosting trade between Iran and Japan through different mechanisms like barter trade.**

In the meeting, Mr. Karbasi pointed to the decline in bilateral trade exchanges between Iran and Japan due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus and the U.S. sanctions, and deplored that Iran still continues its relation with neighboring states, India and China, and it has some solutions.

He added that Iran is currently using the mechanisms of bartering goods and using national currencies in its trades for saving its trade exchanges, adding that theses mechanisms can also be used in Iran and Japan ties. He also stated that trilateral cooperation between Iran, Japan and neighboring states can be another solution, he added.

Karbasi also pointed to the establishment of joint Iran-Japan commercial committee, adding that this committee has been the arm of the international affairs department of Iran Chamber of commerce and its members can pursue the issues practically and present solutions for problems.

He also referred to the ties between Iran and South Korea, saying some \$8b of Iran's



money is in South Korean banks but this country is even not ready to let basic goods, foodstuff, medicines and medical equipment be exported to Iran. He further said that while some part of Iran's money is still in Japan, this country can pave the ground for sending medicines and medical equipment to Iran.

He also raised the suggestion for joint investment of Iran and Japan in the free zones of Iran like Chabahar.

Meanwhile the new head of JETRO office in Tehran Mr. Takayuki Suzuki, for his part, said that the main goal of this center is to introduce Iranian traders and Iran's trade potentials to their Japanese counterparts, adding that some Japanese companies have been active in Iran and some of them have returned to Tehran, and continuation of trade with Iran is important for them.

He added that Japanese traders need information about Iran's potential and its trade condition, expressing hope that it can gain it through cooperation with Iran Chamber of Commerce.

Suzuki also pointed to a webinar on e-trade which is to be held by JETRO in cooperation with Iran's Embassy, adding that the webinar will be in November and the center will inform Iran Chamber of Commerce of exact time of it.

The outgoing head of JETRO Mr. Shinobu Nakamura was also present in the meeting.

## Inflation Rate Rises 0.2% y/y in September

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's annual inflation rate has been largely stable in September despite lower spending by the households amid the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) said the country's Consumer Price Index (CPI) had risen by 0.2 percentage point to reach 26 percent year-on-year in the calendar month ending September 21.

It said showed inflation rate for urban households had increased to 26.1 percent while rural households had seen the annual rate unchanged halfway through the Persian calendar year. Monthly inflation in the Iranian cities was also up 0.1 percent at 3.6 while the increase for rural population was higher at 0.3 percent to reach 3.6 percent, said the report.

The CPI calculated on a point-to-point basis, a methodology routinely used by the SCI, showed the inflation rate had topped 34.4 percent, meaning households had paid around a third more for consumer items in month to late September compared to the similar month in 2019.

Iran shipped a total of \$8.4 billion worth of metals in calendar year ending March 2020. The slight increase in annual inflation in Iran comes despite a sluggish consumption amid the coronavirus outbreak. Households continue to spend less some seven months after the outbreak began in late February. That comes as the government has eased restrictions on economic activity to help businesses recover from months of closures.

Inflation deteriorated in Iran following a U.S. decision in 2018 to withdraw from a major international nuclear agreement which led to re-imposition of Washington's secondary sanctions on businesses and entities dealing with Iran.

## Repair of Old Oilfield in Persian Gulf Boosts Capacity by 20,000 bpd

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Repair of Hendijan oilfield – one of the oldest oilfields of the Persian Gulf – has raised its capacity by 20,000 bpd, according to Iranian Offshore Oil Company.

The company said that Iranian experts have installed a drilling oil platform on Hendijan oilfield on Tuesday and when a second platform is installed next week, the output capacity of the oilfield will be added by 20,000 b/d.

Platform 7 was installed while observing all the safety protocols and international standards, the report added.

It said that the installation operation was fully carried out by domestic experts and operators active in the offshore projects.

## Value of Carpet Exports Revealed

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

TEHRAN - Iran exported 20,800 tons of carpets worth \$82.5 million during the first four months of the current year (March 20-July 21, 2020), Spokesman for the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Rouhollah Latifi said.

According to Latifi, in total, Iranian carpets have been exported to 57 countries. About 50 percent of these carpets were exported to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan.

Latifi added that more than 30 percent of Iranian carpets were exported to the United States by the end of the previous calendar year (from March 21, 2018, to March 21, 2019). This figure dropped to zero in the last Iranian year (from March 21, 2019, to March 20, 2020).

"Iranian carpets have been exported to Canada, Australia, Germany, Japan, Italy, Kuwait, Kenya, Iraq, Pakistan, New Zealand, Bahrain, Belgium, Qatar, Thailand, China, France, Britain, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Denmark," he noted.

The official emphasized that Iran exported \$18 million worth of carpets to Afghanistan. Furthermore, exports to Iraq and Pakistan made up \$17.4 million and \$5.4 million respectively.

Latifi said that \$4.3 million worth of Gabbeh (traditional variety of Persian carpet) were exported to Japan during the first four months of this year.

## Tehran, Kabul to Expand Cooperation on Electricity



**IRAN NEW ECONOMIC DESK**

TEHRAN - Iranian Ambassador to Kabul Bahador Aminian says Iran's Energy Ministry has vast and targeted plans in Afghanistan regarding the importance of electricity and infrastructures for transfer of electricity, and it will soon announce good news.

Speaking in the opening ceremony of the specialized exhibition "Water, Electricity and New Energies" in Kabul, Mr. Aminian said that Iran and Afghanistan have a great deal of opportunities to develop them and they should not let enemies ruin it. So if Afghanistan intends to develop, Iran is definitely the best choice in a way that both Iran and Afghanistan can reach the pre-planned targets via Iran, he added.

He pointed to the significance of Afghanistan market for Iran's private sector, adding that statistics indicate that Afghanistan's imports from Iran are around \$3b annually and if this country is developed, a bigger market will be created for Iranian producers.

Aminian reiterated that the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to help Afghan people to improve quality of their products and then it can be a purchaser of good quality products produced in Afghanistan.

He admitted that although the trade volume and trade balance of both countries is not satisfactory, Iran is ready for investment and offering appropriate technologies in Afghanistan. He then pointed to the historic background of cultural, economic and political commonalities of both states, adding that the decades of good relations between both states is the basic reason for holding this exhibition which can be determinant in the future.

Aminian said that until today only exhibitions on displaying goods have been held but this exhibition is for displaying services and technology, adding that Iran showed that it is ready to invest in developing services and technology needed by Afghanistan, and it means Iran does not look at Afghanistan as a mere market for sale and it is after having a long and sustainable relation.

He reiterated that Iran is the winner of presenting top services in Afghanistan and expressed hope recent peace talks in Afghanistan would lead to sustainability of trade opportunity in the country.

Meanwhile Mayor of Kabul, for his part, said that gates of Kabul and other cities of Afghanistan are open to Iranian companies and investors, expressing hope that expansion of bilateral trade and cooperation would increase. He noted that Iran by putting behind sanctions successfully and attaining self-sufficiency can be a good model for Afghanistan.

## Agrifood Exports Top \$2.13b in 5 Months to August

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's agriculture ministry says exports of agrifood amounted to \$2.13 billion in the five-month period ending late August.

Ministry spokesman Alimorad Sarafrazi said that total agrifood exports in the first five months of the current calendar year until August 21 had amounted to nearly three million metric tons in volume terms.

"Products from the agriculture and food sector were exported to various countries, including to the neighbors as well as (to) Germany over the first five months of the current year," said Sarafrazi in remarks covered by the official IRNA agency.

Iran's agriculture sector grew by nearly 10 percent in the year ending March 2020, according to official figures provided by the government.

Agrifood exports have become a major source of earning hard currency for the government at a time of decreased oil exports. More support for the sector has also been critical in government's efforts to diversify the economy away from crude revenues.

IRNA said earlier this week that Iranian farming companies have been expanding into international markets by seeking to lease lands in countries like Brazil.

It said Iran's diplomatic mission in Brazil have been negotiating with local officials in Mato Grosso state of the South American country to prepare the ground for Iran's farming activity in the region.

Authorities insist that agriculture output in Iran have remained stable over the past months despite the spread of the coronavirus in Iran.

The government also announced on Tuesday that it would nearly double the guaranteed price for domestic wheat purchase for the next harvesting season as it seeks to encourage more cultivation of the strategic crop across the country.

## Iran Preparing to Export PCR Kits

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran's Vice President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari said that Iran is preparing the necessary preparations for the export of coronavirus PCR kits and increasing the export of ventilator to different countries.

"Our knowledge-based companies and researchers are taking new steps in the field of coronavirus every day," said Sattari.

Stating that Iran has a lot of exports in different fields

in the fight against the coronavirus to various countries, he added, "We have export restrictions due to domestic production laws in some fields, which is also being coordinated to be more active in the field of export of ventilators and PCR detection kits."

"Iran is currently exporting serology diagnostic kits to European and neighboring countries, and in the field of PCR kits, we are planning and making the necessary arrangements to export these kits as well," he noted.

## 65% Increase in Gas Refining Capacity in 7 Years

TEHRAN (IRNA) -Iranian Gas refining capacity has reached 1.1 billion cubic meters a day compared to 670 million cubic meters a day seven years ago, it was announced on Wednesday.

Gas refining capacity of Iran has witnessed 65 percent increase after seven years since the current Iranian government took office in August 2013.

Although gas network development enhanced after the start of extraction of gas from South Pars gas field- the world's largest gas field- about two decades ago, the process has been accelerated in the past seven years.

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

Now, over 98 percent of city's population and 82 of rural have joined gas network.

Meanwhile, power plants in Iran have reduced use of liquid fuel from 43 to 10 percent.

Daily national gas production in Iran is 880 million cubic meters, while the figure has been 635 million cubic meters seven years ago, so that it shows 38.5 percent increase in production.

In a related development, Managing Director of National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) Hassan Montazer Torabi said on September 7 that Iranian gas exports has risen up by 88 percent increase in past seven years.

## Iran Gas Transmission Capacity at 870 mcm/d Iran Air to Resume Flights to Germany as of October 3

TEHRAN (Shana) - The CEO of the Iranian Gas Transmission Company announced a 12% increase in the amount of sweet gas transmission in the first five months of the current calendar year, which began on March 21, adding Iran's daily capacity of gas transmission has reached 870 million cubic meters.

According to Mehdi Jamshidi-Dana in a press conference on Wednesday, "Currently, there are 37,400 kilometers of high pressure transmission lines in the country and in terms of global ranking, we have the fourth place in this sector in the world which is unique in the Middle East." He said that the length of high pressure gas transmission lines in Iran 3 times the diameter of the earth which is unique in different climates of the country, adding: "In total, these lines have 86 pressure boosting stations and each have about three, four or five turbo-compressors, for a total of 316 turbo-compressors."

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran Air will resume flights to Germany as of October 3, Civil Aviation Organization said on Wednesday.

IranAir- Airlines of the Islamic Republic of Iran- will have flight to Frankfurt, large city in Germany, on October 3 after months of delay in international flights due to the December 2019 outbreak of the pandemic.

CAO Director Touraj Dehghani Zanganeh said that permission to flights have obtained awaiting final confirmation from Germany.

IranAir also will restart flights to Turkey as of September 25.

Mahan Air - privately run Iranian airlines - resumed flights to neighboring country of Turkey on Monday (September 22).

Many flights to Europe were postponed after the start of the coronavirus pandemic.



## China, India to Stop Troop Deployment Along Disputed Border



NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - China and India have agreed to stop deploying more troops to their contested border and avoid any action that might complicate the tense situation there.

Senior military officials from both countries met on Monday and exchanged ideas on their contested Himalayan border in Ladakh, Chinese defence ministry spokesman Wu Qian said on Tuesday.

A joint press release said both sides had agreed to “avoid misunderstandings and misjudgments”, and “refrain from unilaterally changing the situation on the ground”.

During the meeting it was also discussed that neither side should take any unilateral action in the region.

## U.S.-China Tensions Take Center stage at U.N.



NEW YORK (Reuters) - U.S. President Donald Trump told the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday that China must be held accountable for having “unleashed” COVID-19 on the world, prompting Beijing to accuse him of “lies” and abusing the U.N. platform to provoke confrontation.

China’s President Xi Jinping struck a conciliatory tone in his pre-recorded virtual address to the General Assembly, calling for enhanced cooperation over the pandemic and stressing that China had no intention of fighting “either a Cold War or a hot war with any country.” But China’s U.N. ambassador Zhang Jun rejected Trump’s accusations against China as “baseless” and said “lies repeated a thousand times are still lies.” Trump and Xi, leaders of the world’s two largest economies, laid out competing visions at a time when relations have plunged to their worst level in decades, with coronavirus tensions aggravating trade and technology disputes.

Trump, facing a November re-election battle with the United States dealing with the world’s highest official number of deaths and infections from the coronavirus, focused his speech on attacking China. He accused Beijing of allowing people to leave China in the early stages of the outbreak to infect the world while shutting down domestic travel. “We must hold accountable the nation which unleashed this plague onto the world, China,” he said in remarks taped on Monday and delivered remotely to the General Assembly due to the pandemic. “The Chinese government, and the World Health Organization – which is virtually controlled by China – falsely declared that there was no evidence of human-to-human transmission,” he said. “Later, they falsely said people without symptoms would not spread the disease ... The United Nations must hold China accountable for their actions.” The president promised to distribute a vaccine and said: “We will defeat the virus, and we will end the pandemic.”

U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during the 75th annual U.N. General Assembly, which is being held mostly virtually due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic in the Manhattan borough of New York City, New York, U.S., September 22, 2020. United Nations/Handout via REUTERS

Xi’s address contained what appeared to be an implicit rebuke to Trump, calling for a global response to the coronavirus and a leading role for the WHO, which the U.S. president has announced plans to leave.

“We should enhance solidarity and get through this together,” he said.

“We should follow the guidance of science, give full play to the leading role of the World Health Organization and launch a joint international response ... Any attempt of politicizing the issue, or stigmatization, must be rejected.”

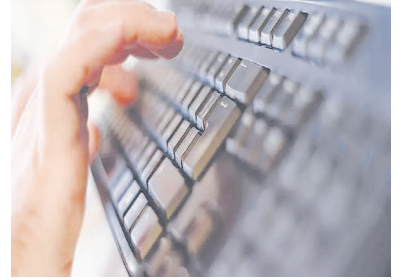
The WHO rejected Trump’s remarks. “No one gov’t controls us,” its communications director, Gabby Stern tweeted, adding: “On Jan. 14 our #COVID19 technical lead told media of the potential for human-to-human transmission. Since February, our experts have publicly discussed transmission by people without symptoms or prior to symptoms.” China has portrayed itself as the chief cheerleader for multilateralism at a time when Trump’s disregard for international cooperation has led him to quit global deals on climate and Iran, as well as the U.N. Human Rights Council and the WHO. Xi took an apparent swipe at Trump’s “America First” policy in a statement on Monday to a meeting celebrating the U.N.’s 75th anniversary.

“No country has the right to dominate global affairs, control the destiny of others, or keep advantages in development all to itself. Even less should one be allowed to do whatever it likes and be the hegemon, bully or boss of the world. Unilateralism is a dead end,” he said.

The U.S. coronavirus death toll surpassed 200,000 on Monday, by far the highest official number of any country.

Trump also attacked China’s record on the environment, but leveled no direct criticism at Beijing over human rights.

## Global Police Sting Against Dark Net Drug Sales Nets 179



THE HAGUE (AFP) - A global police sting has netted 179 vendors involved in selling opioids, methamphetamine and other illegal goods on the internet underground, in what officials of Europol said Tuesday put an end to the “golden age” of dark web markets.

Over nine months Operation DisrupTor seized 500 kilogrammes of drugs including cocaine, heroin, oxycodone and methamphetamine, more than \$6.5 million (5.5 million euros) in cash and online currencies, as well as 64 guns, Europe’s police agency said.

## Qatar Emir Questions World Inaction on Israeli Occupation



DOHA (Dispatches) - Qatar Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani has questioned the credibility of the international community as it “stands by, unable to take any effective action to confront Israeli intransigence and its continued occupation of Palestinian and Arab land”.

In his video speech at the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the emir questioned the role of countries and organisations for failing to uphold the resolutions against the continued Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and its expansion of settlement building.

He accused Israel of carrying out “flagrant violation of international resolutions and the two-state solution as agreed upon by the international community”.

“The international community stands by, unable to take any effective action to confront Israeli intransigence, its continued occupation of Palestinian and Arab land, the imposition of a stifling siege on the Gaza Strip, [and] the expanding settlement policy, among others,” he said. “Peace can only be achieved when Israel fully commits to the international terms

of reference and resolutions that are accepted by the Arab countries and upon which the Arab Peace Initiative is based.”

The Arab Peace Initiative was a plan put forth by Saudi Arabia in 2002 that called for normalising relations with Israel in exchange for an end to its occupation of Palestinian territories, the establishment of a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital, as well as a just solution for Palestinian refugees.

Qatar’s ruler said Israel is trying to “circumvent these parameters” and any arrangements that do not take these factors into account “will not achieve peace”.

“Failure to find a just solution to the Palestinian cause, Israel’s continued settlements, and forcing a reality on the ground without being deterred, this is what raises the biggest question about the credibility of the international community and its institutions,” the emir added.

He called upon the international community, particularly the UN Security Council, to assume its legal responsibilities and “compel Israel to lift the siege on the Gaza Strip, and to put the peace process back on track through credible negotiations based on international resolutions and not on force”.

## Freed Taliban Return to Battlefield

WASHINGTON (AFP) - A number of Taliban prisoners who were released by the Afghan government as a condition for peace talks have taken up arms again, the government’s lead negotiator Abdullah Abdullah said Tuesday.

Abdullah, the chairman of Afghanistan’s High Council for National Reconciliation, said discussions with the Taliban in Qatar so far have been positive.

However, he said some -- though not the majority -- of the 5,000 Taliban prisoners released by the government as a condition for talks had resumed the fight against Kabul.

“I do know that some have returned to the battlefield, which is a violation of the agreement that they had made,” Abdullah said during an online conference with the US Council on Foreign Relations.

Abdullah said talks between the two sides had begun in Doha on a positive note, as the delegations build some familiarity with each other.

Yet the level of violence inside Afghanistan has not fallen, and he called on the United States, which launched the peace process with its own deal with the Taliban, and Pakistan, which maintains ties to the insurgents, to pressure them to agree to a ceasefire.

“Unfortunately, so far, the level of violence is very high and to a level that is not acceptable for the people,” Abdullah said.

“I repeat my call to the Taliban themselves and also to all partners who have any leverage over the Taliban to press on that point.”

Abdullah said he planned to visit Pakistan in the coming days for the first time since 2008.

The persistent violence, and the Taliban’s failure to completely cut relations with the Islamic State and Al Qaeda jihadist groups, was singled out as a barrier to success by US officials testifying in Congress Tuesday.

US chief negotiator Zalmay Khalilzad said a drawdown of US troops, under the US-Taliban agreement, would halt at around 4,500 remaining in Afghanistan in November while Washington assesses whether the insurgents were living up to their pledges.

“Further withdrawals will be determined based on conditions on the ground and delivery by the Taliban on their commitments,” Khalilzad told a hearing of the House oversight committee.

## U.S. Eyes December Agreement on F-35 Jets With UAE

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The United States and the United Arab Emirates hope to have an initial agreement on the sale of F-35 stealth fighter jets to the Persian Gulf state in place by December, as the Trump administration studies how to structure a deal without running afoul of Israel.

Sources close to the negotiations said the goal is to have a letter of agreement in place in time for UAE National Day celebrated on Dec. 2.

Any deal must satisfy decades of agreement with Israel that states any U.S. weapons sold to the region must not impair Israel’s “qualitative military edge,” guaranteeing U.S. weapons furnished to Israel are “superior in capability” to those sold to its neighbors.

With that in mind Washington is studying ways to make the Lockheed Martin Corp LMT.N F-35 more visible to Israeli radar systems, two sources said. Reuters could not determine if this would be done by changing the jet or providing Israel with better radar, among other possibilities. Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz was due to meet his U.S. counterpart Mark Esper in Washington on Tuesday.

The UAE embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The White House declined to comment.

A Pentagon spokeswoman told Reuters, “as a matter of policy, the United States does not confirm or

comment on proposed defense sales or transfers until they are formally notified to Congress.”

Michael Biton, minister in the Defence Ministry of Israel, said on Israel’s Army Radio that if the UAE buys F-35s it would be possible to “preserve the relative defensive advantage” of Israel’s military.

Once a letter of agreement is signed, a fine may be levied against any party that terminates the deal. Several political and regulatory hurdles must be cleared before the sale may be completed and Capitol Hill aides cautioned a deal may not be possible this year.

Ellen Lord, the Pentagon’s chief weapons buyer, told reporters in August that in general, the United States aims to complete a letter of agreement for new F-35 sales in about six months. Because of the qualitative military edge restriction, the Lockheed Martin-made F-35 has been denied to Arab states, while Israel has about 24 jets.

The United Arab Emirates, one of Washington’s closest Middle East allies, has long expressed interest in acquiring the stealthy jets and was promised a chance to buy them in a side deal made when they agreed to normalize relations with Israel.

Sources familiar with the negotiations said a working idea was for Israeli air defenses to be able to detect the UAE F-35s with technology that effectively defeats the stealth capabilities of the jets.



## Putin Wants Stronger WHO



NEW YORK (Reuters) - Russian President Vladimir Putin told the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday that the World Health Organization should be strengthened to coordinate the global response to the coronavirus pandemic and proposed a high-level conference on vaccine cooperation.

“We are proposing to hold an online high-level conference shortly for countries interested in cooperation in the development of anti-coronavirus vaccines,” Putin said.

“We are ready to share experience and continue cooperating with all states and international entities, including in supplying the Russian vaccine which has proved reliable, safe, and effective, to other countries,” he said.

Russia was the first country to grant regulatory approval for a novel coronavirus vaccine, and did so before large-scale trials were complete, stirring concern among scientists and doctors about the safety and efficacy of the shot.

Several countries are now considering adopting emergency measures that would fast-track approval of a vaccine in a similar way, however.

Putin took a veiled swipe at the United States, saying that removing “illegitimate sanctions” would help the world recover from the coronavirus pandemic.

“In general, freeing the world trade from barriers, bans, restrictions and illegitimate sanctions would be of great help in revitalizing global growth and reducing unemployment,” he said.

Putin also proposed that leading space powers sign a binding agreement that would ban “the placement of weapons in outer space, threat or use of force against outer space objects.”





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# Relevance of Regional, Int'l Initiatives of Uzbekistan to Restore and Promote Cultural, Historical Heritage



By: F. Taherpoor

On September 23, 2020, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev made a report in his 75th General Assembly of the United Nations speech. During his speech, he put forward a number of important international initiatives on the need to develop and to adopt an International Code on voluntary commitments of states during a pandemic, to increase attention to the global problem of poverty, to adopt a special resolution of the UN General Assembly on declaring the Aral Sea region as a zone of environmental innovations, technologies, etc.

It should be noted that in his report, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan also focused on the holding, together with UNESCO, the International Forum "Central Asia at the Crossroads of World Civilizations" in the city of Khiva in 2021.

The historical city of Khiva, located in the Khorezm region and one of the main pearls of modern Uzbekistan, has almost completely retained its historical appearance. The rich heritage that has survived to this day makes this city one of the most interesting cities in Uzbekistan and Central Asia.

"Ichan Kala", the inner fortress city of Khiva, was the first World Heritage Site in Uzbekistan, included in the UNESCO list in 1990. "Ichan-Kala" is the largest surviving fortified city in Central Asia.

Therefore, the city of Khiva was not accidentally proposed by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.M.Mirziyoyev as the venue for the

International Forum "Central Asia at the Crossroads of World Civilizations" in 2021. By the way, many Iranians are well aware that in one of the historical cities of Uzbekistan, in Khiva, there is the famous architectural complex of the Pakhlavan Mahmud mausoleum, which is widely known in Iran as "Pourya-ye Vali". Many athletes from Iran, especially wrestlers, greatly respect the personality of Pakhlavan Mahmud as their spiritual mentor.

It is noteworthy that in June 2019, the famous Iranian athlete-hero Reza Gheitasi and the filming crew of the Iranian TV channel "Shoma" took part in the First International Tournament "Games of Heroes", which was held in the ancient city of Khiva. The prepared documentaries were widely shown on such Iranian TV channels as "Shoma", "Sports News", "Jam-e Jam", "Mostanad" and others. As you know, Uzbekistan is rich in historical architectural masterpieces and centuries-old traditions. On its territory are located some of the most ancient cities on the planet, some of which are more than 2.7 thousand years old. The surviving monuments are of value not only for the Uzbek people, but also for all mankind as a whole.

On the territory of Uzbekistan, there are 8208 immovable objects of material cultural heritage, of which 4748 are archeological monuments, 2250 architectural monuments, 678 monuments of monumental art and 532 sights. Currently, the UNESCO World Heritage List included four material objects - the historical centers of Khiva, Bukhara, Samarkand and Shakhrisabz. More than 30 properties are in the process of being included in this list. Since time immemorial, Central Asia has been a place of historical meetings and spiritual enrichment of different peoples, cultures and religions.

Due to its central role on the Great Silk Road, the region served as an important link in international trade, cultural, scientific and intellectual exchange. The peoples of the region play an important role as a connecting link between Asia and Europe, which contributed to the spread of letter writing and world religions, technical achievements, dialogue between the civilizations of the East and West. The scale of the contribution of the peoples who lived and worked in Central Asia is still not fully studied.

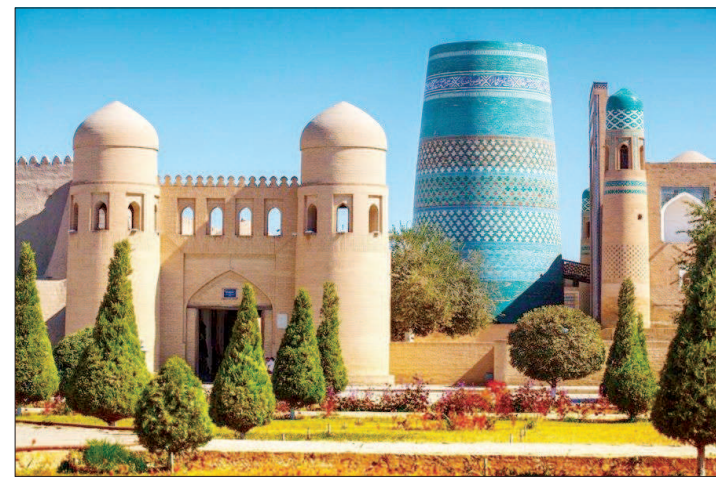
In the popularization of this huge civilization contribution of Central Asia to the development of world culture and science, a special role belongs to Uzbekistan, which is the heart of Central Asia in geographical, cultural, historical and spiritual terms. Realizing the commonality of history, cultures and traditions, as well as the indivisibility of security, from the first years of independence, Uzbekistan played a key, positive and responsible role in matters of interethnic relations in Central Asia.

Strengthening cultural, humanitarian and spiritual ties is one of the most important factors in the implementation of the new regional course of

Uzbekistan in Central Asia, carried out under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. On his initiative, a number of important projects are being implemented in this country on conservation, scientific research, popularization and rational use of objects of material cultural heritage. These initiatives find the full support of the international community. Indeed ancient monuments with a long history testify that the cities of Uzbekistan have been the cradle of science and culture since ancient times.

The careful preservation of this heritage for future generations requires high responsibility from all, as it is the property of not only the peoples of the region, but also of all mankind. The initiative of President Sh. M. Mirziyoyev to hold, jointly with UNESCO the International Forum "Central Asia at the Crossroads of World Civilizations" in Khiva in 2021, which received the support of the wider world community, will be another significant event in the popularization of the huge Islamic historical heritage of the large region of Central Asia. In general, the initiative to hold the International Forum "Central Asia at the Crossroads of World Civilizations" will also allow:

- to further strengthen among the public of the countries of the region a sense of belonging to a single region called "Central Asia", which is an important factor in the development of good-neighborly interstate relations;
- to reiterate the huge contribution of the peoples of Uzbekistan and other countries of Central Asia to the development of world civilization;
- to increase the interest of the international scientific community in the study of the scientific and intellectual heritage of the peoples of Central Asia.



## Euro Zone Rebounds From Recession But Clouds Gather



FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Europe appears to have weathered a pandemic-induced recession better than many feared, a slew of indicators suggested on Tuesday, but prospects for a second wave of infections and a hard Brexit are once again raising talk of more stimulus.

Having shrunk by over a tenth last quarter, the euro zone economy is quickly regaining strength on the back of relatively resilient consumption, supported by job subsidy schemes, tax cuts and lavish stimulus from the European Central Bank. Indeed, consumer confidence in the 19 countries sharing the euro rose to -13.9 this month from -14.7 in August, the European Commission said, a reading below its long-term trend but easily beating market expectations.

Adding to the positive news, the Ifo Institute upgraded its forecast for Germany, expecting GDP in the euro zone's biggest economy to shrink 5.2% this year, a big improvement on its last projection for a 6.7% drop or the Bundesbank's 7.1% forecast. The figures suggest that unprecedented fiscal and monetary support have insulated the bloc from an unprecedented recession and households began to spend once again as most restrictions were lifted during the summer months.

Unemployment in the region has barely risen compared to some other major economies and, at 7.9%, has still not moved far from the more than 10-year low of 7.2% hit earlier this year. Germany's HDE retail association now expects nominal sales to grow by 1.5% this year, a sharp upward revision from its previous estimate for a 4% drop, helped by a surge in online sales and stimulus measures that have included a temporary VAT cut and cash handouts for parents.

But the good news may be unsustainable. Investors are growing increasingly worried about surging coronavirus infections in countries like France and Spain, increasing the risk of lockdowns, a factor not captured by Tuesday's indicators.

"We doubt this (confidence rise) will be sustained," Melanie Debono at Capital Economic said in a note. "Further restrictions are being imposed and look set to cause consumer confidence, and perhaps household spending, to drop back in the fourth quarter."

## Vast Majority of Americans Want More Economic Aid to Offset COVID



LONDON (FT) - Americans are becoming increasingly pessimistic about the U.S. economic rebound, with almost 90 per cent saying Washington needs to pass a new stimulus package to mitigate the fallout from the coronavirus pandemic.

The growing concern about the economy, detailed in a new poll of likely voters for the Financial Times, comes even as Americans increasingly believe the country has turned the corner after the spike of infections this summer, which forced several states to slam the brakes on reopening plans.

The monthly survey for the FT and the Peter G Peterson Foundation found that more than 60 per cent of Americans believe the outbreak — which has killed almost 200,000 people in the US — is either staying the same or getting better in their local communities, the most optimistic outlook since the summer outbreak began.

But that optimism has been tempered by renewed fears about the country's financial situation, with 42 per cent now saying they were more worried about the economy than public health — a 9-point jump from a month ago.

Only a third of American voters think the US economy will fully recover within the next year, the same as during the depths of the summer outbreak and significantly lower than the 44 per cent who believed in April that a rebound would take less than a year. The FT-Peterson poll also sought to gauge voter concerns about the conduct of November's election. Two-thirds said they still had confidence in the integrity of the voting process, despite Mr Trump's repeated warning the election could be "rigged".

Still, 40 per cent did not believe postal voting was secure and reliable and 61 per cent said they intended to vote in person, either on election day or in early voting opportunities. That compares to the 41 per cent of voters who cast their ballots before election day in 2016, according to the Election Assistance Commission.

The White House and congressional Democrats have been locked in a stand-off over a new round of economic stimulus since enhanced unemployment benefits, one of the main provisions in earlier emergency spending legislation, expired more than a month ago.

## Global Trade Returns Faster Than Expected



LONDON (Dispatches) - Global trade is rebounding much more quickly this year than it did after the 2008 financial crisis, lifting parts of the world economy and defying predictions the pandemic could send globalization into permanent retreat.

When the new coronavirus hit earlier this year, international trade in goods suffered the biggest year-over-year drop since the Great Depression. Economists warned of rising protectionism, and some companies said they would reassess overseas supply chains that were vulnerable to unexpected shocks.

Trade remains below pre-pandemic levels. Still, it has snapped back robustly — and had recovered about half of this year's historic loss by June, according to calculations by the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, a German think tank. New export orders were growing in 14 of 38 economies measured by research firm IHS Markit in August, compared with just four in June. Others were trending in the right direction and could start seeing growth soon.

Households are spending on imported goods, sometimes supported by government cash, even as spending on local services like restaurant meals and trips to the cinema has fallen — and all those goods have to come from somewhere. China, whose factories were among the first to reopen from pandemic shutdowns, recorded 9.5% growth in outbound shipping in August compared with the previous year. Its Ningbo-Zhoushan port, among the world's largest, has seen trade volume surpass 2019 levels with increasing frequency since July, according to QuantCube Technology, a Paris-based data company.

South Korean exports in the first 10 days of this month were just 0.2% below the same period last year. Shipping activity in some other U.S., Asian and European ports also has normalized, according to global freight volume data. Freight rates have risen far above pre-Covid-19 levels on some key routes as demand for goods returns, hitting a record high this month for standard container spot prices from Shanghai to California.

The recovery isn't being felt evenly everywhere, and trade still faces fierce headwinds, including a possible coronavirus resurgence this fall.

## Turkey, India Raising Trade Barriers Against South Korea



SEOUL (Dispatches) - Emerging countries are raising their trade barriers with the spread of COVID-19 reducing their foreign exchange reserves. For example, Turkey is trying to block the outflow of funds based on its free trade agreements with its manufacturing and tourism sectors paralyzed.

The South Korean government is closely watching the moves of Turkey and India in particular. According to the government, Turkey is attempting to withdraw from its FTA with South Korea due to trade deficits amid the increasing possibility of sovereign default. India's discontent with its FTA with South Korea is substantial, too. For India, South Korea is a country causing a massive trade deficit second only to its trade deficit with China.

Their complaints about the bilateral FTAs are something unexpected in that both countries have benefited from the agreements. According to the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy, South Korea's imports from Turkey increased by an annual average of US\$174 million in 2013 to 2017 as compared with 2008 to 2012 after their FTA took effect in 2013. Although both Turkey and India are making an issue of chronic trade deficits, this is somewhat excessive given that the FTAs have led to more local investments and intermediate goods exports based on more South Korean companies in those countries. South Korea's direct investment in Turkey more than doubled from US\$130 million to US\$270 million through the implementation of the FTA.

Turkey is currently undergoing a decrease in forex reserves and increasing forex risks attributable to the tourism sector as well as a recession caused by COVID-19. Many Turkish companies in need of foreign currencies for intermediate goods trade and so on are becoming inoperable one after another. India, in the meantime, is currently expanding its countervailing duties while making an issue of the FTA. This is because a domestic breakthrough has been hard to find. Also hard to find is South Korea's solution. "Although India is mentioning the trade deficit, most of it is because South Korean companies such as Hyundai Motor Group entered the Indian market at the request of the Indian government," the institute explained, adding, "If South Korea increases its investment in India to soothe it, more intermediate goods will be shipped to South Korean companies' manufacturing facilities in the country, which means even more trade deficits."



## U.S. Not to Succeed in Forming New Anti-Iranian Coalition

TEHRAN (MNA) – Deputy Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi said that the U.S. will not be able to form a new coalition against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He made the remarks on Wednesday, noting that the U.S. has always made its efforts to form a coalition against the Islamic Revolution and they will never be able to achieve their goal.

Referring to the presence of U.S. forces in the region, he said, “They will be within our reach if they come to the Persian Gulf.” “If the U.S. makes a new folly, they will face a power beyond their imagination,” he added.



## U.S.-Turkey Energy Ties Seeing Renaissance

ANKARA (Dispatches) - The Turkish-U.S. relationship in the energy sector is seeing a kind of renaissance, said participants at a virtual conference.

Speaking at a program as part of the 38th American-Turkish Conference, James Jones, honorary chair of the U.S.-Turkey Business Council, said:

“There are some least reasons for optimism, because, despite the pandemic and the turbulence in the energy market, the U.S. and Turkey energy relationship is experiencing a renaissance of sorts.”

The energy sector, according to him, has good opportunities to boost bilateral ties, from LNG to pipeline projects in Central Asia and Iraq, to renewables, and lately to Turkey’s recent natural gas discovery in the Black Sea.

Jones said technology and secure 5G can also unlock the level of cooperation between the two countries as NATO allies, as their commitments are to develop secure and safe communication, which is something extremely important.

Another area ripe for cooperation is health care, he said, adding that especially PPEs present a great opportunity.

He stressed: “Turkey is a crucial producer of extremely high-quality medical gear that can be an important source of bilateral trade.”

As we are living in extraordinary times, this “requires extraordinary cooperation. We should pledge to do that,” Jones urged. He added that one of the big aims of American politics is a desire to reduce China’s influence in the US’ trading patterns, adding that this has a potential opportunity with U.S. trade and strategic relations.

“In my view, Turkey and the U.S. are viable alternatives to the development projects funded by China’s Belt and Road Initiative,” Jones said.

He concluded by saying both sides should listen to each other with open minds towards the \$100 billion trade volume target set by two countries.

The pandemic has reset the global economic order in a profound way, said Nail Olpak, the chair of Turkey’s Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK), stressing his belief in the resilience of the world economy and the private sector’s sound stance to overcome challenges.



Saying that the world is restructuring its supply chains in various sectors, Olpak added:

“There is a shift away from one or a limited supply chain, not just in the US but globally, because COVID-19 lockdowns forced businesses to confront the risks and challenges of over-reliance on a single country for supplies and materials.”

Having just one or limited suppliers carries more risk than thought, Olpak warned.

“We know that many firms in America and around the world are looking for alternatives, and Turkey stands ready to step into that role,” he stressed.

Touching on Turkey’s strong manufacturing base and reputation for high-quality products, Olpak stressed the geographic attractiveness of the country, as the gateway between the East and the West. The world also realized that logistics is not only about distance, he said.

## China Promises to Do More to Tackle Climate Change



BEIJING (Dispatches) - China is ready to do more to tackle climate change, the country’s chief climate advisor said, as quoted by Reuters, and plans to deliver this message to the UN before this year’s end.

“China is definitely going to launch a very powerful low-carbon development target,” the official, Xie Zhenhua said during a conversation with former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. He added that China’s commitment will span the period until 2050.

China is the biggest emitter of carbon dioxide but it is also the biggest investor in renewable energy projects. However, the country’s emissions are still on the rise and they will only peak in 2030, under current decarbonization plans. Europe has asked China to try and accelerate the decarbonization push, moving peak emissions to 2025.

Recently, even the country’s state oil companies joined the push, declaring their climate change goals for the long term. Petrochina said it planned to bring its carbon dioxide emissions down to near zero by 2050, with investments of \$1.5 billion annually until 2025 on a mix of natural gas and renewable energy projects.

Sinopec, on the other hand, said it would bet on hydrogen, Reuters reported in early September, with the company’s ambition focusing on it becoming the leader on the Chinese hydrogen market. Sinopec already has 14 percent of China’s hydrogen capacity, or some 3 million tons. CNOOC, the state major that focuses on offshore oil and gas, unsurprisingly will focus on offshore wind. It has plans to invest between 3 and 5 percent of its budget on wind projects but also double its natural gas output by 2025 aiming for it to account for 30 percent of total production from 19 percent now.

Meanwhile, China will also be reducing its dependence on coal, Xie also said during his conversation with Rudd. Despite concern that China was approving new coal-fired power plants, the top climate advisor to Beijing said China’s coal consumption had plateaued in 2013 and was not rising from those levels.

## Iran, Near Eastern States Discuss Expanding Mutual Coordination in FAO Regional Conference

TEHRAN (FAO) - The Near East and North Africa region is not on track to eliminate hunger and malnutrition; hunger is on the rise in the region; overweight and obesity levels amongst adults and children are spiralling upwards; and COVID-19 pandemic affects both food security and livelihoods; these are among the major challenges highlighted at the 35th FAO Regional Conference for the Near East.

The two-day conference, held virtually by the Sultanate of Oman, gathers 30 FAO Members as well as representatives from partner organizations, civil society, the private sector and academia, to identify innovative policy solutions to transform our food systems and materialize poverty reduction and zero hunger, amid COVID-19 pandemic.

Mentioning the heavy burden caused by the pandemic on food and agriculture sectors, FAO Director-General QU Dongyu asserts that it “is primarily a health crisis, but its impact has touched all parts of our lives, most importantly food security and incomes,”

FAO Director-General noted that the pandemic, and measures to contain it, pose significant challenges, especially to the most vulnerable communities, as a compounding threat to existing crises such as conflict, natural disasters, climate change, pests and plagues. “This underscores the need for evidence-based, coordinated policy action and investment to make food systems healthier and more sustainable,” Qu added.

Underscoring the need to change the region’s food systems to ensure sustainable and healthy diets for the region’s growing population in a context of water scarcity and advancing climate change, Qu indicated four important elements to kick start such transformations: well-designed multi-sectoral policies that create an enabling environment; innovation of processes and agricultural inputs; well-targeted public and private investments; and vital agricultural activity.

The Iranian delegation, represented by the country’s ad interim envoy to FAO, Mr Shahin Ghoraishizadeh, also shared the main adaptive strategies implemented by the Government to tackle challenges posed by COVID-19 to food and agriculture activities of the country.

As per Ghoraishizadeh, “in [this] region, the spread of COVID-19 has affected the vulnerability of millions of small producers and agricultural workers and intensified challenges for this large part of the population.”

He further emphasised that “if this situation is not effectively addressed in the region, the risk is that all the progress made in overcoming poverty and hunger and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will come to nothing.”

Iran hopes “FAO, through this conference, provides a starting point to move forward collective policies and response programs for member countries in the region; to place food and agriculture at the centre of the COVID-19 socio-economic response strategies,” Ghoraishizadeh said in his concluding remarks.

At the end of the first day of the Conference, Members approved a Ministerial Declaration confirming their commitment to further strengthen regional collaboration and effectively address common challenges, including food security and nutrition, water scarcity, climate change and challenges of transboundary pests and diseases, mobilizing support to mitigate the adverse impacts associated with these challenges.

On the second day, the meeting reviewed the recommendations and conclusions of the Regional Consultative Technical Meetings, a series of preparatory technical sessions that took place earlier this year, gathering senior officers from the ministries of agriculture, water, environment and health from 30 countries, as well as Permanent Representatives of governments to FAO, FAO staff and representatives of regional organizations, private sector and academia. The Conference agreed on the final set of recommendations and actions for countries, FAO and other stakeholders.

FAO Members in Near East and North Africa meet every two years to discuss issues of common concern and guide FAO’s work in support to the region’s food and agriculture. This year’s Regional Conference will further strengthen FAO’s impact across the region, as well as defining its work priorities in the coming two years.

## Deutsche Bank to Close 20% of German Branches in Coronavirus Shift

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Deutsche Bank DBKGn.DE plans to shutter one in five branches in Germany as it seeks to save costs and capitalize on the changing habits of customers during the coronavirus pandemic, an executive said.

Philipp Gossow, who oversees the retail banking business in Germany, told Reuters that the reduction to some 400 branches from around 500 currently would occur primarily in urban locations and take place “as quickly as possible”.

The cull comes as Deutsche Bank undergoes a broad overhaul of its global operations that began in 2019 after years of losses.

German banks traditionally operate large numbers of branches compared with those in the Netherlands or Britain, where customers are more comfortable with digital banking. Banks throughout Europe are rethinking their branch strategies in the wake of the coronavirus crisis.

Deutsche’s rival Commerzbank CBKG.DE recently opted to shut 200 of its

1,000 branches and is considering closing hundreds more.

“Coronavirus has further changed the demands placed on advisory services and the branch business,” Gossow said.

“Even customers who were previously not very familiar with online banking are now doing many simple banking transactions from home on their computer or iPad,” he said.

Gossow said more complex advisory services were taking place increasingly by phone or video chat and the bank would invest an undisclosed amount to build out those services.

He elaborated on the changes on Tuesday at a conference in Frankfurt and in a memo to staff, in which he acknowledged the changes would mean hardship for some.

But the move is not expected to meet strong resistance from employees. The Verdi labour union said in a statement it was “generally right” for Deutsche to review its branch network.

### U.S. Launched...

FROM PAGE 1

“Like Saddam Hussein, the Americans’ first goal was to oust the Islamic Republic of Iran’s system and, at least, tear up and destroy Resolution 2231, but they failed to attain any of those objectives,” he said.

President Rouhani once again touched upon Washington’s failure to get its anti-Iran plans pass through the UN Security Council.

“It is unprecedented in the United States’ history that they take a plan to the UN Security Council after months of arrangements, and finally fail,” he said.

“Indonesia, Niger, Tunisia and 13 UN Security Council members bravely stood up to the U.S. whereby America’s grandeur was shattered.” President Rouhani said.

### Unilateral Sanctions...

FROM PAGE 1

The fresh U.S. sanctions targeted 27 Iranian entities and people in the nuclear, missile and conventional arms sectors. Washington claimed it had triggered the so-called snapback of virtually all UN sanctions on Iran, including the arms embargo.

However, both UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and the vast majority of the 15-strong Security Council insisted the US does not have the legal power to take the steps under the banner of the UN as it had withdrawn from the 2015 nuclear deal two years ago.

Baghaei Hamaneh said the U.S. claim that it had unilaterally reinstated the terminated UN Security Council resolutions on Iran was another sign of Washington’s “bullying and disregard for international law and the UN Charter.”

“Even international judicial institutions such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) have not remained immune from US addiction to sanctions. The U.S. Secretary of State recently sanctioned the prosecutor and several judges of the ICC for pursuing charges against the U.S. military in Afghanistan,” he noted.

Under international law, he emphasized, the world countries should not recognize or implement the unlawful measures of those sanctioning others since such violations run counter to their sovereignty and international human rights obligations.

“Iran would continue its policy of maximum resistance against America’s illegal and unjust pressure,” the Iranian diplomat said.

The U.S. has been tightening its sanctions against Iran in recent months, defying warnings from Tehran and international human rights organizations that the restrictions are severely hampering the Iranian health sector’s fight against the coronavirus outbreak.

### Iran Only Supplies...

FROM PAGE 1

Shekarchi once again reiterated that Iran has no plan to have military presence anywhere and added that the country merely has “spiritual and advisory presence” in the region.

“Countries of the resistance front have armies and forces themselves. We provide them with advisory help. In order to share our experience with the people of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen, our skilled forces go there and assist them, but this is the people and armies of these countries who stand against the enemies in practice.”

He said Iran would provide whatever help it can for any country standing against the Israeli regime and the United States.

### U.S. Maximum...

FROM PAGE 1

Macron said he could not support the approach of U.S. President Donald Trump’s administration.

“We will not compromise on the activation of a (sanctions) mechanism that the United States on its own, leaving the agreement, is not in a position to activate,” he said.

“This would undermine the unity of the Security Council, the integrity of its decisions, and it would run the risk of further aggravating tensions in the region.”

He repeated previous comments that within the 2015 deal, a framework needed to be added to ensure Iran never acquired nuclear weapons and which dealt with Iran’s ballistic missile program and regional destabilizing activities.



## Rennes Goalkeeper Mendy On Brink of Chelsea Switch

LONDON (Dispatches) - Senegal goalkeeper Edouard Mendy is expected to complete his move to Chelsea from Rennes on Tuesday, Stamford Bridge boss Frank Lampard has confirmed.

The 28-year-old was undergoing a medical with the London club, with Lampard indicating the deal should be completed shortly afterwards.

Mendy's arrival will provide competition for Spain goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga, who has struggled for form and confidence.

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## Spurs' League Cup Tie

## Postponed Due to Coronavirus

LONDON (Dispatches) - Tottenham's League Cup tie at Leyton Orient was called off on Tuesday after several of their League Two opponents tested positive for the coronavirus.

Just two hours before Jose Mourinho's side were due to play the third round match at the Breyer Group Stadium, the English Football League announced it had been postponed.

Orient had already shut down their training ground as a result of the virus outbreak in their first-team squad.

# Nadal "Number One" French Open Favorite

PARIS (Dispatches) - Rafael Nadal remains "number one favourite" for Roland Garros, rival Novak Djokovic said Monday, despite saying the Spaniard's last-eight exit at the Italian Open showed he can be beaten on clay.

Nadal, a 12-time Roland Garros winner, lost in the quarter-finals of the Italian Open to world number 15 Diego Schwartzman.

"Even though he lost this week, I still think, a lot of people will agree, he's the number one favourite and, the record that he has there, the history of his results, you just can't put anybody in front of him," said Djokovic.

World number one Djokovic beat Argentine Schwartzman 7-5, 6-3 in Monday's final to win a fifth Rome title, and a record 36th Masters crown to move one better than Nadal.

"But, you know, definitely Diego showed that Nadal is beatable on clay," added the Serb.

Conditions in Roland Garros could also have an impact, with the tournament pushed back to autumn because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Nadal "prefers high bounces, that it is hot, that the ball goes fast," said Djokovic, the French Open champion in 2016.

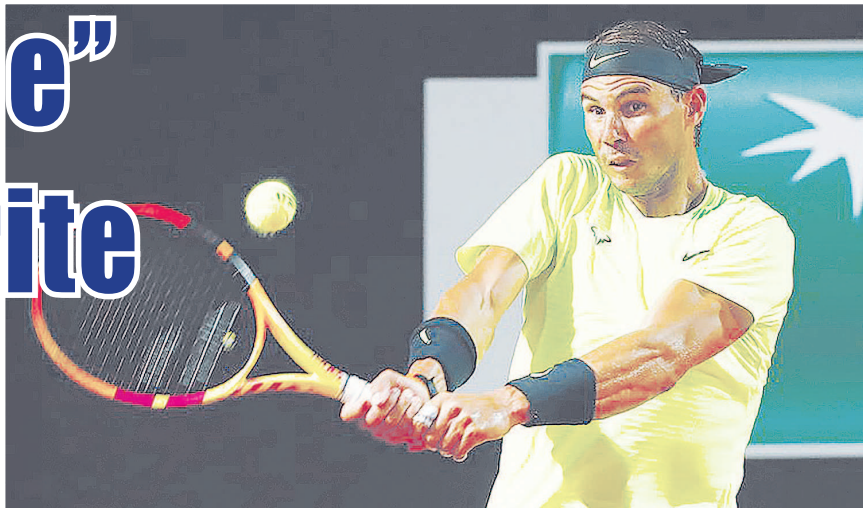
"So let's see. It's going to be interesting. I think even though he's the number one favourite, I think there are players that can win against him there."

Schwartzman agreed that Nadal was the favourite.

"Rafa is the king. It's his house. He went to Roland Garros many years playing good, sometimes not playing his best and he won.

"I think Rafa is always there, the guy who is going to win."

Djokovic said getting back on court for a tournament so quickly after being disqualified at the U.S. Open for striking a



line judge with a ball helped him move on from the incident.

The world number one came in for heavy criticism at Flushing Meadows earlier this month and the Serb said he spent several days processing what had happened.

He returned to tournament play in Rome last week and captured his 36th ATP Masters crown in Monday's final by beating Argentine Diego Schwartzman 7-5 6-3.

"I did experience mentally some ups and downs in the first four-five days after that happened," Djokovic told reporters.

"Obviously I was in shock... but I moved on, I've never had an issue in my life to move on regardless of how difficult it is.

"Obviously having a tournament a week after helped a lot because I really wanted to get on the court and get whatever trace of that out of the way."

Djokovic, who has won 31 of his 32 matches this year, said he would have to raise his game further to challenge for the title at the French Open, which begins on Sunday.

"I don't think I played my best tennis to be honest, I don't want to sound arrogant here. I am very satisfied and pleased to win a title. I know I still have a couple of gears," he added.

"Hopefully I'll be able to raise that level for the French Open because that's going to be necessary if I want to go deep in the tournament."

## Thiago Silva Brushes Off Age Concern

LONDON (AFP) - New Chelsea signing Thiago Silva has shrugged off concerns that he might struggle to adapt to the extreme pace of the Premier League, insisting "age is just a number".

The veteran Brazil defender joined Frank Lampard's side from Paris Saint-Germain on a free transfer last month after suffering defeat to Bayern Munich in the Champions League final.

The centre-back, who turned 36 on Tuesday, brushed off concerns he would struggle to come to terms with the speed of the English top-flight.

"Physically I feel really good," he told reporters on Tuesday. "Age is just a number on your document. Physically, I feel very young. I'm very well prepared for this."

The former AC Milan player, who is expected to make his debut in Chelsea's League Cup match against Barnsley, said the Premier League had not previously held great appeal for him.



## Andreescu Pulls Out of French Open

PARIS (Reuters) - Canada's Bianca Andreescu has pulled out of the French Open and will take the rest of the season off to focus on her recuperation, the world number seven said on Tuesday.

Andreescu, who did not defend her 2019 U.S. Open crown in New York this year, has not played on tour since the WTA Finals in Shenzhen last year where she retired with a knee injury that also kept her out of the Australian Open in January.

"I have come to the difficult decision to skip the clay court swing this year and will be taking the remainder of the season off to focus on my health and training," Andreescu said in a statement.

"As hard as it was to come to this conclusion, I have so much to look forward to in 2021, including the Olympics. I want to use this time to focus on my game so I can come back stronger and better than ever."

The French Open begins on Sunday.

## Bilic Charged With Improper Conduct After Red Card at Everton

LONDON (Reuters) - West Bromwich Albion manager Slaven Bilic has been charged with improper conduct after he was sent off in Saturday's 5-2 Premier League defeat at Everton, the Football Association (FA) said on Tuesday.

Bilic, 52, was shown a red card by referee Mike Dean for his vehement complaints at halftime after defender Kieran Gibbs was sent off for pushing Everton's James Rodriguez in the face.

"Slaven Bilic has been charged with a breach of FA Rule E3," the FA said in a statement here.

"It is alleged that the West Bromwich Albion FC manager's language and/or behaviour on the field of play ... amounts to improper conduct."

The governing body's statement added that Bilic has until Thursday to respond.



when Real Madrid sanctioned a loan last week following the 31-year-old's fallout with manager Zinedine Zidane, who did not select him for matches towards the end of last season's league title run.

Signed from Southampton as a promising left back in 2007, Bale scored 56 goals in

# Bale Could Extend Spurs Stay Beyond Loan Spell

LONDON (Reuters) - Tottenham Hotspur's new loan signing Gareth Bale could extend his stay at the north London club beyond the season, the forward's agent said on Tuesday as the Welshman looks to end his spell with Real Madrid.

Bale returned to Spurs after seven years when Real Madrid sanctioned a loan last week following the 31-year-old's fallout with manager Zinedine Zidane, who did not select him for matches towards the end of last season's league title run.

## De Bruyne Urges Man City to Make Fast Start In Title Race

LONDON (Dispatches) - Kevin De Bruyne has urged Manchester City to make a fast start as they aim to win back the Premier League title.

Pep Guardiola's side finished 18 points behind champions Liverpool last season after making an inconsistent start to the season.

Having won the title two years in a row before last term, De Bruyne knows exactly what it takes to lift the trophy.

Monday's 3-1 win at Wolves in their opening game was a solid beginning.

De Bruyne scored City's first from the penalty spot before having a hand in Phil Foden and Gabriel Jesus's goals.

But the Belgium midfielder is well aware that City cannot afford to take their foot off the gas.

"If the title pace is the same as the last few years it'll be hard. We want to fight with Liverpool. That's what sport is all about," De Bruyne told City's website.

"With just two weeks training, it was always going to be hard. But we kept it tight and I think we did really well and we know you have to start well.

"Wolves have been a bogey team for us, so to come here and do this performance is good. We were missing some players. We will go game by game, Thursday

(in the League Cup against Bournemouth) is another one."

It was City's first competitive game since long-serving playmaker David Silva left the club and De Bruyne feels they have the players to cope without the Spaniard.

"Everyone has to play with their own quality. David (Silva) is the master of tight spaces, but in Phil, Bernardo (Silva), Riyad (Mahrez) and Raheem (Sterling), we have players who can do the job. But obviously he is a big miss," De Bruyne said.



## Suarez Language Exam for Italian Citizenship Rigged

ROME (Reuters) - Italian prosecutors said on Tuesday they had evidence that the language exam taken by Barcelona's Uruguay striker Luis Suarez to obtain Italian citizenship ahead of a possible move to Juventus was rigged.

Suarez, whose wife is of Italian descent, passed the exam last Thursday at the University for Foreigners in Perugia.

It cleared the way for a fast-track citizenship approval which would mean Juventus could sign him without exceeding its permitted quota of non-EU players, but suspicions were quickly raised in the media that he was given preferential treatment.

Perugia chief prosecutor Raffaele Cantone said his investigations showed the questions had been agreed with Suarez ahead of the exam and it had already been decided what mark to give him, despite his scarce knowledge of Italian.

The university denied any wrongdoing, saying in a statement it had acted with "correctness and transparency" and was confident this would emerge at the end of the probe.

Police searched the university on Tuesday looking for further evidence, Cantone said in a statement, while Italian newspaper la Repubblica reported that five university employees had been put under investigation, including the rector.

Suarez himself is not cited among those under investigation.

La Repubblica published alleged conversations tapped by police during their probe, in which a tutor preparing Suarez for the exam told a colleague "he can't speak a word," and described him as an absolute beginner in Italian.

Suarez, 33, obtained the intermediate B1 qualification required for citizenship in just 15 minutes, his examiner said after the test, and was only required to do the oral part of the exam.

Other citizenship applicants taking the B1 exam on the same day in Rome, had to also complete a written paper lasting two-and-a-half hours.

