

Sepideh Khoei, the Faculty Member of the School of Chemistry, College of Sciences, University of Tehran Wins is the Patent Award of COMSTECH of the OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation)

# IRAN NEWS

Minister of Roads and Urban Development of Iran Mohammad Eslami Has Announced That the Country Does Not Have Any Flights To Iraq for Arbaeen Due to Concerns Over the Coronavirus Outbreak

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2

## DOMESTIC

Iran Won't Tolerate Collateral Damage from Karabakh Fighting



> SEE PAGE 2

3

## DOMESTIC

Tehran, Moscow Strive To Restore Long-Term Economic Cooperation



> SEE PAGE 3

4

## INTERNATIONAL

Macron Remarks On Islam Prompting Backlash From Muslims



> SEE PAGE 4

8

## SPORTS

Thiem, Svitolina, Nadal Into French Open Last 16



> SEE PAGE 8

## Int'l Community Urged To Pressure Israel To Accede to NPT

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has called on the international community to compel the "outlaw" Israeli regime, the "sole possessor" of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, to swiftly accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and annihilate its nuclear arsenal.

Addressing the head of the United Nations General Assembly on Friday, Zarif made the remarks in a video message broadcast at the 75th high-level plenary meeting, attended by nearly 100 foreign ministers, to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

The United States, as "the world's lone perpetrator of a nuclear attack extends blind support to the sole possessor of a nuclear arsenal in our region: an outlaw regime that has openly threatened others with nuclear annihilation, all while crying wolf about proliferation," Iran's top diplomat said at the virtual meeting, referring to Israel, which is in possession of an estimated 200 nuclear warheads.

See Page 7

## Gov't Announces Stricter Rules To Stem Coronavirus



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Iranian president says stricter restrictions will be put in place to stem the spread of coronavirus, and those breaching health protocols will be dealt with seriously.

President Hassan Rouhani said "prevention" is the only way to counter COVID-19 and cut off its chain of transmission. "We have no other option, but to levy fines on offenders," he said at a meeting of the National Coronavirus Headquarters on Saturday.

"It is necessary to intensify care and monitoring to combat coronavirus," he said.

Rouhani said punishments have been envisaged for all civil servants and other businesses that do not abide by health protocols.

He noted employees who do not abide by health directives could be fined or temporarily suspended, and businesses that do not comply could also be ordered to close for a specific period of time.

He added anyone giving services to customers who do not observe health protocols will also be punished.

President Rouhani urged all citizens to seriously respect health protocols.

"Under the current circumstances, we should all join hands to ensure people's health and livelihood as well," he added.

Rouhani said the measures to contain the novel virus will be implemented in a stricter way in the capital city of Tehran.

The president once again thanked all medical personnel who have been actively involved in treating coronavirus patients and containing the spread of the disease.

President Rouhani also said that the novel coronavirus pandemic has affected all countries such as Germany, however, Iran's economy will register positive growth till yearend.

Speaking in a meeting of Coronavirus Combat and Prevention Headquarters yesterday, Rouhani said that Germany's economy has recorded a 5.2% percent of shrinking since the start of the outbreak. "This is an advanced country that neither is under sanctions nor has any problems. Our economy will have better conditions than this figure and our economic growth minus oil will be positive till the yearend."

He emphasized that coronavirus does not recognize the poor and rich and to deal with it requires national determination with a sense of social and moral responsibility, adding, "The only way to deal with coronavirus and break the transmission chain is prevention, and this prevention is possible with the participation of all members of society."

"We must do something to strengthen empathy, coordination and synergy in the country, and we must all join hands to ensure the health and livelihood of the people in the current situation of confronting coronavirus," he said, according to the President's press service.

Rouhani appreciated about 8 months of dedicated efforts of the country's medical staff in the fight against coronavirus, and stated, "People's appreciation to the medical staff is possible by wearing masks, observing physical distance and health instructions."

The President further thanked all the departments, including the knowledge-based companies, which are working on research in the field of vaccine production and the construction of equipment needed by medical centers to fight against coronavirus, and said, "The production of the first human vaccine by these companies is commendable."

## Iran Considering Onion Export to Bangladesh

DHAKA (Dispatches) - The assurance came when Iranian ambassador to Bangladesh Mohammad Reza Nafar made a call-on with Agriculture Minister Dr M Abdur Razzaque at his secretariat office in the capital.

Iran will consider exporting onion to Bangladesh with due importance as the price of the vegetable used in most cuisines in the subcontinent including Bangladesh is comparatively low in the Asian country.

The assurance came when Iranian ambassador to Bangladesh Mohammad Reza Nafar made a call-on with Agriculture Minister Dr M Abdur Razzaque at his secretariat office in the capital. "Onion price in Iran is comparatively low. So, the onion export to Bangladesh will be considered with high importance", said the Iranian envoy responding to a request made by the agriculture minister. He said Bangladesh and Iran have enormous scope to work jointly in various sectors, including the agriculture.

Praising Bangladesh's success in agriculture, the Iranian envoy said despite the ongoing corona pandemic, Bangladesh is continuously maintaining its food production chain due to the pragmatic and time-befitting steps taken by the government. He also expressed his keen interest to import different food items including tea, jute, mango and spices from Bangladesh to Iran. At the same time, Iran can export date, wheat, onion and raisin to Bangladesh, said Nafar during the call-on.

During the meeting, they discussed on various aspects including agricultural science and technology, bio-technology, agro-food processing and packaging, innovations of different stress tolerant varieties under the changing climatic condition, research, trade and bilateral relations between the two countries. The minister informed the Iranian envoy that Bangladesh has achieved tremendous success in agriculture and that's why the country is now self-sufficient in cereal food production.

## Iran Military Ready to Nip Threats in the Bud

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The Islamic Republic can nip any threat in the bud thanks to its high combat power, says a senior Iranian Army commander.

"Today, we have a great combat power and if there is any threat, we will nip it in the bud," Iranian Army's Executive Deputy Commander Brigadier General Mohammad Mahmoudi said on Friday.

What we have, the commander said, is Iran's capable Army forces which have a brilliant record of success in countering excessive demands by the enemy during the Islamic Republic's 1980-88 Sacred Defense against an invasion by a Western-backed Iraq.

"Today, we produce various types of missiles, aircraft, helicopters and artillery on our own."

Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami said late last month that the Sacred Defense had led to "valuable" achievements.

"Iran is in a position in the fields of science, politics, and particularly defense that despite the cruel threats by the hegemonic system, it can detect and thwart any threat at its starting point even outside the borders," Hatami said.

See Page 7

## Coronavirus Kills 179 More Iranians

TEHRAN (IFP) - Health Ministry spokeswoman says the novel coronavirus has killed 179 patients since Friday noon, increasing the overall death toll to 26,746.

In a press briefing on Saturday, Sima-Sadat Lari said 467,119 patients have contracted the virus so far, including 3,523 new cases identified in the past 24 hours.

So far, she added, 387,675 patients have recovered from the disease or been discharged from the hospital.

Lari said 4,127 patients are also in critical conditions caused by more severe infection.

The spokeswoman noted that 4,098,161 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, Ardabil, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Hamadan, West Azarbaijan, Bushehr, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Alborz, Lorestan, Markazi, Ilam, South Khorasan, Kermanshah, North Khorasan, Semnan, Gilan, Zanjan, Qazvin, and Kerman provinces.

The "orange" zones also include Golestan, Hormozgan, Kurdistan, and Fars provinces, she added.

## Iranians Outraged by AFC's 'Unfair' Ban Against Persepolis Striker

TEHRAN (IFP) - Iranian football fans have been shocked and outraged by the Asian Football Confederation's Saturday decision to ban Persepolis top goal scorer Isa Alkassir for six months over his goal celebration in a recent AFC Champions League match.

The Iranian player has been banned from all football events and fined \$10,000 over his special goal celebration after the recent ACL match against Pakhtakor of Uzbekistan, where he was named the man of the match after scoring two goals, helping the Iranian side advance to the semi-finals.

However, Iranian football fans and Persepolis officials say the ban - announced by the AFC a few hours before the semi-final match against the Saudi club Al-Nassr - is unfair as Alkassir had used it a lot of times in domestic league.

See Page 7

## Emirates Fined \$400,000 for Flights Over Iran

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States Transportation Department fined Emirates airline \$400,000 for flights through Iranian airspace during a time of heightened political tension between the U.S. and Iran last year.

Half of the fine will be waived if Emirates avoids similar violations for one year. The department said the flights carried the code of New York-based JetBlue Airways - a sign that JetBlue could sell seats as if it were a JetBlue plane.

That arrangement made the flights subject to a US ban on flying in Iranian airspace, including areas over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.

The Federal Aviation Administration imposed the ban after Iran shot down an American surveillance drone over the Gulf of Oman. The FAA cited political tension with Iran as raising the risk that American civilian planes in the area could be wrongly identified as military planes.

The flights took place over 19 days in July 2019.

In a consent order, Emirates said it does not believe the violation deserves enforcement action but agreed to the fine to settle the matter. Emirates said after the FAA order it suspended all flights through Iranian airspace except two a day to Tehran. The airline said when it resumed flying planes to and from the U.S. through Iranian airspace, it mistakenly kept JetBlue's code on the flights.

The airline said it fixed the error and made changes to avoid the same mistake in the future.



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## Terrorists Behind Attacks on IRGC Soldiers in Nikshahr Arrested

TEHRAN (IP)- Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) on Saturday announced in a statement that it arrested the elements who assassinated three soldiers of its ground force unit in Nikshahr city, southwestern Iran.

Two vehicles of the Basij unit (Voluntary forces associated with the IRGC) of Nikshahr city in Sistan and Baluchestan province were patrolling on route to Nikshahr on September 29 when armed terrorists onboard a vehicle attacked them.

In the terrorist attack, three members of the IRGC – Morteza Kebari, Saeed Mehrjan, and Hojjat Harati - were killed, and one was injured. Also, two of the attackers were killed.

## Iran Won't Tolerate Collateral Damage from Karabakh Fighting

TEHRAN (IFP) - A mortar shell fired by the warring sides engaged in conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh region has hit a village in Khoda-Afrin County in northwest of Iran, injuring a six-year-old child.

Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran Saeed Khatibzadeh has given a serious warning to the warring sides involved in military clashes over the Nagorno-Karabakh region to avoid violating the Iranian soil. Asked by journalists on Saturday about the reports of violation of Iran's soil amid the ongoing clashes between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia, Khatibzadeh said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran is monitoring the movements at our country's border areas seriously and with great sensitivity."

The spokesperson underlined that any violation of the Iranian soil by any warring side in the region would be "intolerable", adding, "We seriously warn all sides to take the necessary precautions in this regard."



The Iranian spokesman further reiterated the necessity of respecting the Republic of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, observing the principle of protecting civilians, halting the clashes, and starting serious and scheduled negotiations.

Khatibzadeh finally expressed the Islamic Republic's readiness to help achieve those objectives.

His comments came after officials in Iran's northwestern province of East Azarbaijan reported that mortar shells fired by the warring sides in the latest round of fighting between Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan have hit border rural areas in the Iranian province.

According to reports, one of the mortar shells that hit a village in Khoda-Afrin County has injured a six-year-old child.

## Iran, Russia Discuss Nagorno-Karabakh Developments

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov discussed the latest developments in the Nagorno-Karabakh region in a telephone conversation on Friday.

Both sides expressed serious concern over the conflict, calling for an immediate ceasefire in the region.

They also underlined the necessity of easing tension and avoiding provocative remarks over the issue in the region.

They said the regional states, especially neighbors of Azerbaijan and Armenia, can play an important role in creating the right conditions for the parties to return to the negotiating table rapidly. Dozens have been reported killed as Azerbaijan and Armenia continue fighting in the South Caucasus breakaway region of Karabakh.

The region, internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, has been under Armenian control since the early 1990s.

## Iranian, Syrian Ambassadors Focus on Broadening Cooperation

MOSCOW (IP) - The Iranian and Syrian ambassadors to Moscow stressed the need to improve bilateral relations and Tehran's continued support for Damascus.

During the meeting between the Iranian Ambassador "Kazem Jalali" and the Syrian Ambassador "Riyadh Haddad" in Moscow, the bilateral relations between Tehran and Damascus, Syrian developments including the Astana process, the latest situation in Idlib and East Euphrates, Western sanctions against Syria and the prospects of the process of normalization of relations between some Arab countries and the

Zionist regime were discussed.

Jalali and Haddad also expressed interest in continuing their contacts and meetings on issues of mutual interest on Syria and the region.

During the meeting, the Iranian Ambassador to Russia emphasized Tehran's commitment to supporting Damascus in all areas.

The Syrian ambassador to Moscow, Riyadh Haddad, also condemned the normalization of relations between some Arab countries and the Zionist regime, calling it a great betrayal, saying that Syria opposes this process.

## Mobile Phones, IT Play Integral Economic Role at National, Int'l Level

TEHRAN (IP) - The head of Pardis Technology Park stated software, especially mobile phones, are of the fields that have added value in economics, but its economic, technical, and market dimensions have not yet been known as such in the society.

Mahdi Safarinia noted that such events as Mobile Programming Marathon attract top students from universities to discover their talents and new ideas and markets for their new products.

Considering the share of IT in the world's economy, especially in the field of services and even in the field of knowledge-based companies, it can be said that Iran's position in this regard is very good Safarinia stressed.

He said that such events can provide the capacity of local talents in knowledge-based companies and to present new projects and added that IT companies have very high sales, but more work needs to be done to enter the global arena.

Mahdi Safarinia said that in the biotechnology and nanotechnology fields, Iran has had a good entrance into the global market, and the products of such fields can be found in various countries, even in the European countries.

The 8th round of the Mobile Programming Marathon was held on early Saturday morning with over one hundred contestants attended the marathon, with the presence of the Head of Pardis Technology Park (PTP) Mahdi Safarinia.

## Response of Iranians to U.S. Is Maximum Strategic Resistance

ISLAMABAD (IRNA) - The ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan, recalling the inhumane crimes of the Trump administration and the US economic terrorism against the Iranian nation, especially during the coronavirus pandemic, says the response of the Iranian people to the maximum pressure of the United States is maximum strategic resistance.

Ambassador Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini during an interview with Pakistan's Urdu daily 'Jinnah' said that the US regime is currently launching severe economic terrorism against the Iranian nation that never witnessed in the history against any nation.

"At a time when the Iranian nation has been severely suffering from the coronavirus outbreak, the United States has also intensified its inhumane sanctions and even preventing the import of basic goods and food, as well as medicine and medical equipment for the treatment of patients and children. The US led by Trump regime, has committed a crime against humanity today," noted the Iranian ambassador.

Hosseini went on to say that this strategy has isolated America in today's world and shown the hidden and ugly face of this regime to the world.

Replying to a question, the ambassador said Iran and Pakistan are cooperating closely in various bilateral, regional, and international fields.

"We are two neighboring countries with many

cultural, religious, historical, and linguistic commonalities. We have common or close views on regional and international issues and to ensure regional security and stability, economic growth and prosperity are our joint objectives," he said.

The Iranian envoy said: Currently we have joint cooperation in economic, trade, political, cultural, military, and security areas and a number of joint committees are formed and active in the mentioned areas.

He noted the volume of trade between the two countries has been close to \$ 1.5 billion, however, due to the coronavirus pandemic in the past few months it was affected and decreased.

"The capacity for joint trade cooperation between the two countries is much higher than that figure, however, obstacles and problems created by some malicious and corrupt countries such as the US regime has slowed down the progress of cooperation," he viewed.

Expressing his views, Ambassador Hosseini said the imposition of oppressive, unilateral, and illegal sanctions by the US government is a clear example of the machinations that affect the interests of the two Muslim and neighboring nations of Iran and Pakistan to some extent.

"Of course, the determination of the officials of the two neighboring countries will surely overcome any type of obstacle. ECO, OIC, D8 are the other forums of joint cooperation between the two countries," he noted.

## National Housing Plan Reaching Goals

TEHRAN (IP) - Iran's Minister of Agriculture said that all facilities are being used to complete the national housing plan.

The ceremony to sign an agreement between the ministries of Agriculture Jihad and Road and Urban Development to build 100,000 houses was held on Saturday at the Ministry of Road and Urban Development.

Kazem Khavazi said that after signing this agreement all potentials will be used to reach our goal as soon as possible adding that Keshavarzi (Agriculture) Bank beside Maskan (Housing) Bank will work closely in this regard.

The houses will be delivered to the retired, martyrs, and veteran families of the Jihad Agriculture ministry, he noted.

The Minister of Road and Urban Development Mohammad Eslami said for his part that based on the agreement, the needed land for building 100,000 houses will be provided for the Agriculture Jihad Ministry, expressing hope that the process accelerates.

Eslami also referred to the latest government's approval by the virtue of which 50% of the lands for each organization will be allocated to the housing of the personnel.

Agriculture Jihad Ministry is the pioneer in completing the plan and the Ministry of Road and Urban Development provides sources and potentials for them to build 100,000 houses for their target group, Eslami stated.

Those who are supposed to receive the houses will be introduced by the Ministry of Jihad Agriculture from all over the country.

## Iran, Germany Airlines Resume Activities After 6-Month Halt



TEHRAN (IP)- The Iranian embassy in Berlin announced the resumption of Iranian-German airlines after a six-month halt.

The Iranian embassy said in a tweet on Saturday that the plane of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Iran Air) landed Berlin on the 30th anniversary of the reunification of the two Germanys (western and eastern) after a six-month halt.

The fall of the Berlin Wall symbolizes the collapse of fake and imposed demarcations and the need to focus on interaction and multilateralism, the Iranian embassy said.

Due to the coronavirus outbreak flights between many airlines were suspended. Due to the rapid spread of the virus, airlines have cautiously resumed their flights.

## Army to Firmly Continue Battle Against COVID-19

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Islamic Republic of Iran's Army continues its efforts to help contain the coronavirus pandemic in the country, said the commander of Army Ground Force.

"All the 28 hospitals of the Army Ground Force have been exerting every effort 24/7 to help contain the pandemic since the spread of the novel coronavirus; they will not leave the battle till the end," Brigadier General Kiumars Heidari said on Saturday at the funeral ceremony of a military physician who lost his life due to the pandemic.

The commander urged all Army forces and the Iranian people to remain sensitive and active in the field until the coronavirus is uprooted in the country.

According to Deputy Coordinator of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, the Army has established a base to specifically address the pandemic issue.

More than 12,000 Army personnel are now active in different healthcare sections, including hospitals and laboratories, to contain the pandemic.

## Iran Not to Hesitate To Defend Its Borders

TEHRAN (MNA) – Stating that the complete security of Iran's borders is one of the most important priorities of the Establishment, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian called for an immediate end to the war in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Iranian Parliament Speaker's Special Aide for International Affairs Hossein Amir-Abdollahian stressed the sovereignty of Azerbaijan Republic over the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh, calling for an immediate end to the war.

"UN resolutions emphasize the sovereignty of Azerbaijan Republic over the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh," he said, adding, "Respect for territorial integrity, immediate cessation of hostilities and political negotiation are the key tactics."

"The continuation of the war and the presence of Takfiri terrorists in the Nagorno-Karabakh region is a threat to peace and security," he noted.

"Maintaining complete security of Iran's borders is our important priority and we won't hesitate to defend them," Amir-Abdollahian stressed.

## Iran's Universities Top In Prestigious Rankings

TEHRAN (FNA) - Iranian universities are shining in prestigious ranking lists among other rivals in the world.

Iran ranked top in terms of the number of universities in the region and Islamic countries, based on the prestigious 2021 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings.

The website, with 5 decades of experience as an important analytical source for the global educational indicators, published in its latest report that Iran ranked first in terms of the number of universities in the region.

Based on Academic Ranking of World Universities (Shanghai Ranking) in 2020, Tabriz University ranks among the world top universities in eight engineering fields.

Tabriz University stood at the first rank in mechanic, electronic, automation and control, science and technology of tools, civil, chemical, energy, and water resources fields of engineering.

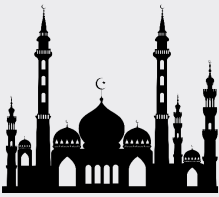
Six Iranian universities including Sharif University of Technology, Amir Kabir University of Technology, Iran University of Science and Technology, Tehran University, Shahid Beheshti University and Shiraz University participated at QS World University Rankings in 2020.

Some 26 Iranian universities were among 1176 top ones based on CWTS Leiden Ranking.

The idea of the world university rankings was first raised in December 2003 by Richard Lambert, who believed that university rankings could help compare the UK universities with other ones in the world.

The most important university ranking systems are QS World University Rankings, Times, Shanghai, Webometrics Ranking of World Universities, Scimago and Leiden.





PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)

■ Evening (Maghreb)

■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)

■ Tomorrow's Sunrise

11:52

18:01

04:39

06:03

41. How then if We brought from each people a witness, and We brought thee as a witness against these people!  
42. On that day those who reject Faith and disobey the apostle will wish that the earth Were made one with them:  
But never will they hide a single fact from Allah.

Surah 4. Women ( 41 - 42 )

# Tehran, Moscow Strive To Restore Long-Term Economic Cooperation

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Efforts of private sectors of Iran and Russia for expanding trade exchanges in the hard time of sanctions still continue by the chambers of commerce of both states.

In a virtual conference on developing Iran and Russia trade in the post-Coronavirus era which was held last week, chambers of commerce of Tehran and Moscow explored ways for developing trade between both states.

Addressing the webinar, Deputy for International Affairs at Tehran Chamber of Commerce Mr. Hesamoddin Hallaj said in Tehran that holding such meetings by the private sector of Iran is aimed at boosting the general knowledge of Iranian business activists about the environment and condition of trade in Russia and this meeting was focused on trade in Samara region in southwestern Russia. He stipulated that through such conferences, state-run bodies of both governments can be aware of shortages and needs related to expansion of bilateral economic relations. Hallaj then pointed that Tehran Chamber of Commerce with huge capacity of economic activists, who account for 45 percent of Gross National Product, is eager to make network through specialized associations.

He noted that small and medium-sized companies mainly shape the members of Tehran Chamber of Commerce which enjoy good international experiences but due to problems resulted by the U.S. sanctions in recent years they have not been able to enjoy advantages for launching normal trade relation with foreign partners and this is the duty of chambers to exert their supportive services to lift these hurdles and to ease international relations.

Hallaj also pointed to the economic cooperation between Tehran and Samara, noting the cooperation is definable in various fields like agro products, auto sector, oil and gas equipment, petrochemicals, industrial productions and educational services.

He said that the strategy of Iran's private sector is restoration of long-term economic cooperation with Samara region, adding that both sides can, for example, have long term cooperation in agro sector and in extraterrestrial cultivation.

Hallaj added that since Samara is located on southwestern Russia, it can be used as a hub for transportation for traders of both countries.

On trade of goods with national currencies, he said Tehran Chamber of Commerce is interested to follow the issue in cooperation with its counterpart in Moscow until getting maximum result.

Elena Denisova, advisor to economy minister of Samara, for her part said in the webinar that Iran is a special trade partner for Samara Province, and said cooperation in fields like food industries, technology, medical, IT, environment, machine manufacturing. Air industries and ship-building, educational plans and tourism are appraisable.

Russia's Trade Representation in Iran, Rustam Ziganshin, for his part, announced the readiness of the office for providing any needed information to those Russian companies which are keen to enter Iran's market, adding that Tehran Chamber of Commerce has recently signed a bilateral MoU with Russia's Exports Center which will be focused more on bilateral cooperation for expanding trade exchanges.

Meanwhile Rustam Ilingin, the director of agency for developing investment in Samara Province, for his part, briefed the participants in the webinar of trade condition in Samara.

## Over 3.5m Tons of Commodities Traded In September on IME

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - At the end of September 2020, different trading floors of the Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) witnessed trading of more than 3,585,664 tons of commodities worth over \$1,560m.

According to the report by the IME's International Affairs and PR, during the last month, the oil and petrochemical trading floor of the IME played host to trading of 1,883,926 MT of commodities worth more than \$606m.

On this trading floor, more than 557,434 MT of bitumen, 364,399 MT of polymer products and 203,688 MT of chemical products, 530,700 MT of VB feed stock, 153,990 MT of lube cut oil, 54,650 MT of sulfur, 7,615 MT of insulation, 300 MT of slaps waxes, 590 MT of argon as well as 10,560 MT of oil products were traded by customers.

The metal and mineral trading floor witnessed trading over 1,675,507 MT of commodities worth more than \$944m.

On this trading floor 1,573,982 MT of steel, 28,615 MT of copper, 600 MT of molybdenum concentrates, 60 MT of precious metals concentrates, 26,900 MT of zinc, 33,850 MT of aluminum, 5,000 MT of iron ore concentrates, 6,500 MT of coke as well as 40 kg of gold bullion were traded by customers.

Furthermore, in agricultural trading floor of the IME more than 2,090 kg of saffron worth over \$869,000 was traded by the customers.

The side market of the IME experienced trading of 3,625 MT of PDA TAR, a total of 300 empty barrels, 18,389 MT of tomato paste, 28 MT of used locomotive engine oil, 786 MT of metal scrap, 200 MT of ferrosilicon, 700 MT of steel scrap, 2,500 MT of phosphate concentrates as well as a commercial real estate in Bandar Abbas.

# Iran's Foreign Trade Exceeds \$30b Over Past Six Months

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's Customs Office has announced that the country's trade has surpassed \$30 billion over the past six months of the Iranian year (started on March 20, 2020).

Head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Mehdi Mirashrafi said that Iran's goods trade has surpassed 62,842 million tons and Iran's exports to China, Iraq, the UAE, Afghanistan, and Turkey stood at \$10.4 billion during the period.

According to Iran's Customs Office, China accounted for over 27.3 percent of Iran's total exports, followed by Iraq, UAE, Afghanistan, and Turkey, with 21.9 percent,

14.2 percent, 8.1 percent, and 5.3 percent.

More than 16 million tons of basic goods worth \$16.7 billion were cleared through Iran's customs office in the past six months, he added. Mirashrafi noted that the top five sources of imports during this period were China with \$4.295 billion, the UAE with \$3.961 billion, Turkey with \$1.814 billion, India with \$1.097 billion, and Germany with \$835 million worth of imports.

Iran Exports \$1.1b Goods To Afghanistan Via Dogharoon in 6 Months



MASHHAD (IRNA)- About \$1.16 billion worth of goods were exported to Afghanistan through Dogharoon Special Economic Zone over the past six months (starting on March 20), IRNA reported on Saturday.

The value of the exported goods has risen up 33% compared to the same period last year, the head of Dogharoon Special Economic Zone told IRNA.

Mohammad Rostami said that the weight of the exported goods has been 719.439 million tons.

Rostami said that 34,981 trucks have taken Afghanistan exports to Iran, which have been worth \$2.575 million and weighed 2,992 million tons.

He added that 50% of the Iranian exports to Afghanistan through Dogharoon go to Herat, which is the second biggest market in the country.

The 30-million-person market of Afghanistan welcomes Iranian goods, he said, adding that construction materials, fresh and dried fruits, and food are among the most goods exported Afghanistan and construction stones, oil seeds, and used batteries are among the most goods exported to Iran by Afghanistan.

Dogharoon border customs office is 100 years old. Rough Most of the goods that go through Dogharoon to Afghanistan are the ones that have originated from Pakistan, Persian Gulf states countries, and sometimes India, and other border customs offices of Iran, including Bandar Abbas and Bandar Lengeh.

## Turkey Revokes Licensee for Iranian Flights

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Days after it was officially announced that Iranian airliners would begin their flights to Turkey, Maqsood Asadi-Samani, secretary of the Association of Iranian Airlines, said that Turkey once again decided to extend suspension of Iranian flights to Turkey due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Asadi-Samani said that as it was expected, Turkish officials decided to suspend flights of Iranian airliners to Turkey due to the spike in the Coronavirus.

He also refuted political doubts over suspension of Iranian flights between both states, adding that before decision made for resumption of the flights, Turkish officials had reiterated that the flights would be suspended if the virus were not curbed.

He added that Turkey has also suspended flights Turkey's flights with Afghanistan and Iraq.

Asadi-Samani noted that currently the problem is just because of the virus and the suspension is valid till the further notice.

He said that currently Qatar Airways continue flights between Iran and Turkey and it has not been suspended yet.

# Iran's Agricultural Exports Rise Up

TEHRAN (IRNA)- Iranian agricultural exports have risen up by 12.2% despite the outbreak of the COVID-19, official with Iranian Customs Administration said on Saturday.

The value of the farming products exported in the first half if the Iranian year (starting on March 20) was \$2.57 billion, said Mehrdad Jamal Orounaqi, deputy head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

He said that 3.706 million tons of farming products were exported.

Jamal Orounaqi added the weight of the exported goods show a 24.4% increase compared to the

same period last year.

Pistachio, tomatoes, tomato paste, pistachio nuts, apples, potatoes, and peaches were on the top of the list of the export, he said.

Pistachio export has been 47,000 tons fetching 304 million dollars, indicating 143% growth in weight and 101% growth in value, he said, adding that tomato paste export has been 104,000 tons (88 million dollars), which show growth of 108% in weight and 48% in value.

Orounaqi said that the target markets of Iran's agricultural products have mostly been Iraq, the UAE, Afghanistan, and China.

## 70% Difference Between MSC Products' Price in Free Market and IME

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Head of Sales and Marketing Department of Mobarakeh Steel Company says the company has reached the exploitation phase for 25 years and it has started offering its products on the Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) since 15 years ago in order that ultimate consumer could reach out for them.

Mr. Tahmoures Javanbakht said that since the foundation of Mobarakeh Steel Company, its experts have visited production plants which are eager to buy form the company and these visits have been taken place regularly, and accordingly, the expertise capacity has been defined for any customer.

He added that according to these visits, apparent consumption of steel in the country is almost 16m tons and the capacity is 33m tons based on the exploitation licenses. He reiterated that but according to the studies of experts of MSC, the real capacity of production units is 13m tons and MSC meets the demands of almost 60 percent of these units in supplying them with steel products.

Javanbakht added that the company has started to offer its products on Iran Mercantile Exchange in order to control the prices and to resolve problems for real steel consumers.

He went on to say that today one can see huge difference between the price of MSC's products on IME and in the free market and the difference is around 70 percent, and the reason is lack of management of demand and supply in the market of steel products. He reiterated that it is necessary to manage the market through demand management s via expertise capacities of MSC ,and other companies should also offer their products on the IME.

Javanbakht further said that direct offering of products to the costumers with L/C (matching) is MSC's suggestion in order to control the market, adding that this should happen through offering some part of products on the bourse based on the discovered price on the bourse and in the frame of matching method.



## U.S. Sanctions Eight Belarus Officials

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The Trump administration has slapped sanctions on eight Belarus officials citing their roles in the August presidential election that many Western governments maintain was fraudulent, and the subsequent crackdown on protesters.

"The Belarusian people's democratic aspirations to choose their own leaders and peacefully exercise their rights have been met with violence and oppression from Belarusian officials," said US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin in a statement on Friday. The Belarus opposition maintains that the August election was rigged by President Alexander Lukashenko who has been in power for 26 years.



## Sudan, Major Rebel Groups to Formalize Peace Deal

JUBA (Reuters) - Sudan's power-sharing government and several rebel groups are due to formalise a peace agreement on Saturday aimed at resolving decades of regional conflicts which left millions displaced and hundreds of thousands dead.

Three major groups signed a preliminary deal in August - two factions from the western region of Darfur and one from the southern region - after months of peace talks hosted by neighbouring South Sudan.

Another powerful rebel group, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North led by Abdelaziz al-Hilu, which had not participated in initial peace negotiations, agreed last month to hold new talks hosted by South Sudan.



## Macron Remarks on Islam Prompting Backlash From Muslims



PARIS (Dispatches) - President Emmanuel Macron has unveiled a plan to defend France's secular values against what he termed as "Islamist radicalism", saying the religion was "in crisis" all over the world, prompting a backlash from Muslim activists.

In a long-awaited address on Friday, Macron insisted "no concessions" would be made in a new drive to push religion out of education and the public sector in France.

"Islam is a religion that is in crisis all over the world today, we are not just seeing this in our country," he said.

He announced that the government would present a bill in December to strengthen a 1905 law that officially separated church and state in France. The measures, Macron said, were aimed at addressing a problem of growing "radicalisation" in France and improving "our ability to live together". "Secularism is the cement of a united France," he insisted, but added that there was no sense in stigmatising all Muslim believers. The law permits people to belong to any faith of their choosing, Macron said, but outward displays of religious affiliation would be banned in schools and the public service.

Wearing the hijab is already banned in French schools and for public servants at their workplace. Yasser Louati, a French Muslim activist, tweeted: "The repression of Muslims has been a threat, now it is a promise. In a one hour speech #Macron buried #laicite, emboldened the far right, anti-Muslim leftists and threatened the lives of Muslim students by calling for drastic limits on home schooling despite a global pandemic."

Rim-Sarah Alaoune, a French academic, tweeted: "President Macron described Islam as 'a religion that is in crisis all over the world today'. I don't even know what to say. This remark is so dumb (sorry it is) that it does not need any further analysis ... I won't hide that I am concerned. No mention of white supremacy even though we are the country that exported the racist and white supremacist theory of the 'great replacement', used by the terrorist who committed the horrific massacre in #Christchurch."

In his speech, Macron also claimed he is seeking to "liberate" Islam in France from foreign influences by improving oversight of mosque financing. There would also be closer scrutiny of schools and associations exclusively serving religious communities.

France is once again evaluating its relationship with its Muslim minority, the largest in Europe. Last month alone saw a French parliamentarian from Macron's La Republique En Marche party stage a walkout over the presence of a hijab-clad student union leader at a parliamentary inquiry.

That incident was preceded a week earlier by another polemic, involving a French journalist who retweeted a young Muslim influencer's post about cooking on a budget with the caption "11 September," in reference to the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York. Macron on Friday was speaking one week after a man attacked two people with a meat cleaver outside the former Paris offices of the Charlie Hebdo satirical weekly, an assault condemned by the government as an act of "Islamist terrorism".

## Trump Supporters Shocked at Diagnosis, Unwavering in Support

WARREN (Reuters) - As Americans digested the news on Friday that President Donald Trump had tested positive for the novel coronavirus, some of his backers expressed surprise that he hadn't been safe from infection and said their support for him was not diminished.

"It was shocking," said Maranda Joseph, 43, of Warren, Ohio, who has 12 Trump flags in her front yard festooned with skeletons and other Halloween decorations. "To see he has it wakes you up a bit. Anyone can get it, even the president."

Trump tweeted early Friday morning that he and his wife, Melania, had tested positive here after a whirlwind campaign week in which he visited seven states here and debated with his Democratic rival in the Nov. 3 election, Joe Biden.

The Republican has played down the risks of the virus and COVID-19 disease that has killed more than 207,000 Americans, drawing criticism for his erratic messaging and recent resumption of campaign rallies where his supporters often are crowded together and don't wear masks.

Officials in Minnesota and New Jersey - two of Trump's stops this week - urged anyone who had attended his events to be tested. Joseph, a homemaker, said she thinks more people should wear masks at future Trump rallies, though she added that she would attend one herself once the president recovers.

"People with compromised immune systems should stay home," she said. Some in Warren expressed skepticism that Trump even has the virus, citing Ohio Governor Mike DeWine's positive test earlier this year before he tested negative later the same day.

"There's so many false positives out there. Has Trump had a second test yet?" asked Sharon Tice, 70, who sells Trump T-shirts and other memorabilia. "But if he does have it, it could influence the way he sees things." In Palm Springs, California, 36-year-old Katie Jones, from San Diego, was confident Trump would beat the virus.

"It's, like, heartbreaking inside, but he's a strong man. He'll get through it," she told Reuters.

The White House said Trump was being moved into a special suite at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, for the next few days as a precautionary measure.



## EU Hits 40 Belarus Officials With Sanctions, Sparing Lukashenko

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - The European Union imposed sanctions on Belarus' interior minister and the head of its electoral commission but spared President Alexander Lukashenko, the bloc said in its Official Journal on Friday.

Publishing the names of the 40 individuals that EU leaders agreed to sanction early on Friday in response to an Aug. 9 election that the West says was rigged, the EU list included commanders, security officials and prison directors.

Lukashenko is not on the EU's list, however. Despite pressure from the EU's Baltic states, diplomats said Brussels was sticking to its policy of punishing powerbrokers as a last resort, so as to push for new elections.

Interior Minister Yuri Karaev and his deputy are the most senior officials to be targeted, which was first reported by Reuters on Sept. 7. The draft list faced a series of delays as the EU's decision-making became entangled in internal conflicts.

EU leaders broke the impasse following a summit dinner in the small hours of Friday in Brussels.

The EU's Belarus sanctions aim to support pro-democracy protests in Minsk against Lukashenko, whom opponents say has illegally prolonged his 26-year rule through a fraudulent vote.

The EU travel bans and asset freezes also include top security officials such as Alexander Valerievich Bykov, commander of rapid response forces and whom the EU accuses of "arbitrary arrests and ill-treatment, including torture, of peaceful demonstrators."

Electoral commission chairwoman Lidia Mikhailovna Yermoshina is also now under sanctions, accused of intimidating voters and distorting the vote result.

Belarus earlier announced retaliatory sanctions against the EU.

## 15 Palestinians Hurt in Clashes With Israel Troops

GAZA (Dispatches) - Israeli troops in the West Bank wounded 15 Palestinians with rubber bullets Friday in clashes marking 20 years since the start of the second intifada, the Palestinian Red Crescent said.

The incident took place in the village of Kfar Qaddum, near Nablus in the north of the occupied territory, it said, adding that four of the injured were taken to hospital and the others treated on the spot.

The Red Crescent told AFP that it had also aided "dozens" of protesters who inhaled tear gas fired by Israeli forces.

The Israeli army said it had no knowledge of clashes in the village.

Bearing Palestinian flags, a few hundred

demonstrators gathered there in the early afternoon, an AFP journalist at the scene said.

Protests against more than five decades of Israeli occupation are a regular weekly occurrence in the West Bank.

Friday's demonstrators also marked the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising which followed late Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon's contentious visit to the Al-Aqsa mosque compound on September 28, 2000.

The second intifada ended in February 2005, after the deaths of some 4,700 people, nearly 80 percent of them Palestinians.

Palestinian officials, including the vice-chairman of the Fatah party Mahmoud al-Alul, participated in Friday's march.



## Mexico Deploys Military to Block Migrant Caravan

MEXICO CITY (Dispatches)

- Mexico on Friday ordered the military to deploy along its southern border to block a migrant caravan that President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador suggested was linked to the U.S. election.

Thousands of mostly Honduran migrants were traveling through Guatemala, heading for the United States via Mexico, just weeks before a tense US presidential vote in which immigration is a key issue.

"It seems very strange to us. It's very strange that this caravan leaves on the eve of the election in the United States," Lopez Obrador told reporters.

"It has to do with the election in the United States. I don't have all the elements but I think there are indications that it was put together for this purpose," he added.

The migrants, mostly young men, surged across the border from Honduras into Guatemala on Thursday despite restrictions linked to the coronavirus pandemic. Many were not wearing masks to protect against the spread of infection.

Some returned to their country after the Guatemalan government ordered them to be detained and deported. Mexico will deploy hundreds of military and immigration personnel to its border to prevent the caravan entering the country, a senior government official said.

"They're not going to cross," Francisco Garduno, the head of the Mexican migration authority, told reporters.

Garduno said the migrants must "respect the immigration law." Lopez Obrador, however, said that Mexico wanted to avoid a confrontation with the caravan. In recent years, thousands of Central American migrants traveling in large groups have crossed into Mexico, with the aim of reaching the US border.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who is seeking a second term in the November 3 election, has threatened Mexico with steep tariffs if it does not do more to stop a surge of undocumented migrants. Lopez Obrador has deployed some 26,000 troops to the country's borders in response.







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# Euro Zone Inflation Will Remain Negative This Year

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Euro zone inflation will remain negative for the rest of the year, European Central Bank Vice President Luis de Guindos said on Friday, just after fresh data showed price growth hitting a more than four year low.

"Inflation will be negative for the rest of the year ... for the coming year, we hope that it will recover," de Guindos said in a speech.

His comments could be seen as a nuanced change in his views as he earlier predicted that inflation would be negative or very close to zero for the rest of the year.



# U.S. Job Growth Slows in September

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. job growth slowed more than expected in September and the ranks of the permanently unemployed swelled, underscoring an urgent need for additional fiscal stimulus as the COVID-19 pandemic drags on and threatens the economy's recovery.

The Labor Department's closely watched employment report on Friday was the last before the fiercely contested Nov. 3 presidential election for which the economic scarring from the pandemic has been a top issue.

Republican President Donald Trump, who said on Friday he had tested positive for coronavirus, is likely to tout the fifth straight month of job gains and lower unemployment as a sign of progress for an economy that plunged into recession in February.

But September's employment gains were the smallest since the jobs recovery started in May and left the labor market a long way from recouping the 22.2 million jobs lost in March and April, indicating slower growth heading into the fourth quarter.

Former Vice President Joe Biden, the Democratic Party nominee, blames the economic turmoil on the White House's handling of the pandemic, which has killed more than 200,000 people and infected over 7 million in the nation.

Nonfarm payrolls increased by 661,000 jobs last month after advancing 1.489 million in August. Every sector added jobs with the exception of government, which shed 216,000 positions because of the departure of temporary workers hired for the Census and layoffs at state and local government education departments as many school districts shift to online learning.

Employment in the leisure and hospitality sector increased by 318,000, accounting for nearly half of the increase in nonfarm employment in September. Payrolls are 10.7 million below their pre-pandemic level. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast 850,000 jobs were created in September. Employment growth peaked in June when payrolls jumped by a record 4.781 million jobs.

The unemployment rate fell to 7.9% in September from 8.4% in August. As in the previous months, the jobless rate was biased down by people misclassifying themselves as being "employed but absent from work."

Without this error, the government estimated that the unemployment rate would have been about 8.3% in September.

The drop in the unemployment rate last month reflected people leaving the labor force. There were 3.8 million people who had lost their employment for good, up 345,000 from August.

Stock on Wall Street opened lower. The dollar rose against a basket of currencies. U.S. Treasury prices were higher.

A further slowdown in the labor market is likely. The Democratic-controlled House of Representatives on Thursday approved a \$2.2 trillion rescue package. Objections from top Republicans are likely to doom the plan in the Senate.

New coronavirus cases are rising, with a surge expected in the fall, which could lead to some restrictions being imposed on businesses in the services sector. Political uncertainty is increasing and could extend beyond the election, and make businesses cautious about hiring.

Several months after operations resumed, demand has remained poor, especially in the services sector, leading some businesses to permanently shut down or lay off more workers.

# EU Trade Chief Sees Easier U.S. Ties With Biden Than Trump

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - The European Union's trade relations with the United States would likely be easier if Democratic challenger Joe Biden won November's U.S. election rather than President Donald Trump, European Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis said on Friday.

The EU still faces U.S. tariffs on its steel and aluminium and is in dispute with Washington over aircraft subsidies and EU plans to tax digital services companies. The two sides also have differing view on the value of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Asked how Brussels was preparing for the U.S. election on Nov. 3, Dombrovskis told EU lawmakers the bloc wanted strong transatlantic ties and would work with Washington whatever the outcome.

"Probably under a new administration it would be easier because we know that the Trump administration is unfortunately supporting this unilateral action in areas of trade which is creating lots of tensions and lots of problems," he said.

"But in any case we will need to work closely and deliver positive results where we can," he continued.

On aircraft subsidies, Dombrovskis said that, in the absence of an agreement, the EU would impose tariffs related to Boeing once the WTO decides on the size of damages.

Dombrovskis was speaking at a hearing at the European Parliament, which needs to approve his new role as the commissioner in charge of trade.



# India's Contracting Economy Rebooting From Coronavirus Blow

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - Millions of distressed Indian manufacturers and traders are counting on the eagerly-awaited October-December festive season to rescue them from their coronavirus catastrophe.

But spending may be the last thing on the minds of many Indians who have lost their jobs or businesses in the pandemic downturn, and pressure is building for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to do more to regain the momentum of growth that, at 8.2% in 2016-17, made India one of the fastest growing major economies.

The Hindu Dussehra, Diwali and Durga Puja celebrations that extend through the Christmas and New Year holidays are an occasion to splurge on big ticket items like gold, homes and cars as well as clothing, smartphones and electronics.

This year will likely lack the customary pomp and show, given the need for masks and social distancing with the pandemic still raging and no vaccine yet available.

The government began easing a stringent two-month-long lockdown in June, but business still is only a quarter to a fifth of usual and customers are scarce, said Praveen Khandelwal, general secretary of the Confederation of All India Traders.

In August, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced \$1.46 trillion in infrastructure projects to boost the sagging economy and allocated \$2 billion



to upgrading the country's overwhelmed health system.

That followed a 1.7 trillion rupees (\$22 billion) economic stimulus package announced in March, including delivering rations of grain and lentils for 800 million people, some 60% of the world's second-most populous country.

Other subsidies included a meager cash grant of 6,000 rupees (\$80) a year each for 86 million poor farmers and free cooking gas cylinders for 83 million poor women until the end of September.

The economy still contracted an unprecedented 24% in the April-June quarter, with another downturn forecast for July-September.

The government needs to do more, said Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee, such as direct cash transfers for the poor and others severely affected by the prolonged lockdown. India's pandemic assistance has amounted to only about 1% of its GDP, he said, compared with the U.S.'s package in March of about 10% of its GDP.

The crisis is far from over: India's coronavirus caseload jumped from 1 million in mid-July to 6.3 million in less than three months and the number of fatalities is approaching 100,000. Modi's administration is hard strapped to push out more stimulus, however, given the financial demands of dealing with the pandemic on top of military tensions with China along a disputed border in the mountainous Ladakh region, where both sides have amassed tens of thousands of troops.

# Universal Social Protection Floors, Our Joint Responsibility

*By Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights; Guy Ryder, Director-General, International Labour Organization*

Governments have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and the social and economic disruption it has wrought with a range of ad-hoc schemes, including paid furloughs, cash transfers and family support. While commendable, these responses share two major limitations.

First, many are temporary, short-term fixes, covering lockdowns or a notional period until economic recovery kicks in. They do nothing to change the underlying circumstances that left many millions of people vulnerable, or to put them in better standing to face future crises.

Secondly, the measures simply do not address the existential threats that face many of the world's worst-hit communities. Although worldwide government spending on the COVID-19 response is more than USD 11 trillion, by far the largest responses have come from rich countries. For example, the European Union recently adopted a Euro 750 billion recovery plan (equivalent to 6 per cent of its GDP) while Japan's economic recovery plan equates to 22 per cent of its GDP (or USD 1.1 trillion). But among low-income developing countries the fiscal response has averaged 1.2 per cent of GDP.

Developing countries, particularly low-income countries, have limited domestic resources, made worse by falls in some export commodity prices. They are simply unable to put in place the comprehensive crisis response measures their people need, let alone the longer-term social protection systems that would create more fundamental resilience.

Even before COVID-19, 69 per cent of the global population was either not covered, or only partially covered, by social security. Almost two-thirds of the world's children had no social protection coverage, only 22 per cent of unemployed persons received unemployment cash benefits, and just

28 per cent of persons with severe disabilities received disability cash benefits.

Global crises like this pandemic observe no geographical or political borders. Against them we are only as strong as the weakest among us. If we are to build greater resilience and a more effective ability to recover, we need to support all countries in creating robust social protection floors. The current piecemeal approach is like starting to recruit firefighters after a blaze has broken out, and then directing them to save only a few rooms in the burning building.

Clearly, this doesn't work. In these circumstances, international solidarity is essential, and in everyone's interest.

Social protection floors for all are affordable. The financing gap for all developing countries -- the difference between what these countries already invest in social protection and what a full social protection floor (including health) would cost -- is about USD 1,191 billion in the current year, including the impact of COVID-19. But the gap for the low-income countries is only some USD 78 billion, a negligible amount compared to the GDP of the industrialized countries. Yet the total official development assistance for social protection amounts to only 0.0047 per cent of the gross national income of donor countries.

International human rights law recognizes that wealthy States have a duty to help fulfill social rights in countries with more limited resources, and a number of steps have already been taken to convert this commitment into concrete assistance. In 2011 an expert advisory group recommended donors provide predictable, multi-year financing to strengthen social protection in developing countries. In 2012, two independent UN human rights experts proposed a Global Fund for Social Protection to help low-income countries create social protection floors for their people.

The same year the ILO's membership -- governments, workers and employers from 185 countries -- backed the idea of comprehensive social protection with a unanimously-adopted pledge to "establish and maintain... social protection floors as a fundamental element of their national social security systems".

We regularly hear pledges that we must, and will, 'build back better' from the current crisis. We can only do this if everybody has a minimum level of social protection, including the poorest and most marginalized.

Countries must deploy the maximum resources available to make social protection a reality for all. This may require more effective approaches to taxation and tackling corruption. Longer term, this redistribution of assets will help to curb inequality and discrimination and support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's promise to "leave no one behind".

This crisis offers us many lessons. One is that building back better requires international solidarity and better social protection for all, not just those who can already afford it. If we ignore this message, we risk condemning future generations to endure once more the immense suffering we see today. That, surely, is an intolerable prospect.



De Schutter



Ryder



Bachelet



## Iranian “Ojaq” Wins at Religion Today Film Festival

TEHRAN (MNA) – Ali Bolandnazarzar, the Iranian filmmaker won an award for his documentary “Ojaq” at Religion Today Film Festival in Italy.

The Iranian film “Ojaq” won an award for the best short documentary at the 23rd edition of Religion Today Film Festival in Italy.

Earlier, “Ojaq” was nominated for the grand prize of the 23rd edition of this Italian film festival.

“Ojaq” is about the Qashqai Clan, their folk customs, as well as the status and role of the oven (Ojaq in Persian) among the people of the tribe, Ali Bolandnazar, the director of the film told a reporter in Mehr News Agency.



## Italy Vows to Use EU Money to Finally Alter Its Economic Destiny

ROME (Dispatches) - European aid money will help lift Italy’s economy out of a chronic underperformance if it’s targeted properly, according to the country’s minister in charge of industrial policy.

“I am convinced that Recovery Fund money will allow Italy to finally make the leap,” Economic Development Minister Stefano Patuanelli said in an interview in Rome Thursday. Italy will be the biggest beneficiary of the aid, and could receive up to 209 billion euros (\$246 billion) in grants and loans.

But Patuanelli acknowledged the challenge of directing the money properly. Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte’s government will have to make tough political decisions, even at the expense of angering some supporters, so that it helps the post-coronavirus reconstruction and gives a much needed boost to long-term growth prospects.

“We need to have the strength to avoid distributing it in bits and pieces and instead concentrate it where it’s most effective to boost growth,” Patuanelli said. “We need credible projects and rapid execution to repair fractures in our productive system.”

Italy’s economic growth has long lagged behind the euro region

The country has approved 100 billion euros in stimulus so far, which is set to boost its debt load to almost 160% of output. The economy will contract 9% this year and bounce back 6% next year, according to government forecasts. Patuanelli said the only way out of the crisis is growth, and his ministry is working on identifying projects and sectors to submit to the EU. Among its targets are infrastructure, digitalization and green transition.

“The money shouldn’t be spent, it should be invested,” he said.



## Confidence in Economy in Brazil Back To Pre-Pandemic Levels



RIO DE JANEIRO (Xinhua) -- Brazilian business-sector confidence in the economy rose 3 points in September to pre-pandemic levels, according to a report released on Thursday.

The Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV), a leading economic think tank, said the Business Confidence Index (ICE) reached 97.5 points in September, 1.5 units higher than in February, before the arrival of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

According to the FGV, the index consolidates increases in confidence in four sectors of the Brazilian economy: industry, services, trade and construction.

Meanwhile, the Current Business Situation Index (ISA) rose 4.4 units to 93 points, surpassing the 92.5 points it registered in February, and the Expectations Index (IE) rose 4.9 units to 101 points, recovering 97 percent of what it lost in March and April, according to the report.

Brazilian business owners showed a certain neutrality (neither optimism nor pessimism) on the evolution of business in the coming months, except in the industrial sector, where there was optimism, the report added.

The industrial sector showed the highest growth in optimism in September. Trade and construction remained neutral, while the services sector showed a slower recovery, due to a poor perception of the current situation.

Increase in business confidence coincides with the recovery of the country’s economic indicators, which have rebounded from the strong negative impact of the pandemic.

In recent months, Brazil’s economy has shown signs of recovery, though that will not prevent gross domestic product (GDP) from plunging 5.04 percent this year, according to the latest forecast from the financial market.

## City of London Will Have Less Fluid Trade With EU

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - The flow of financial services between the European Union and Britain will be less fluid from January whatever happens in talks on a future free trade deal, the EU’s financial services chief designate said on Friday.

Britain left the EU last January and unfettered access to the single market under transition arrangements ends on Dec. 31.

Brussels and London are in talks on a free trade agreement, though financial services are being handled separately.

“Under all circumstances, deal or no deal, trading in financial services will be different and less fluid as of the first of January next year,” Mairead McGuinness told the European Parliament.

If confirmed by the parliament, McGuinness will lead the European Commission’s work that will decide how much EU access the City of London will have from January.

“We need to avoid being overly dependent on a third country for key financial services,” she said in a confirmation hearing on her appointment as financial services commissioner.

McGuinness said the EU currently does not have sufficient knowledge to decide on market access for



UK financial services beyond the 18 months granted for UK clearing houses from January.

She said the EU has asked Britain for “clear answers” on its “vision” for its financial sector to gauge how far it wants to diverge from EU rules, and therefore potentially no longer be “equivalent” to the bloc’s standards - a condition for EU access.

“It’s extremely difficult to grant equivalence without knowledge,” she said.

“Is it right, financially prudent to rely on a third country for the location of vital services? In my view we need to take a precautionary approach to build up our own structures.”

McGuinness, a veteran Irish member of the European Parliament, also commented on the collapse of German payments company Wirecard after a 1.9 billion euro (\$2.23 billion) hole in its balance sheet.

The Wirecard collapse has prompted the European Commission to revisit the question of more common supervision in markets, which EU states had pushed back in the past, fearful of losing more regulatory sovereignty.

“The Wirecard scandal is a shocking tale of fraud and failure of supervision,” McGuinness said.

“We need to take a long hard look at what went wrong there and learn the lesson... It’s such an enormous issue.”

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“We need to avoid being overly dependent on a third country for key financial services,” she said in a confirmation hearing on her appointment as financial services commissioner.

McGuinness said the EU currently does not have sufficient knowledge to decide on market access for UK financial services beyond the 18 months granted for UK clearing houses from January.

She said the EU has asked Britain for “clear answers” on its “vision” for its financial sector to gauge how far it wants to diverge from EU rules, and therefore potentially no longer be “equivalent” to the bloc’s standards - a condition for EU access.

“It’s extremely difficult to grant equivalence without knowledge,” she said.

“Is it right, financially prudent to rely on a third country for the location of vital services? In my view we need to take a precautionary approach to build up our own structures.”

McGuinness, a veteran Irish member of the European Parliament, also commented on the collapse of German payments company Wirecard after a 1.9 billion euro (\$2.23 billion) hole in its balance sheet.

The Wirecard collapse has prompted the European Commission to revisit the question of more common supervision in markets, which EU states had pushed back in the past, fearful of losing more regulatory sovereignty.

“The Wirecard scandal is a shocking tale of fraud and failure of supervision,” McGuinness said.

“We need to take a long hard look at what went wrong there and learn the lesson... It’s such an enormous issue.”

## Japan’s Jobs Market Worsens in August

TOKYO (Reuters) - Japan’s unemployment rate rose in August to its highest in over three years and job availability fell to a more than six-year low, government data showed on Friday, indicating damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic persisted through the month.

The figures come after new Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga pledged to protect jobs, keep companies in business and help the economy recover from the impact of measures taken to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus. They also dull any optimism brought by recent data such as factory output and business sentiment which offered signs of economic recovery.

“The government’s special employment subsidy to support firms hit by the coronavirus has helped to rein in the jobless rate, which could have risen much higher,” said Atsushi Takeda, chief economist at Itochu Research Institute.

“People have started to seek jobs but the labor market is not strong enough to absorb them. The pace of recovery in the jobs market is likely to slow and the unemployment rate could rise further.”

Japan’s seasonally adjusted jobless rate rose to 3.0% in August, the highest since May 2017, labor ministry data showed. The result met analysts’ median forecast of 3.0%. The data showed about 2.06 million people lost their jobs in August, 490,000 more than in the same month a year earlier, and marking the seventh consecutive month of increase.

Compared with the previous month, however, the number of employed workers rose by 110,000 people in seasonally adjusted terms - the fourth straight month of gain. The jobs-to-applicants ratio fell to 1.04, matching a level last seen in January 2014. It compared with 1.08 in July, and a median forecast of 1.05.

Worsening conditions in the jobs market is likely to add pressure to the government to offer further support for small and mid-sized firms to help prevent further job losses. The economy logged its worst post-war contraction in the second quarter of the year as the coronavirus outbreak jolted both external and domestic demand.

### Int’l Community...

FROM PAGE 1

Zarif added that the Tel Aviv regime, “which has aggression in its very DNA”, has deceived the world about its secret development of nuclear armament for the past six decades and that it is high time the global community pressures the occupying entity to “submit to the most intrusive inspection regime that law-abiding members of the NPT observe.”

“We also call on the General Assembly to declare as a binding norm of international law that a nuclear war cannot be won—and must never be fought. This should be followed by a long-overdue, concrete program for time-bound nuclear disarmament and provision of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon states in the interim,” he said.

Iran’s foreign minister further said that figures revealed that during the last year, \$72.9 billion had been spent on developing nuclear armaments across the world - “half of it by the US alone”- meaning that the colossal sum of money is more than the Gross domestic product (GDP) of most countries. “Just imagine if the billions wasted on instruments of global annihilation were allocated to help fund the fight against COVID-19,” Zarif concluded, stressing, “Enough is enough.”

Israel is not a signatory to the NPT and has refused to either confirm or deny the existence of nuclear weapons in its arsenal. The regime has been invariably blaming Tehran’s peaceful nuclear energy program for “diversion” toward military purposes to supposedly rationalize the ceaseless fortification of its military with Washington’s help.

This is while Tehran is an NPT signatory that roundly rejects either development or possession of nuclear arms on religious and humanitarian grounds.

### Iran Military...

FROM PAGE 1

In recent years, Iran has made major breakthroughs in its defense sector and attained self-sufficiency in producing important military equipment and hardware. Iran has also conducted major military drills to enhance the defense capabilities of its Armed Forces and to test modern military tactics and state-of-the-art army equipment. The Islamic Republic maintains that its military might poses no threat to other countries, stating that its defense doctrine is merely based on deterrence.

### Iranians Outraged...

FROM PAGE 1

Alkasir says his goal celebration, which the AFC considers to be “racist”, is in memory of his nephew who has small eyes.

Some Iranian football fans believe the decision has been taken under the influence of Saudi lobby groups, as Alkasir was the Iranian side’s top goal scorer and many had pinned their hopes on him for the Saturday match against Al-Nassr. In a statement, Persepolis club slammed the AFC for taking the “hasty” decision without “careful consideration”.

“It was a very illogical and unfair decision to ban Alkasir a few hours before the semi-final match,” the statement said. Persepolis says it has provided the AFC with the explanation one day before the announcement of the ban, but to no avail. It said it will continue to pursue the issue and appeal the decision, but it won’t influence the team’s resolve to defeat the Saudi rival.

## UAE Ranks First in Arab Region in IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking

DUBAI (WAM) -- The UAE ranked first in the Arab region and one of the best in the world in the “World Digital Competitiveness Ranking 2020” issued by the IMD World Competitiveness Centre in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The UAE, which ranked 14th globally, ahead of countries such as Australia, China, Germany, France, Japan and Belgium, maintained its leadership in the Arab region in all categories of the rankings, most notably in the “Technology” factor where it ranks fourth globally, as well as in “Future readiness” where it ranks 11th globally, and “Knowledge” where it advanced four places.

Now in its fourth year, the IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking measures the capacity and readiness of 63 economies through three key factors (Knowledge, Technology and Future readiness), nine sub-factors and 52 criteria to adopt and explore digital technologies as a key driver for economic transformation in business, government and wider society. It uses an array of data to understand how 63 economies employ digital technologies.

Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, UAE Minister of Economy, said, “The fact that the UAE ranked first globally in the ‘Public-Private Partnerships’ confirms the strong belief of its government in the importance of the partnership between the public and private sectors, upon the directives of the country’s leadership to promote the role of the private sector, as one of the key cornerstones of the national economy.”



## Cavani Left Out of Uruguay Squad for World Cup Qualifiers

MONTEVIDEO (AFP) - Former Paris Saint-Germain striker Edinson Cavani has been dropped from the Uruguay squad named Friday for the upcoming World Cup qualifiers against Chile and Ecuador.

The 33-year-old, who scored a record 200 goals for PSG, is without a club after his contract with the French champions ended in June.

Uruguay's assistant coach Mario Rebollo said Friday there were concerns about Cavani's fitness as he had not played for several months.

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## Leicester Sign Promising French Defender

LONDON (AFP) - Leicester signed promising French defender Wesley Fofana from St Etienne on Friday in a deal worth a reported £32 million (\$41 million).

Fofana agreed a five-year contract with Leicester after the Premier League club ended their interest in Burnley centre-back James Tarkowski.

The 19-year-old will arrive at the King Power Stadium subject to international clearance.

8 IRAN NEWS

SPORTS

SUNDAY OCTOBER 4, 2020

# Thiem, Svitolina, Nadal Into French Open Last 16

PARIS (AFP) - U.S. Open winner Dominic Thiem swept into the last 16 at Roland Garros on Friday along with women's third seed Elina Svitolina while claycourt master Rafael Nadal powered his way into the fourth round of his beloved French Open with a merciless 6-1 6-4 6-0 demolition of Italian Stefano Travaglia on Friday.

The second seed, looking to extend his record to 13 titles at Roland Garros and hoping to match Roger Federer's record of 20 men's Grand Slam singles titles, will next meet American Sebastian Korda. Nadal encountered little resistance on court Philippe Chatrier, hitting 28 winners and saying stars started to align in Paris.

"The scoreline is because I did a lot of good things, I went to the net more often, I was more aggressive," the 34-year-old said. Meanwhile Thiem broke down early resistance from Norway's Casper Ruud to secure an impressive 6-4, 6-3, 6-1 victory and set up a possible showdown with 2015 French Open winner Stan Wawrinka.

"I'm very happy. It was a great match and I didn't do any mistakes," said Thiem, the runner-up to Nadal the past two years.

"The conditions are very nice to play in under the roof - no wind and the court is perfect."

Wawrinka, the 16th seed, goes up against the lone Frenchman remaining in the draw, Hugo Gaston, the world number 239. Two-time quarter-finalist Svitolina ensured she will stick around for the second week in Paris with a 6-4, 7-5 win over Russia's Ekaterina Alexandrova, the 27th seed.

Ukrainian Svitolina is full of confidence after capturing her 15th career WTA at Strasbourg last weekend.

"It's always really nice to have another chance to go deep in the tournament," said Svitolina. "It's a little bit different without the crowd, so you start to treasure every match and every Grand Slam you play."



Polish teenager Iga Swiatek dismissed former Wimbledon finalist Eugenie Bouchard 6-3, 6-2 to seal a return to the last 16, matching her best result at a Grand Slam.

Top seed Simona Halep extracted brutal revenge on American teenager Amanda Anisimova with a 6-0 6-1 victory to move ominously into the fourth round. Anisimova caused a huge upset last year when she comfortably beat Romanian Halep, then the defending champion, in the quarter-finals, but could not reproduce that form as she received a 54-minute claycourt lesson.

Halep was in typically miserly mood on Court Philippe Chatrier, making only seven unforced errors and waiting for the 19-year-old Anisimova to make mistakes, of which she made 32. It took her only 23 minutes to win the opening set in which she made every single service return.

The 29th seeded Anisimova, who had dropped only four games in her first two matches, briefly threatened a revival at the start of the second set but Halep raced away to victory. "I learned so many things from last year," Halep told Eurosport. "So I just wanted to show myself that I was able to win against her. Really happy the way I played."

"Even if the ball was really heavy I played very aggressive. I think last year I stood too far back on the return but today I did well and I think the plan was great for today."

Halep, who decided against travelling to the U.S. Open so that she could train on clay, will face another rising star in the next round when she plays Poland's Iga Swiatek in a repeat of their fourth-round clash last year in which Halep dropped only one game.

## Celtic Face AC Milan In Europa League

PARIS (Dispatches) - Celtic will come up against Zlatan Ibrahimovic and AC Milan in a tough Europa League group while Rangers will face another former European Cup winner in Benfica and Friday's draw also placed Arsenal in the same section as the Irish champions Dundalk.

Celtic were in the first pot of seeds for the draw after scraping past Bosnian side Sarajevo away in the play-offs on Thursday, but they could scarcely have asked for a tougher draw than that handed to them in Group H.

As well as Milan, Neil Lennon's side will take on Czech Cup winners Sparta Prague and French club Lille, who qualified automatically for the group stage after finishing fourth in Ligue 1.

Milan, the seven-time European champions, qualified by winning 9-8 on penalties away to Rio Ave in Portugal on Thursday after being rescued by a Hakan Calhanoglu spot-kick right at the end of extra time.

The Scottish champions and Milan last met in the Champions League group stage in 2013/14. They also faced off several times in that competition in the previous decade including in 2006/07, when the Italians narrowly won their last-16 tie en route to winning the trophy.

Rangers' reward for ousting Turkish giants Galatasaray in the play-offs and qualifying for the group stage for the third season running was a spot in Group D with Benfica, Standard Liege of Belgium and Lech Poznan of Poland.

Steven Gerrard's side may fancy their chances of reaching the knockout phase again, after losing to Bayer Leverkusen in the last 16 last season. There were fewer glamour ties for England's representatives but all will be expected to progress.

Arsenal will play three teams who dropped out of the Champions League qualifiers in Rapid Vienna, Norwegian champions Molde, and Dundalk of Ireland. It is Dundalk's second appearance in the group stage in five seasons and the Arsenal clash in particular will be a glamour tie for them.

They will hope their fans can attend the match, with UEFA announcing on Thursday that they will allow spectators back at a maximum of 30 percent of capacity.



# Mourinho Takes Swipe at "Gary" Southgate

LONDON (Dispatches) - Tottenham boss Jose Mourinho took a swipe at Gareth Southgate as he called the England manager 'Gary' and questioned his plans for Harry Kane.

Mourinho does not think Tottenham striker Kane should be involved in all three of England's forthcoming friendly against Wales and Nations League fixtures with Belgium and Denmark.

After a gruelling run of fixtures for Tottenham, which continued with a 7-2 win over Maccabi Haifa in the Europa League on Thursday, Mourinho fears Kane could be in danger of burnout.

Southgate recently said Mourinho must look after Kane in April and May with the European Championships around the corner.

With tongue in cheek, Southgate also pointed out that Mourinho had only namechecked England assistant coach Steve Holland as a friend in his comments.

Kane showed why both men want him to play every minute of every game with a hat-trick and an assist in the romp over Maccabi Haifa which booked Tottenham's place in the group stages.

But Mourinho used his interviews after the game to get the final word in, although he made a slip by calling the England boss 'Gary'.

"What I can promise to my friend Steve Holland and for Gary (sic) not to be jealous. For my friend Gary, I can promise that until the end of the season I don't play Harry Kane one minute of any friendly match," Mourinho said.

"His match was a fundamental match for us. A match that means a few million pounds and means that we are in a group phase of a competition that we have ambitions."

## Guardiola Says Bielsa a Better Coach Than Him

LONDON (Dispatches) - Pep Guardiola said on Friday he believes he is still not a match for Marcelo Bielsa as a coach despite the vast difference between the number of trophies the pair have won in their distinguished careers.

Guardiola faces Bielsa, who he credits as one of his inspirations, for the first time since 2012 when Manchester City visit Leeds in the Premier League.

The Catalan has won 24 major trophies in spells at Barcelona, Bayern Munich and City. By contrast, Bielsa has won just three league titles in his native Argentina as well as leading Leeds back to the top-flight after a 16-year absence.

"I feel the managers should not be judged on how many titles or prizes you won because I feel far away from his knowledge as a manager," said Guardiola.

"My teams won more titles than him but in terms of his knowledge of the game and many things he is far away."

Leeds have adapted well to life back in the Premier League, pushing champions Liverpool all the way in a 4-3 defeat on the opening weekend of the season before beating Fulham and Sheffield United.

And Guardiola believes Bielsa's presence is a "gift" for English football.

"I think he is the person I admire the most in world football as a manager and as a person," Guardiola said.

"I think he is the most authentic manager, in terms of how he conducts his teams. It's unique, nobody can imitate him, it's impossible. "It is a gift to have him here in the Premier League. His teams are always a joy to watch. I think it is a good news for England."



## Klopp Voices Fears Over Internationals As Virus Spikes

LONDON (Dispatches) - Liverpool coach Jurgen Klopp said on Friday he is concerned about the number of his players travelling across the world to represent their national teams in the coming weeks as coronavirus infections continue to soar.

The Reds' Brazilian trio of Alisson Becker, Fabinho and Roberto Firmino have been called up for the Seleccion's first two World Cup qualifiers this month -- at home to Bolivia and away to Peru.

A host of other players will disperse across Europe for Euro 2020 qualifiers, Nations League fixtures and friendlies. "I am slightly concerned because it is difficult to get in contact with all FAs (football associations) all over the world," said Klopp on Friday.

"I understand the demands on all FAs, UEFA, FIFA, I know how difficult the situation is for everybody. But it is just not exactly perfect the information we get from some FAs."

Klopp also turned on the Premier League and TV broadcasters for a schedule that could see many of his players return on Friday, October 16, before facing Everton a day later. No date or kick-off time has yet been set for the Merseyside derby.

"The Premier League and TV broadcasters give us a challenge on top because they just don't care if our players play on (Tuesday) night in Peru. They still think it is a good idea to play on Saturday pretty early," added Klopp. "In these moments as a club we are completely alone. You have to make sure you bring the players home in the quickest and the most safe (way) because nobody helps you. It's not like the FA says 'we pay the private plane'."

"Then they arrive on Friday, then we have to make the test and see if we get the result before the Saturday, so it is really tricky. We try everything to make it as safe as possible, but from time to time a little bit more help would not be bad."

