

Iran Has Temporarily Released French-Iranian Academic Fariba Adelkhah, Who Has Been in Jail After Being Convicted of Security Breaches, Her Lawyer Said On Twitter on Saturday

IRAN NEWS

Public Relations of Iran National Broadcasting (IRIB) Refuted Allegations That the Head of IRIB Mr. Abdolali Ali Asker Will Be Replaced, Reiterating That He Will Be At His Job Till 021 Presidential Election

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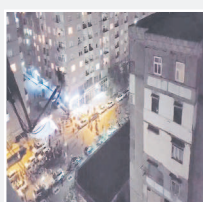


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Trump Administration Set Fire to Negotiating Room: Iran's Zarif

TEHRAN (IFP)- Iran's foreign minister says U.S. President Donald Trump has set fire to the negotiating room and is now committing economic terrorism against the Iranian nation.

In an interview with the Iranian daily Kar Va Kargar, Mohammad Javad Zarif has weighed in on a whole range of issues. The highlights of Zarif's comments follow.

On the U.S. pullout of the JCPOA, Zarif said: The JCPOA (the abbreviation which refers to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) was signed in a climate of mistrust. The reason why the JCPOA has numerous provisions with various details and why general statements are completely avoided is the existence of this very mistrust between the two sides. ... Over the past three and a half years, there has been no important international agreement that Mr. Trump has not withdrawn from, without any good reason and logic, including his pullout from the Paris Climate Agreement, UNESCO, NAFTA, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and the JCPOA.

Even after the recent global scandal of the U.S. failure to take the JCPOA to the UN Security Council, some believed Trump would withdraw from the UN and the Security Council, too.

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CBI Governor Blames Sanctions for Devaluation of National Currency



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Governor of Iran Central Bank of Iran Abdolnaser Hemmati yesterday blamed the sanctions for recent devaluation of the national currency against the foreign currencies in the forex market.

On the sidelines of a ceremony for honoring those exporters who have repatriated their earned forex into the country, Hemmati said that in cooperation with the supervisory organs, \$8b out of \$27b resulted from the exports which had not been repatriated into the country has returned into the national economic cycle and expressed hope that soon the remaining \$19b would return into the country which would help the national currency gains value.

He noted that the CBI has sent the list of exporters, who have not returned their forex into the country, to the Judiciary, expressing hope the Judiciary would help the bank in return of the forex.

On the frozen money of the country in foreign banks, Hemmati said that billions of dollars of the country have been blocked in foreign banks and they are not ready to unblock them due to their fear of the U.S. fines. He added that fortunately some part of them has been blocked and would be injected into the national economic cycle, expressing hope that by injection of the unblocked forex, the power of CBI for interfering in the market for supplying forex would increase.

He reiterated that the CBI accepts any foreign currencies from exporters and they cannot resort to such pretexts that their partners are only ready to pay their money in their national currencies.

Hemmati pointed to the efforts of enemies for closing the national economic gateways and exerting heavy sanctions, adding that fortunately the Islamic Republic of Iran in collaboration with exporters and economic activists has managed the problems and the country is experiencing the last days of pressures.

He noted that oil exports of the country have improved in recent months and he hopes the economic growth would bounce back and become positive.

Hemmati also pointed to the outbreak of Coronavirus and called it a disaster for global economy, adding that Iran also was affected by the virus. He said all programs of the country for getting out of recession or reducing inflation were going ahead well till April but since June, the economic growth has lost its progress.

He added that nobody can benefit from devaluation of national currency and rise in the price of dollar, adding that some people may benefit of it but the society would be the main loser and CBI and the government are not after raising the price of the dollar in order to compensate the budget deficit.

COVID-19 Kills 211 More in Iran

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Health Ministry spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari said on Sunday that some 211 more Iranians have died from coronavirus disease (COVID-19) over the past 24 hours.

The health ministry spokeswoman said on Sunday that with the 211 new deaths the country's total COVID-19 death toll mounted to 26,957.

Some 3,653 new cases of infection with the COVID-19 were found over the past 24 hours, some 1,483 of whom have been hospitalized, Sadat Lari added.

She said that a total of 471,772 Iranians have been confirmed infected with the COVID-19, some 389,966 of whom have recovered or discharged from the hospitals.

Some 4,154 other COVID-19 patients are in critical condition and are being treated in intensive care units, the spokeswoman further said.

Sadat Lari added that 4,123,173 coronavirus tests have so far been carried out in Iran.

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ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian



Methods: U.S.'s Regime Change, Europe's Transmutation

When we listen to the speeches and remarks of world leaders which are made nowadays in the United Nations either in the 2020 sessions or on their sidelines and ponder most of them, we apparently notice that their conditions of all of them for confronting Iran is similar. The U.S. approach is to regime change and it is after changing Islamic Republic regime in Iran and Europe's approach is to bring into power their own elements that they have kept them on the ice for rainy days like Mir Hossein Mousavi who was brought to stand against velayat-e faqih which follows some kind of transmutation.

Let's have a look at the speech of the U.S. President and President of European Council. U.S. President Donald Trump on September 20 claimed that the U.N. Resolutions on imposing embargos on Iran, which had been suspended because of the JCPOA, have been activated again. In response to Trump's claim, the wretched President of EU Charles Michel on Friday September 20 said that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is still a key for regional security. Michel who was speaking in the 75th meeting of UN General Assembly said it is therefore essential to preserve the JCPOA amid the U.S. measures against Iran. Michel added, "The Iran Nuclear Deal remains key for global non-proliferation and regional security. It is therefore essential to preserve the JCPOA and for all parties to fully implement it. The agreement endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231 remains in place and for us there is no doubt that the sanctions lifting commitments under the agreement continue to apply."

Now clearly we realize that both the U.S. and EU are beating the same drum but one from one side and the other from the other side of the drum. Both of them are trying to insulate a big lie that Iran pursues production of weapons of mass destruction and to show "today we are confronting with Iran with two methods." Why are the Westerners really after transforming the structure of the Islamic Republic? A question may strike anyone's mind that perhaps current generation can answer it with doubt; the generation who has not found enough time to find the roots of hostilities and wars in the bed of historical studies in order to ponder them to know right and wrong.

Power essentially if is not engrafted with culture and ethics will follow power seeking and will not spare any action even massacre of innocent people to meet its goals. We are living in some part of the world where it is storeroom of world energy. West Asia or as Europeans say "the Middle East" has been, is still and will be the target of imperialism.

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Russia Has No Problem Selling Iran S-400

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Russia's ambassador to Iran said Moscow is open to the delivery of S-400 air defense missile system to Tehran.

In an interview with Resalat daily, Levan Jagarian said Russia has no problem in delivering S-400 missile system to Iran. The envoy emphasized that the U.S.' threats would by no means affect Russia's arms cooperation with Iran.

As already announced by the Russian deputy foreign minister, Moscow is not afraid of Washington's threats, honors its commitments, and is prepared to carefully consider Iran's proposals for arms purchases after October 18, Jagarian stated.

He was referring to the date when the UN arms embargo on Iran is going to terminate under the 2015 nuclear agreement and the UNSC Resolution 2231.

The U.S. suffered an embarrassing diplomatic defeat in August when the United Nations Security Council rejected a proposal to indefinitely extend the arms embargo on Iran.

The embargo on conventional arms is due to expire on October 18 under the terms of a resolution that blessed the Iran nuclear deal, signed in July 2015 and officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Third Iranian Fuel Tanker Arrives in Venezuela's Waters

LONDON (Reuters) - The final vessel in a flotilla of three Iranian fuel tankers entered gasoline-starved Venezuela's waters on Saturday, in the latest sign of cooperation between the two countries amid protests over shortages in the South American nation.

The Faxon, carrying around 234,000 barrels of fuel, was directly north of Venezuela's northeastern Sucre state as of 9:37 a.m. local time (1:37 p.m. GMT) on Saturday, Refinitiv Eikon data showed. The second vessel, the Fortune, had docked at western Venezuela's Amuay port on Friday, the data showed.

The flotilla was the second group of fuel tankers Iran has sent this year to Venezuela, a once-prosperous OPEC nation now experiencing gasoline shortages due to years of underinvestment and lack of maintenance at its refineries, and U.S. sanctions on state oil company Petroleos de Venezuela.

The shortages have led to snaking, sometimes days-long lines outside PDVSA gas stations. Together with unreliable water, power, and cooking gas supplies, the shortages have prompted a new wave of protests as discontent intensifies in Venezuela's near-abandoned interior.

Washington sanctioned PDVSA last year as part of its push to oust Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, who has overseen an economic collapse in his six-year tenure and is accused of human rights violations, corruption and rigging his 2018 re-election. Maduro says the United States is seeking to steal Venezuela's oil riches.

Iran's oil industry is also under U.S. sanctions over the country's nuclear program, and the growing cooperation between the two countries this year has alarmed U.S. authorities. But the three tankers - just like a flotilla of five tankers that Iran sent between May and June - arrived without incident.

The first tanker in the current group, the Forest, docked at central Venezuela's El Palito port on Tuesday.



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MPs Visit Nagorno-Karabakh Border

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – A group of Iranian lawmakers paid a visit to the country's border areas near the Nagorno-Karabakh region, where fighting has broken out between Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan since last week.

Members of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission have traveled to the areas near the common border with the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region, the commission's spokesman told Tasnim.

Abolfazl Amoei said the lawmakers are going to prepare a report on the developments in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and the impact of the disputes between Yerevan and Baku on the border areas of Iran.

Gov't Provides Tax Incentives To Businessmen

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Hassan Rouhani said that the government will provide incentives for committed exporters of the country.

President Rouhani said that merchants and businessmen of the country, whether in the conditions of economic war or in normal conditions, should not face any administrative obstacles in the course of their activities.

At the 170th meeting of the cabinet's economic coordination board, which was held on Sunday morning, chaired by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade presented a report on the process of creating and activating the country's National Trade system.

President Rouhani described the system as the center of information and management of goods and its imports and exports and stressed the urgent need of the country's economy for it.

Rouhani added that all agencies, including customs and insurance, are obliged to take immediate steps to fully join this system.

He also assigned the new minister of industry to set up a comprehensive database system on trade, saying it would contribute to more transparency and help the fight against corruption and smuggling.



Rouhani ordered Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Alireza Razm-Hosseini to establish a comprehensive database on the supply and distribution chain, including the data on production, exports and imports.

The database should be available to the public, including all managers and economic activists, so that all stages of production, distribution, and the stock of products would be clear, the president said.

Rouhani added that it would prevent harm to the society's psychological security in the economic sector, would help the fight against corruption and smuggling by creating transparency, and will mark a major step in organizing the economy.

The president also emphasized that all organizations, including the customs office and insurance companies, must join the database.

Tehran Condemns Attack on Civilians in Karabakh Conflict

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Baku strongly condemned any aggression against innocent people and civilian facilities in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

In a statement on Sunday, the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Baku noted that based on official sources in the Republic of Azerbaijan, since the beginning of a new wave of clashes between the Azerbaijan and Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and its seven surrounding cities, a large number of citizens in Azerbaijan, including women and children, have been killed and injured and many civilian facilities and centers have been destroyed.

The office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan reported that as of October 3, 19 civilians have been killed and 63 other injured, and 44 civilian facilities along with 181 houses have also been destroyed, added the statement.

Iranian Embassy further emphasized the need to respect human rights and international humanitarian law and strongly condemned any aggression against civilians and extended its condolences to the bereaved families.

Dozens have been reported killed as Azerbaijan and Armenia continue fighting in the South Caucasus breakaway region of Karabakh.

34th Islamic Unity Conference to Be Held Virtually in Oct-Nov



TEHRAN (IP) - The Secretary-General of the World Forum for the Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thoughts (WFPIST) announced the virtual holding of the 34th Islamic Unity Conference on October 9 to November 3, coinciding with the Week of Unity and the days of the birth of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

Hamid Shahriari on Sunday (October 4) on the sidelines of the meeting to plan and coordinate the celebration of Unity Week told reporters:

"This year, Unity Week coincides with the 8th to 13th of Aban (October 29-November 3), and we have plans for more than 200 foreign figures from the Islamic World to speak about the unity of the Islamic Ummah. These lectures are about eight geographical zones, and in each of these zones, we will have online and offline programs in the morning and afternoon," he added.

Shahriari continued: "The opening ceremony of the Islamic Unity Conference will be held on the 29th of October to November 3rd) coinciding with the 12th of Rabi-al-Awal, and the closing ceremony of the 13th of Aban, coinciding with the 17th of Rabi-al-Awal, and some of our country's dignitaries will speak at the opening and closing ceremonies."

He added: "This year, considering that we are facing a huge disaster in the world {Covid-19}, we made the discussion of Islamic cooperation in the field of calamities and disasters as the focus of the conference."

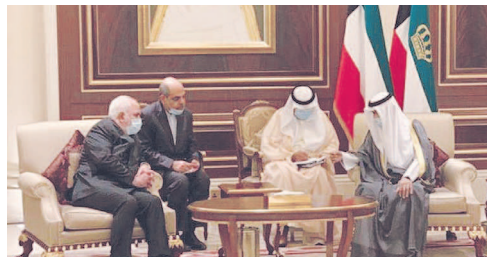
The Islamic world's approach to the prevention and fight against Corona was in the form of cooperation. These strategies and behaviors in the Islamic world were very different from the Western world.

Shahriari added: "The Muslims of the world, especially the people of our country, today showed that they faced this calamity with full culture, while in the Western world we saw many problems that individualistic liberal culture to succeed in combating."

Zarif Meets With New Emir in Trip to Kuwait

TEHRAN (IFP) - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has travelled to Kuwait on behalf of President Hassan Rouhani to offer sympathy to the Kuwaiti nation and government over the demise of the country's former emir, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah.

During the visit, Foreign Minister Zarif held meetings with Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, the



new emir of Kuwait, and Foreign Minister Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

In the Sunday meetings, the Iranian top diplomat expressed Iran's sympathy and condolences over the loss.

He also offered congratulations on the new emir's appointment,

and underlined the Islamic Republic's support for the Arab country.

Tehran, Damascus Mull Development of Bilateral Cooperation

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian Minister of Labor, Cooperatives and Social Welfare Mohammad Shariatmadari met and held talks with Syrian Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Salwa Abdullah through videoconference.

In a videoconference that took place on Saturday, the two sides stressed practical steps to develop Tehran-Damascus cooperation. Shariatmadari called for a timetable for implementing a Joint Action Plan signed last year between the two countries.

He also expressed hope that more cooperation would be possible under the agreement, saying that the technology and engineering services, pharmaceuticals, metals, petrochemical industries, oil and gas, civil engineering, and construction are among the common areas of cooperation between Iran and Syria.

Shariatmadari announced Iran's readiness to take practical steps to develop joint cooperation, adding that Iran is ready to cooperate with Syria in the field of rural development, micro-funds, rural jobs, entrepreneurship, labor relations activities, etc.

There is a lot of potential for joint cooperation in the field of welfare, the Iranian minister highlighted.

Appreciating Iran's readiness to continue cooperation with Syria, Salwa Abdullah, for her part, called for using Iran's experience in welfare, micro-funds, and rural development funds.

Iran is very strong in the field of industry and petrochemicals, she added, hoping that the two counties would be able to transfer their experiences through the exchange of expert delegations.



Tehran, Baghdad Discuss Strengthening of Bilateral Relations

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran's Ambassador to Baghdad Iraj Masjedi met and held talks with Iraqi President Barham Salih on the expansion of bilateral relations.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the latest developments in Iraq, the prospects of bilateral relations between Tehran and Baghdad and the significance of adherence to negotiations and reinforcing regional peace and security, as well as the importance of reducing tensions in the region.

They also stressed the need to support the measures of the Baghdad government in order to protect diplomatic places and centers. Iranian ambassador reaffirmed Iran's support for stability in Iraq and strengthening economic and social ties between the two neighboring countries.

SMEs Exports at 17% Growth in H1

TEHRAN (MNA) – Export of products by Small- and Medium-Sized Industries (SMEs) registered a 17 percent growth in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (from March 21 to Sept. 22).

Deputy CEO of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) Asghar Masaheb made the remarks on Sunday and revealed the 16.7 percent growth in export of products by these small industries based in industrial parks and towns since the beginning of the current year.

He put the total value of products exported by these companies from March 21 to Sept. 22 at \$1.740 billion, showing a 16.77 percent growth as compared to the last year's corresponding period. Masaheb put the value of products exported by SMEs from March 21 to Sept. 22, 2019, at \$1.490 billion.

He pointed to the spread of COVID-19 and added, "SMEs managed to export \$1.740 billion worth of products to other countries since the beginning of the current year at the condition that the country is grappling with the adverse and negative consequences of COVID-19."

Elsewhere in his remarks, member of the Board of Directors and Deputy CEO of ISIPO added, "In this period, SMEs managed to export maximum volume of their products to the countries including Pakistan at \$1 billion, Iraq at \$364 million, Afghanistan at \$83 million, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) at \$50 million, Turkey at \$36 million, Azerbaijan Republic at \$26 million, Armenia at \$25 million and India at \$20 million."

Masaheb put the number of exporting units in the first half of the current year at 430.

Police Force, Manifestation of Authority of Establishment

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran's Army Commander said that Law Enforcement Forces (Police) is manifestation of authority of the Establishment and restoration of social order and security in the country.

In a message, Army Commander congratulated the Police Day to the Police Chief Brigadier General Hossein Ashtari, industrious staff and personnel of this force and added, "Comprehensive and sustainable progress, development and excellence demands a safe, healthy and peaceful platform which has achieved significant progress at the unsparing efforts of police forces in establishment of social order and security in the country."

He reiterated that Law Enforcement is a manifestation of authority of the Establishment and restoration of social security in the country.

Mousavi emphasized that all-out and sustainable progress, development and excellence demands a safe, healthy and peaceful environment in order to accelerate popular activities with more power and speed under the auspices of this security.

Today, "We are witnessing salient progress and developments in the field of restoration of social order and security in the country due to the unsparing and unflinching efforts of all staff and personnel of the Police Force."

Iran's Army Commander Abdolrahim Mousavi once again felicitated Mehr 13 (Oct. 4) named after Law Enforcement Forces (Police) Day in the official calendar of the country to all police forces who establish social order and security throughout the country.

Iran Warns Armenia, Azerbaijan Over Mortar Shells

TABRIZ (IRNA) - A senior official in Iran's East Azarbaijan province that is adjacent to Armenia and Azerbaijan said Iran has given the two clashing countries the necessary warnings about the consequences of mortars hitting Iranian villages.

Aliyar Rastgoo who serves as the deputy for East Azarbaijan governor-general in political and security issues, told IRNA that province's highest authority has also sent a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to pursue the issue through diplomatic channels.

Meanwhile, he added, the Iranian military is present in the region and is closely minoring the situation.

Also, earlier on Saturday, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh warned the warring parties fighting over the Nagorno-Karabakh region against any violation of Iran's territorial integrity and national sovereignty.

Iran meticulously monitors all the movements at the borderlines with the two parties engaged in the dispute, said Khatibzadeh when responding to a question about the reports on Iran's territory being violated.

Khatibzadeh said that any violation of the Iranian territory is intolerable.

He stressed the need for the both clashing parties to stop the conflicts and start serious time-bound talks.

The spokesperson also expressed Iran's readiness to help the two parties pursue these goals.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)

■ Evening (Maghreb)

■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)

■ Tomorrow's Sunrise

11:52

18:00

04:40

06:03

43. O ye who believe! Approach not prayers with a mind befogged, until ye can understand all that ye say;- nor in a state of ceremonial impurity (Except when travelling on the road), until after washing your whole body: If ye are ill, or on a journey, or one of you cometh from offices of nature, or ye have been in contact with women, and ye find no water, then take for yourselves clean sand or earth, and rub therewith your faces and hands. For Allah doth blot out sins and forgive again and again.

Surah 4. Women (43)

Iraq Oil Ministry Not Ready to Buy Iran Oil Products

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Spokesman of Iranian Oil, Gas and Petrochemical Products Exporters' Union (OPEX) Mr. Seyed Hamid Hosseini says Iraq central government has the refining capacity for 700,000 barrels of oil per day and it has set standards of euro 4 and 5 for imports of the oil products but it is not ready to purchase oil products from Iran due to the U.S. sanctions.

Speaking to ILNA, Mr. Hosseini pointed to the volume of Iran's exports to Iraq in the current year, saying that in the first half of the year, Iran's exports to Iraq were around \$2.9b while the figure in the first five months of the year was just \$560m but after reopening of borders, exports to Iraq were accelerated and the figure rose significantly.

He added that gasoline topped Iran's exports to Iraqi Kurdistan and electricity, construction materials, foodstuff, chemicals, petrochemicals and industrial items were Iran's other major exports to Iraq.

He then elaborated why the major part of Iran's exports are to Iraqi Kurdistan rather than the central government, saying that Iraq oil ministry is not ready to buy Iran oil products due to sanctions and it buys its needed products from India and Europe but



this year it has decreased its imports of oil products due to the Coronavirus pandemic and currently the central government of Iraq has daily refining capacity of 700,000 and it has set standards of euro 4 and 5 for imported oil products.

Hosseini added that so Iraqi Kurdistan is Iran's major customer, adding that the major exports in the past ten years have been destined to Iraqi Kurdistan and the trade with the central government has been insignificant.

He added that Iraqi Kurdistan has its own laws and regulations and regarding the sanctions, it has received some waivers and acts based on them. He reiterated that Iraqi Kurdistan does not usually ban imports of goods but it regulates its trade policies with levying tariffs and whenever it decides to stop import of some goods, it increases the tariffs and it does not slap ban like the central government of Iraq.

Hosseini reiterated that the gasoline which is produce in Iran is with octane ratings of 87 and 91, and it is the most high quality gasoline in the region.

He said most of euro 4 gasoline produced domestically and in Persian Gulf Star Refinery is consumed domestically, and one cannot find gasoline with such a quality in the region and no country but India produces gasoline with euro 4 and 5 standards.

Iran, Russia to Cooperate On COIVD-19 Vaccine

TEHRAN (MNA) – An official in Iran's Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology said that Iran and Russia are set to conduct research on the ecology of the Caspian Sea and vaccine and medicine of coronavirus.

Referring to the previous talks between Iran's Vice President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari and Head of Russian Academy of Sciences Aleksandr Sergeyev, Head of the International Affairs and Technological Exchange Center of Iran's Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology Mehdi Ghal'e Noei said that the Russian side was interested in conducting joint cooperation with Iran on the ecology of the Caspian Sea and vaccine and medicine of coronavirus.

It was decided to form a joint working group consisting of activists from the two countries, he added.

Emphasizing that this working group can pave the way for the development of scientific relations and cooperation between the two countries, he said that some agreements will be reached on the Caspian Sea project and medicine and vaccines of coronavirus, etc. through this working group.

Stating that the Caspian Sea is shared with 5 countries and each country is interested in knowing the ecological events and environmental effects of the sea in each country, he noted that the joint research with Russia will also focus on the ecology of the Caspian Sea.

MP Highlights 16th Resistance Int'l Film Festival

TEHRAN (MNA) – An Iranian lawmaker urged officials to seriously and fully support Iran's 16th Resistance International Film Festival.

Mohammad Pakmehr underscored that combat against the Coronavirus is a universal and unequal war, adding that fighting against an unknown and borderless enemy that has no specific location requires sincere self-sacrifice.

The MP said countering such an enemy is a sacrificial act that should be appreciated properly.

He said that the era of Sacred Defense was one of the best manifestations of the sacrifice of the military and even law enforcement forces, stressing that nowadays, the golden age of resistance of the medical staff has arrived.

He added the mission of health defenders should be covered by mass media, urging the Iranian Parliament to support the cinematic works with the theme of health defenders and employ its financial and spiritual capacities to support artists of this arena.

Iran Ranks 10 Worldwide In Medical Tourism

TEHRAN (IP) - Iran ranked 3 in the Islamic world and 10 in the world with \$ 315 million of medical tourism market share.

Mohammad Qasemi, Director-General of the Tourism Marketing and Advertising Office of Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts said, "According to statistics and information provided by the Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture of Islamic countries for COMCEC meeting, in 2018, Iran ranked third in the Islamic world and tenth in the world with \$ 315 million of medical tourism market share."

Iran Dominates Half of Afghanistan Market

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iranian commercial attaché in Kabul Mohammad Mehdi Javanmard says almost half of imported goods to Afghanistan market are from Iran, adding that Afghanistan enjoys having good capacity for imports of technical and engineering imports.

Speaking on the current condition of Iran's trade with Afghanistan and when was asked why Iran's exports to Afghanistan have remained unchanged between 3 to four billion dollars and it has not increased, Javanmard

said that the capacity of Afghanistan market is not more than this figure.

He added that in the first year of entering Afghan market, Iran's exports to this country were around \$1b and the figure rose to \$3b in 2013.

Javanmard further said that currently Iran's exports to Afghanistan are around \$4b and due to some regulations of the Central Bank the figure has actually increased by \$30.

He noted that Iran's exports of goods to Afghanistan are valued at \$3b while the total volume of

Afghanistan imports is around \$7b, and Iran actually takes the control of half of Afghanistan market. So the condition for Iran's exports to this country is good and considerable amount of goods in Afghanistan is Iranian, he added.

He noted that because of devaluation of the national currency, export is justifiable but export needs integrated and targeted planning and if export policies are accompanied by planning, the country will have organized export and it can also witness surge in export.

Javanmard also pointed to the recent exhibition of Iran's technical and engineering services exhibition in Afghanistan and said the exhibition saw the biggest trade delegation of Iran in Afghanistan in the past 25 years, adding that the good relations between both countries have led to good relations between traders of them and the exhibition was welcomed uniquely by Afghan people and companies.

He also urged Iranians to work on exporting technical and engineering services to Afghanistan, saying that Afghanistan with a population more than 40m has great capacity in developing industrial infrastructures and it is a good opportunity for Iranians for transfer of technical knowhow to Afghanistan.



SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT



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Qualitative evaluation of tenderers

Method	Qualification process will be done in plain mode in offers opening session according to presentation of valid practice certificate / legal documents (certificate of corporation/ supply announcement up to latest changes) which should be related to tender subject.
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Purchasing & Submitting

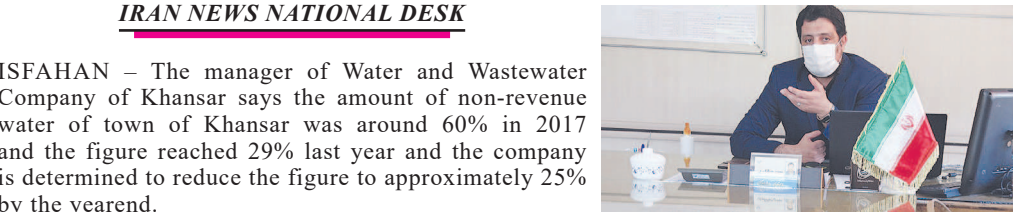
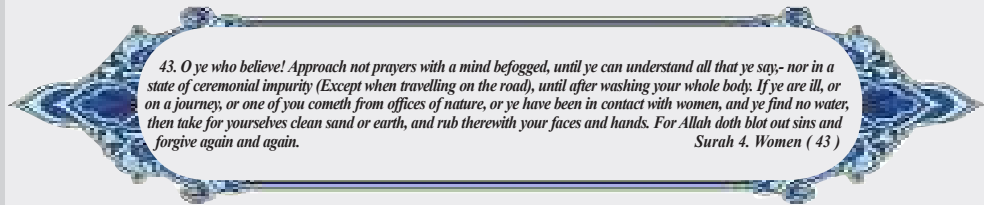
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Tender Guarantee

Value of guarantee	1,119,000,000 Rial / 3 ,997 Euro
Type of guarantee	Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtain activity license from the central bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 4001114006376636 (Shaba No. IR 350100004001114006376636) in name of “NIDC saving account” by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran.
Duration of credit & quotation	Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.

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ISFAHAN – The manager of Water and Wastewater Company of Khansar says the amount of non-revenue water of town of Khansar was around 60% in 2017 and the figure reached 29% last year and the company is determined to reduce the figure to approximately 25% by the yearend.

Mehdi Jahangiri said that in 2014, Water and Wastewater Engineering Company of town of Khansar was chosen as the national pilot for reducing the amount of non-revenue water, adding that after implementation of this project, it was decided that some group from Japan puts on its agenda the studies regarding lowering the non-revenue water in Khansar but due to sanctions, this project was not implemented and it was later decided the project to be operationalized by using all hardware, software and manpower capacities and potentials of the town.

He stipulated that since 2017, renovation and repair of 12 kilometers of worn out network has been put on the agenda and some 1800 worn out meters have been replaced with new ones and 776 items of service lines have been renovated and standardized. He added that all these measures led to save water from being wasted in the town of Khansar.

Jahangiri said that the length of water distribution network is around 128 kilometers, stipulating that according to the studies conducted by the company, about 40 percent of the water distribution network of Khansar is worn out and the company is determined to prioritize repairing some parts of the network due to the fatigue which has more waste of water.

He also pointed to the plan for smartizing the water distribution network in Khansar, saying that mechanical equipment for smartizing the distribution network has been installed and electronic equipment is on the verge of being installed and planning for radiocommunication is in the works.

Three Rwanda Genocide Suspects Arrested in Belgium

BRUSSELS (AFP) - Three men suspected of involvement in the 1994 Rwanda genocide have been arrested and charged in Belgium with serious abuse of human rights, the prosecutor's office said Saturday.

The office gave no details about the three but said their identities had been established with the help of witness testimony collected in Rwanda by a Belgian investigation.

Rwanda's prosecutor's office later named the trio as Pierre Basabose, Seraphin Twahirwa and Christophe Ndagali, all the subjects of international arrest warrants.



Pompeo Shortens Upcoming Asia Trip

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo will depart for Japan on Sunday but will not go to Mongolia and South Korea as originally planned, the State Department said on Saturday, after President Donald Trump was diagnosed and hospitalized due to the coronavirus.

Initially, Pompeo planned to visit all three countries between Oct. 4 and Oct 8. He is still set to leave for Tokyo on Sunday but will be returning to Washington on Oct. 6 after consultations with his Japanese counterparts and attending a wider meeting with foreign ministers of India and Australia.



Azerbaijan Claims Advances in Karabakh, Armenia Vows Struggle



BAKU (Reuters) - Armenia said on Saturday it would use "all necessary means" to protect ethnic Armenians from attack by Azerbaijan, which said its forces had captured a string of villages in fighting over the mountain enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Ignoring a French attempt to mediate, the opposing sides pounded each other with rockets and missiles for a seventh day in the newest flare-up of a decades-old conflict that threatens to draw in Russia and Turkey.

The death toll rose to at least 230 in the fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh, an ethnic Armenian enclave inside Azerbaijan that broke away from its control in the 1990s.

Each side said it had destroyed hundreds of the other's tanks. The Azeri side claimed gains, and President Ilham Aliyev sent congratulations to a military commander on the capture of a Karabakh village. "Today the Azeri army raised the flag of Azerbaijan in Madagiz. Madagiz is ours," Aliyev declared on social media. He later announced the capture of seven more villages.

Hundreds of people took to the streets of the Azeri capital Baku in celebration, waving flags and placards reading "Karabakh was and will be ours".

It was not possible to independently verify the situation on the ground.

Armenian Defence Ministry official Artsrun Hovhannisyan said the situation was changing frequently. "In such a large war such changes are natural. We can take a position, then leave it in an hour," he told reporters. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan told his countrymen in a televised address that fighting all along the front was intense.

"As of now, we already have significant human losses, both military and civilian, large quantities of military equipment are no longer usable, but the adversary still has not been able to solve any of its strategic issues," he said.

Armenia's armed forces have so far held back from entering the war alongside those of Nagorno-Karabakh. But Pashinyan portrayed the conflict as a national struggle and compared it to the country's war with Ottoman Turkey in the early 20th century.

His Foreign Ministry said Armenia, as the guarantor of Nagorno-Karabakh's security, would take "all the necessary means and steps" to prevent what it called "mass atrocities" by the forces of Azerbaijan and its ally Turkey. A ministry spokeswoman declined to comment on what steps this could entail.

The clashes are the worst since the 1990s, when some 30,000 people were killed. They have raised international concern about stability in the South Caucasus, where pipelines carry Azeri oil and gas to world markets.

Apart from a four-day war in 2016 that killed about 200 people, the Karabakh region has mostly been calm for the past quarter-century, with Russia playing a balancing role as an ally of both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Now Azerbaijan, emboldened by Turkish backing, says it has run out of patience with decades of ineffective diplomacy that have failed to lead to the return of its lost territory.

While Russia, the United States and France have called for an end to hostilities, Turkey has said Armenian "occupiers" must withdraw and rejected "superficial" demands for a ceasefire. [nL8N2GU0C8]

Regional and military analysts say the Azeris lack the firepower to overrun Karabakh completely but may settle for territorial gains that will enable them to declare a victory and gain leverage in future negotiations.

The two sides continued to trade accusations of foreign involvement, with Pashinyan saying Armenia had information that 150 high-ranking Turkish officers were helping to direct Azeri military operations. Both Turkey and Azerbaijan have repeatedly denied the involvement of Turkish forces, as well as assertions by Armenia, Russia and France that Syrian rebels are fighting on the Azeri side.

Trump Says Real Test Ahead in His COVID Fight

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Donald Trump said from his hospital room on Saturday that he felt "much better" but the next few days will be "the real test" of his treatment for COVID-19, capping a day of contradictory messages from the White House about his condition.

In a four-minute video posted on Twitter, Trump, looking tired and wearing a jacket and open-necked shirt, said he "wasn't feeling so well" when he first arrived at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Friday. "Over the next period of a few days, I guess that's the real test, so we'll be seeing what happens over those next couple of days," Trump said, seated at a round table in front of an American flag. The remarks came hours after differing assessments of his health from administration officials left it unclear how ill the president had become since he tested positive for COVID-19 on Thursday night, a matter of enormous public concern.

A White House team of doctors said on Saturday morning that Trump's condition was improving and that he was already talking about returning to the White House. One doctor said Trump told them, 'I feel like I could walk out of here today.'

Within minutes, White House chief of staff Mark Meadows gave reporters a less rosy assessment, telling them, "The president's vitals over the last 24 hours were very concerning and the next 48 hours will be critical in terms of his care. We're still not on a clear path to a full recovery."

Meadows, whose initial comments were delivered on condition that he not be identified, altered his tone hours later, telling Reuters that Trump was doing "very well" and that "doctors are very pleased with his vital signs."

Meadows did not clarify the discrepancy in his comments. A Trump adviser who spoke on condition of anonymity said the president was not happy to learn of Meadows' initial remarks.

Administration officials have described the move to Walter Reed as precautionary and said Trump would stay at the hospital for several days. Another source who was briefed on Trump's condition said the president was given supplemental oxygen before he went to the hospital. The decision to hospitalize Trump came after he had experienced difficulty breathing and his oxygen level dropped, according to a source familiar with the situation.

Jordan's King Accepts Prime Minister's Resignation

AMMAN (Dispatches) - Jordan's King Abdullah II has accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Omar al-Razzaz but asked him to stay on in a caretaker capacity until he designates a successor to oversee parliamentary elections in November, according to local media.

The monarch dissolved Parliament last Sunday at the end of its four-year term, in a move that under constitutional rules meant the government had to resign within a week.

"As I accept your resignation, I instruct you and the government to continue working until a prime minister is chosen and the new government is formed," the king was quoted as saying by the al-Ghad news outlet in a statement, stressing "the need to work with vigour, determination and perseverance during this period because of the coronavirus pandemic".

"Dealing with the virus means taking continuous action and making decisions [regarding it] without delay."

To date, the country has registered 14,479 coronavirus cases and 88 related deaths, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. In recent weeks, the government has been widely criticised for failing to contain a surge in the number of COVID-19 infections.

King Abdullah appointed al-Razzaz prime minister in the summer of 2018 to defuse the biggest protests in years against tax increases sought by the International Monetary Fund to reduce Jordan's large public debt.

Observers say a wider shake-up and a new assembly after the November 10 vote could help ease popular disenchantment about economic hardships worsened by the impact of COVID-19 and limits on civil and political freedoms under emergency laws. Jordan's economy is expected to shrink by 6 percent in 2010 as it tackles its worst economic crisis in many years, with unemployment and poverty aggravated by the pandemic.

Jordan, which is hosting more than 650,000 Syrian refugees, remains heavily reliant on foreign aid.

Deadly Car Bomb Kills at Least 15 in Afghanistan

KABUL (Dispatches)- At least 15 people have been killed and more than 40 wounded in a suicide car bomb attack that targeted a government building in the eastern Afghan province of Nangarhar, officials said.

There were fears that the death toll could rise after the explosion on Saturday at the entrance of an administrative building that also housed some military facilities in the Ghani Khel district.

"The car bomb detonated at the entrance of the district headquarters building. Several armed attackers tried to enter the building after the attack but were killed by security forces," the governor's spokesman Attaullah Khogyani told AFP news agency on Saturday.

"As a result, 13 civilians including one woman and four children were killed. Two members of security

forces were also killed," he said.

Forty-two people, including four security forces members, were wounded, Khogyani added.

Provincial police spokesman Farid Khan confirmed the details.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blast.

Armed groups such as ISIL (ISIS) and the Taliban have carried out attacks against the Afghan government, national security and defence personnel and civilians.

The attack comes as representatives of the Afghan government and Taliban are engaged in negotiations in the Qatari capital, Doha, to end the country's decades-long war. The intra-Afghan talks followed a United States-Taliban agreement signed in February in Doha.



Sudan, Rebel Groups Sign Historic Peace Deal

JUBA (Dispatches) - Sudan's government and rebel groups on Saturday signed a landmark peace deal aimed at ending decades of war in which hundreds of thousands have died.

Cheers rang out as one by one, representatives from the transitional government and rebel groups signed the deal, a year after the peace talks began, at a ceremony in the South Sudanese capital Juba.

The deal covers a number of tricky issues, from land ownership, reparations and compensation to wealth and power sharing and the return of refugees and internally displaced people.

Ending Sudan's internal conflicts has been a top priority of the transitional government, in power since longtime dictator Omar al-Bashir was ousted in a pro-democracy uprising.

"For us today it is a historic day... this will stop the war... we are very committed to the implementation of all the protocols agreed upon," said the head of Sudan's transitional sovereign council General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan. "This agreement will help Sudan to transform smoothly to a state of justice, citizenship, freedom and democracy."

Both al-Burhan and Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, as well as the European Union and United Nations, called on two powerful holdout rebel groups to join the peace process.

"We are waiting for you to achieve a comprehensive peace in Sudan," said Hamdok, who said the deal would not only silence the guns but also "stabilise the economy".

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres hailed the deal as a "milestone on the road to achieve sustainable peace" in a recorded video message.

"Now it is critical that this agreement translates into tangible improvements in peoples' lives."

The agreement was signed by the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF), which comprises rebel groups from the war-ravaged western Darfur region, as well as the southern states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan.

Guarantors of the deal from Chad, Qatar, Egypt, the African Union, European Union and United Nations also put their names to the agreement.





Elahieh Apt (\$1800)
200sq.m, 3bdrs
S/p, Sauna
J, balcony
marble fl
Fully Furn

Shanon (adviser)

Farmanieh Villa (\$4000)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
S, J, balcony
yard, & F.F

Parsian

(\$3000)
Mahmoodieh
300sq.m, 4bdrs
S/p, S, J, pkg
L.balcony, & F.F

Farmanieh (\$2300)
240sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p
S, J, balcony, pkg
marble floor
F.F

(\$10000)
Velenjak bldg
5storey, 20bdrs
S/p, S, J, balcony
brand new, & pkgs

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Malaysia Airlines Group Low on Cash

SINGAPORE (Reuters) - Malaysia Aviation Group, the holding company for Malaysia Airlines Bhd, said in a letter to lessors the group is unlikely to be able to make payments owed after November unless it receives more funding from state fund Khazanah.

The letter, reviewed by Reuters, follows a request by the troubled carrier for steep discounts on aircraft rentals from

its lessors as part of a broad restructuring plan, three sources with knowledge of the matter said.

The letter added that in the absence of an implemented restructuring by the end of the year, Khazanah, its sole shareholder, "intends to divert all efforts and funds to an alternative company with an existing air operator's permit to ensure connectivity for Malaysia."



India's September Data Showing Credible Signs of Economic Growth

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India's Finance Ministry on Saturday said the month of September has exhibited "credible signs" of economic growth towards normalcy and the government is not averse to taking any further measures to ameliorate the suffering of people.

It said during the last six months of Covid-19 crisis, while pushing the fiscal stimulus and packages to boost recovery process of the economy it has taken every possible measure to address the concerns of all the stakeholders and the citizens and has progressively extended help on both the demand and supply side to bring the economy back on track.

"Earnest efforts made by the government in last few months during coronavirus period have now started showing the green shoots and the month of September has exhibited credible signs of economic growth towards normalcy," the ministry said in a statement.

The ministry further said that to minimise Covid-19's impact on the economy and people's livelihood, the government is open to all possibilities and "the Finance Minister is not averse to taking any further measures to ameliorate suffering of people".

It said with phased relaxation of lockdown, the economy is gaining encouraging momentum. Increased business activities are imparting positive recovery of the economy as is evident in the month of September when the GST collection with Rs 95,480 crore was up by 4 per cent in the month (year-on-year).

It said rail freight revenue earnings were up by 13.5 per cent, power consumption up by 4.2 per cent, and rising tractor sales, healthy monsoons and other growth indicators like PMI manufacturing, the index of eight core industries, E-way bills, exports, kharif sowing, cargo traffic and passenger vehicle sales, etc., are showing credible upward movement.

"All this makes the ministry confident that its effort to mitigate impact of Covid-19 are on the right track towards faster recovery of economy to normalcy," the ministry added.

The government has effectively implemented two major stimulus packages — the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGK) without delay post lockdown on March 16, 2020, and the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Package (ANBP) of Rs 20 lakh crore on May 12, 2020, which was a "judicious mix" of fiscal and monetary policies to mitigate the negative impact of Covid-19 on the economy.

The government implemented several measures under these packages which include relief measures for households and cash transfers to senior citizens, widows, disabled, women Jan Dhan Account holders, farmers; insurance coverage for workers in the healthcare sector; and wage increase for MGNREGS workers.

The ministry's relief efforts during Covid-19 provided 42 crore people with direct financial assistance of Rs 68,921 crore. It included almost 8.94 crore beneficiaries under PM KISAN with two instalments of Rs 17,891 crore each.

Russia to Deliver New Locomotives to Cuba This Year

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russia will deliver seven locomotives to Cuba at the end of this year, as part of an action plan to restore and modernize the railway infrastructure on the island by 2021, the Russian Ministry of Transportation announced in a statement.

In a meeting between Cuban Deputy Prime Minister Ricardo Cabrisas with Russian Deputy Minister of Transportation Dmitri Zverev, the progress between the Russian Railways and the Union of Cuban Railways was "emphasized when working on a project to restore and modernize the island's railway infrastructure."

The two sides also stressed the "importance of the early start of relevant work" in this area.

"For this, Russian Railways and the Union of Cuban Railways will develop an action plan for 2021 aimed at starting the project," said the Russian Ministry of Transportation.

The representative of the Russian company Sinara-Transport Machines, also present at the meeting, addressed the renovation of the locomotive fleet, the modernization of the depot and the training of specialists from the Union of Cuban Railways.

Plans to implement more projects in the field of maritime transportation were also discussed, in agreement with the Russian



Turkish Exports Exceeded \$16b Last September

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Minister announced Turkish trade Rohsar Bakjan that the value of her country's exports during last September amounted to 16 billion and 13 million dollars, an increase of 28.5 percent from last August.

Bakjan explained, in a press statement, that it is valuable Turkey exports. During this period, it increased by 4.8 percent compared to the same period last year.

Bakjan added that the value Turkish exports in the third quarter, it increased by 34.5 percent compared to the second quarter of this year, indicating that these numbers reflect the recovery from the Corona pandemic and the success of the process of returning to normal life.

It stated that the value of Turkey's exports exceeded 90 percent of imports last September, and that it remained at a very high level, reaching 84.4 percent during the nine months of this year.

The Minister indicated that the Corona pandemic caused great shocks not only in the field of health, but also in the economic field, and affected the balances in the global system.

She explained that at a time when the world witnessed a contraction last year, Turkey achieved an increase in its exports by 2.1 percent, ranking sixth in the world among the 50 most exporting countries.

Bakan stated that the number of exporters in Turkey exceeded the number of importers for the first time in 2018, noting that the increase during September of this year was 6.8 percent.

On the new economic program for the period 2021-2023, announced by Minister of Treasury and Finance Barat Albayrak, on Tuesday, Bakjan said, "We will continue our path towards achieving the goals in a deliberate and determined manner."

It is noteworthy that the new economic program is based on three main axes, which are the "new balance", "the new economy" and "adaptation to the new normal," and aims, by implementing strategic reforms in financial markets, to support the effective distribution of resources and raise awareness. Financial, reduce inflation and achieve balance in the current account.

France's Central Banker Sounds Alarm Bell Over Public Spending

PARIS (Reuters) - Growth in France's public spending is reaching dangerous levels even when taking into account the exceptional stimulus plan to support the coronavirus-

ravaged economy, the country's central bank head said on Saturday.

"There's a real alert and it is time to regain control (over public spending)," central bank head Francois Villeroy de Galhau told France Inter radio station.

"We can't afford everything all the time," he added, saying that France's public spending has grown at a pace of 1% in real terms over the last 10 years.

France announced a 100 billion-euro (\$117 billion) stimulus package last month. This equates to 4% of gross domestic product, meaning France is ploughing proportionally more public cash into its economy than any other big European country.

Villeroy said France's welfare system was comparable to that of other European countries, which showed there was an "efficiency problem" in the way money was spent.

"There is a justified debt which is the COVID debt, there is a dangerous debt which is the one under which we would live beyond our means for a long time," Villeroy said.

Villeroy underlined the risk that a lasting slippage in public spending could increase borrowing costs, making French debt increasingly expensive to repay. In an extreme case, it could even make it impossible for France to continue to borrow in the markets.

Credit rating agency S&P kept its AA rating on France's long-term debt on Friday, saying it believed France's recent economic, budgetary and structural reforms have improved the economy's capacity to face the COVID shock.

Johnson Launches Transport Review To Boost Economy

LONDON (Reuters) - British Prime Minister Boris Johnson launched a review aimed at improving transport links across the UK, including a possible bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland, as part of a plan to boost the pandemic-hit economy and strengthen ties between its member nations.

The study will consider air links within the country, road and rail links in Scotland, the Welsh rail network, as well as the cost and practicality of building a "fixed link" with Northern Ireland, said a government statement on Saturday.

Johnson has in the past spoken of his desire for a 20-mile (32 km) plus bridge between Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Coronavirus lockdowns meant Britain's economic output collapsed 20% in the second quarter, and the country faces rising unemployment as its furlough scheme comes to an end, and Brexit.

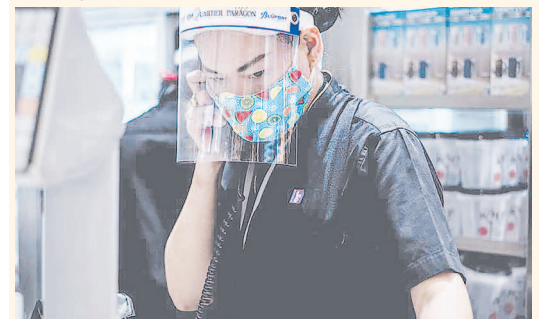
At the same time, support for Scottish independence has grown due to perceptions that Johnson responded too slowly to the pandemic and Scots' anger over the UK's decision to leave the European Union. Scottish voters opposed leaving the EU in a 2016 referendum.

Johnson hopes that transport improvements resulting from the review will help create jobs and bring the UK's member nations closer together.

"Today's announcement follows a recent pledge by the UK Government to bring forward funding to accelerate infrastructure projects in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland," added the statement.

The review will be conducted by Peter Hendy, chair of state-owned rail track owner Network Rail, and report its findings in summer 2021.

More Than 100 Thai Companies Pledge to Strengthen Women's Economic Empowerment



BANGKOK (Dispatches) - Chief executives of 110 companies in Thailand, have signed up to a new set of UN principles on women's economic empowerment, pledging to improve gender equality in the boardroom, equal pay for equal work, and safer and more inclusive workplaces.

The Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), established by UN Women and the UN Global Compact, offer guidance to businesses, regardless of their size or sector.

According to UN Women, Thailand has done "comparatively well" in terms of women occupying senior business roles. Across the country, 24 percent of chief executive officers (CEOs) and managing directors are women, compared to an Asia-Pacific average of 13 per cent. Globally that figure stands at about 20 per cent.

While the Asia-Pacific region has made impressive progress in reducing extreme poverty, with women helping to power growth, fully closing the gender equality gap could take another 100 years.

Against this backdrop, UN Women's WeEmpowerAsia initiative, aims to mobilize the private sector towards gender equality and increase women's full and equal economic participation through implementing the WEPs. Its focus countries include China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, the region's economies can create an opportunity for full recovery by building on the trend towards full equality, said Mohammad Naciri, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific at UN Women.

Speaking at a physically-distanced signing ceremony in the Thai capital, Bangkok, Mr. Naciri called for "nothing less than bold, decisive actions to secure a generation of equality in business as well as women's full and equal participation across all sectors."

"The 'new normal' shines a light on our common humanity, shared vulnerabilities, and it is only through a collective, collaborative recovery that a more gender equal society can be fully achieved", he added.

Globally, some 3,600 companies have committed to the WEPs, and prior to the ceremony on Wednesday, only 11 Thai companies had signed on, according to the UN gender equality agency.

Established in 2010, the WEPs are based on international labour and human rights standards, grounded in the recognition that businesses have a stake in, and a responsibility for, gender equality and women's empowerment.

Iranian Animation to Be Screened at Italian Festival

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Iranian animation ‘The 11th Step’, directed by Maryam Kashkoolinia, is to be screened at the 17th Sediciorto International Film Festival on 2-11 October 2020 in Forlì, Italy’s northern Emilia-Romagna region.

Made by the cutout technique, the eleven-minute animation is produced by Iran’s Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults and is based on a story written by Susan Taghdis.

Maryam Kashkoolinia is an animator, university teacher, director, and chairperson of the Board of Directors of Iran Asiafa. She was attending the 41st Annecy Animation Festival as a jury in 2017. She had directed several short animations which have been selected in many festivals. She has been a member of the selection committee for several festivals as well as a jury member for the Annecy animation festival 2017 and also has been the head of Iran’s Asifa since 2018.



“Best Germany Yet” Marks 30th Anniversary of Reunification

BERLIN (AP) — Germany marked the 30th anniversary of its reunification on Saturday, drawing a generally positive picture of the progress made in knitting together east and west. The country’s president declared that today’s is “the best Germany there has ever been” and proposed a new memorial to the “peaceful revolutionaries” who helped end communist rule.

Germany was reunited on Oct. 3, 1990, after four decades of Cold War division. East Germany joined the western federal republic less than a year after the east’s communist rulers — under pressure from growing protests — opened the Berlin Wall and the rest of the highly fortified border between the two states on Nov. 9, 1989.

While much progress has been made since then, economic and other differences between the west and the less-prosperous east still persist. A long-lasting trend of more people leaving the east than moving there has finally halted in recent years. Pensions in the east are nearing the level of those in the west, though wages are lower. And Germany’s biggest companies are still headquartered in the west, while political polarization has been most noticeable over recent years in the east, where the far-right Alternative for Germany party is particularly strong.

The coronavirus pandemic meant that celebrations were relatively low-key — as Chancellor Angela Merkel put it this week, “quieter than the occasion would actually deserve.” President Frank-Walter Steinmeier led the main ceremony at a hall in Potsdam, just outside Berlin, with 230 guests — about one-fifth of the audience originally planned.

Germany is “rightly proud” on the anniversary of reunification, “and no pandemic can get in the way of that,” Steinmeier said. He summed up mixed feelings about the progress of the past three decades by saying that “we are not nearly as far along as we should be, but at the same time we are much further along than we think.”

Eastern cities such as Leipzig and Rostock are now economically stronger than parts of the western Ruhr industrial region, Steinmeier said, and there are “more and more eastern success stories.”

Steinmeier contrasted reunification in 1990, preceded by peaceful protests and sealed by international agreement, with the emergence of the unified German state nearly 150 years ago — “brutally forced, with iron and blood, after wars with



our neighbors, based on Prussian dominance, on militarism and nationalism.” He said Saturday’s anniversary is a reminder of the value of “an international order which is so strongly contested today, unfortunately in western societies too.”

“We are living today in the best Germany there has ever been,” the president said. “Let’s thank all those who worked for it.”

He advocated creating a memorial to the “peaceful revolutionaries” of East Germany whose efforts brought the communist dictatorship to an end. That would add to existing memorials at remnants of the Berlin Wall and former facilities run by the Stasi, East Germany’s secret police, and to an already-planned unity memorial in Berlin.

Germany could use “a place that reminds us that East Germans took their fate in their own hands and liberated themselves,” Steinmeier said.

Suga Rules out Snap Election for Time Being



TOKYO (Dispatches) – Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga does not plan to call early elections “for the time being,” he said Friday, adding to signs that the next parliamentary race will not come until at least early 2021.

Suga made the comments in a roughly hourlong meeting with Natsuo Yamaguchi, who heads Komeito, the ruling coalition partner to the prime minister’s Liberal Democratic Party. Asked about the election outlook, Suga said he wants to “ensure we’re responding to the coronavirus and work hard to put the economy back on track,” Yamaguchi told reporters after their meeting. “That’s what I’ll be doing for now,” Suga reportedly added.

Hopes had been growing within the ruling coalition for early elections to capitalize on Suga’s popularity. His cabinet enjoyed 74% approval at its outset in a recent Nikkei/TV Tokyo poll, one of the highest levels ever for a new government. But the prime minister, who succeeded longtime leader Shinzo Abe in September, appears focused on his early pledges. The coronavirus pandemic still shows no signs of abating. “What the public wants from this new government is to balance stopping the spread of infections and handling the economy,” Suga had told reporters soon after taking office. “I aim to ensure the economy recovers. That’s what I want to focus on first.”

Suga has also laid out other priorities, including cutting mobile phone bills and creating a dedicated government agency for digital policy. The government and the ruling coalition are keen to get key legislation passed during a short parliamentary session set to convene in late October. Measures to be submitted include a Japan-U.K. economic partnership agreement and legislation that would give pharmaceutical companies protection from coronavirus-vaccine-related liabilities.

Discussions have begun on an additional economic stimulus package due out as early as this year. A third supplementary budget for fiscal 2020 will be drafted to fund this spending and submitted during the regular parliamentary session starting next January.

Suga will decide the timing of a snap election based on the status of the COVID-19 outbreak and the political calendar for next year. His term as LDP leader lasts until the end of next September, and the terms of lower house lawmakers end on Oct. 21, 2021.

Possible timings to dissolve the lower house for elections are the start of the January parliamentary session, after the fiscal 2021 budget passes in late March, and around the time of the LDP leadership election. Factors to be taken into account include whether the rescheduled Tokyo Olympics take place as planned next summer.

Pakistan Allows Wheat Import From Russia

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) – Pakistan federal government approved the purchase of 180,000 tons of wheat from the Russian government at a price of \$279 per ton amid questions over the high cost and the decision to use Russian ships for transportation instead of the national flag carrier.

The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet approved the import price of \$279 per ton for supply on a government-to-government basis hardly a week after the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) cancelled a tender due to the high bid of \$274 per ton and the suspicion of collusion.

“The ECC approved the import of 180,000 tons of wheat from Russia on GTG (government-to-government) basis, waiving all taxes/levies on GTG import of wheat,” according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of National Food Security and Research created a sense of urgency for securing the ECC’s approval for wheat import. The ECC was told that Russia offered to supply 180,000 tons at \$279 per ton and gave less than 24 hours to take decision on the offer.

TCP had accepted a bid in a competitive bidding process for the import of 330,000 tons of wheat at a price of \$233.8 per ton. Russian wheat will be \$45.2 or 19.3% expensive than the earlier public sector wheat deal.

Interestingly, in a separate summary that the food security ministry moved to secure the cabinet’s approval for signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU), it claimed “the Russian side has verbally assured that the rate of wheat will be a few dollars lower than the price in the international market”.

But the rate that Russia quoted and was eventually approved by the ECC was not only higher than the international prices for the day but was also at least \$5 higher than the offer quoted in the tender that the TCP cancelled due to high rates. Some ECC members objected and asked as to why the food security ministry was inclined to accept the higher price, said the sources.

Sources said Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Zaidi objected to the food ministry’s decision to not use Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC) ships.

“The ECC and the federal cabinet have approved a national shipping policy that gives the first right of refusal in government contracts to the national flag carrier,” said Zaidi when The Express Tribune contacted the minister for his views.

Zaidi said his ministry was trying to lessen the burden on foreign exchange reserves as PNSC would charge the fare in Pak rupees.

“If our state does not give business to the national flag carrier, then who else would do it,” questioned the minister.

According to the finance ministry’s statement, the ECC was informed that about five million tons of wheat was available with the public sector in its stocks. So far, 430,000 tons had already been imported by the private sector and another 1.1 million tons were expected to be imported by the end of December 2020, said the finance ministry.



TCP has already opened a Letter of Credit for importing 330,000 tons of wheat and is in the process of issuing tenders for import of another 1.2 million tons, according to the statement. Import of 330,000 tons of wheat was being made at a price of \$233.8 per ton.

Owing to the increasing shortage and fewer supplies, prices of wheat and wheat flour have been constantly increasing. Wheat prices, which were at Rs1,500 per 40 kg in the market two years ago, have now increased to Rs2,000, a hike of 33.3%. Similarly, wheat flour prices, which were at Rs900 per 20 kg in August 2018, have increased to Rs1,400, a surge of Rs500 or 55.5% within two years.

The food security ministry told the ECC that Russia would provide 180,000 tons of milling wheat from October 15 to November 30, 2020. However, the proposal was valid until 1800 hours Pakistan Standard Time, October 2, 2020. The ministry said it had evaluated the proposal and due to fluctuating prices in the international market, and the domestic demand and supply situation, the price of \$279 per ton, equivalent to Rs46,116, offered by Russia was reasonable.

The entire cost of wheat import would be \$50.22 million or Rs8.3 billion. Due to urgency, the Finance Division may be advised to arrange foreign exchange and to assist Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (Passco) in opening the Letter of Credit.

Methods: U.S.’s Regime Change...

FROM PAGE 1

Since the distant past, the Middle East has been the cradle of brilliant human civilizations and the birthplace of science and the place for emergence of Divine Messengers. This region geographically is located in the center of junction of three important continents of the world, Africa, Europe and Asia, so that it is linked to Europe via Turkey and linked to Africa via Palestine. This region is one of the strategic and geopolitical regions in the world that has been the center of international events for years. Before the World War II, the face-off between Britain and Ottoman Empire and changes in the geographical structure in the region, and after the World War II no region in the world has faced with different events and incidents as many as the Middle East has faced.

The major events which have happened in the past years in the Middle East are like wars of Arabs with Zionist Regime, energy crisis, Israel and Egypt Peace Treaty, Israel’s invasion at Lebanon, eruption of civil wars in Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen and Jordan, former Soviet Union’s attack at Afghanistan, occupation of Kuwait by Iraq, emergence of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Iraq’s Baath Regime’s eight years of imposed war on Iran, oil war, and the U.S. and trans-regional powers’ invasion at Iraq.

It is known that there are 14 strategic points in the world of which seven points are located in the Middle East: Bosphorus Strait, Dardanel, Suez Canal, Strait of Gibraltar, Bab al-Mandab Strait, Greater and Lesser Tunbs, Strait of Hormuz, Persian Gulf and Abu Musa Island. The Middle East has been surrounded with five important seas of the world Mediterranean, Persian Gulf, Red Sea, Black Sea and Caspian Sea and trans-regional powers of the world call Persian Gulf as the heart of the earth and heart of world gas and oil. Above all, the Middle East is the resource of the biggest energy reserves of the world, namely, oil and gas, and one can consider the oil pipelines in the Middle East as the world industry and military vital veins. By the way, Western countries have gotten acquainted with the human civilization with the Middle East and in the past they were like barbaric ethnics rather than civilized one.

This region has the biggest oil and gas resources of the world and it is heart of the earth. It also enjoys having considerable economic, agricultural and water resources, and by 2025, all fossil fuels will decline and only 5 countries in the Middle East will have the capability for producing and exporting oil and gas. These five countries, namely, are Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar. So the Westerners believe that ant energy crisis in the Middle East is a threat to the world.

Preventing Russia and China from getting power in the Middle East, providing security for Zionist regime and safeguarding its existence in the region, guaranteeing security for energy interests in the oil-rich Middle East, bolstering colonialist relations with the countries in the Middle East region, reining and preventing the spread of the Islamic Republic of Iran’s influence in the Muslim world, confrontation with Islamic civilization-making thought in the 21st Century and preventing creation of any regional alignment for hostility with the Westerners in the Middle East are of the key goals of Europe and the U.S. in this part of the world.

So with these explanations, it is clear what the goals of the expansionist West in this region are and why they cannot tolerate an establishment like the Islamic Republic of Iran’s.



Trump...

FROM PAGE 1

We drew up mechanisms for the settlement of differences ... so precisely that no one, namely the US and Mr. Trump, would not be able to withdraw from the deal without suffering harrowing global problems.”

Zarif also said: U.S. President Donald Trump lies [when he says he is committed to safeguarding the interests of American people]. ... What is important to him is his personal interests. Today, all American people have come to realize that except for his own interests, Mr. Trump does not care at all for their interests and even for the interests of the Republican Party. Moreover, a group of people are surrounding him that only think of preserving Israel’s interests. The most renowned analysts in the U.S. says when Trump says “Let’s make American great again!” he means “Let’s make Donald Trump great again!”

He further said: Mr. Trump’s [economic] pressure is definitely a reality. Sanctions are definitely a tangible objective phenomenon. I, for one, not only admit that the current situation is a [economic] war, but I would say that it is something beyond that and amounts to US economic terrorism against the Iranian nation. ... The question is, who started this war? Did we start it or Mr. Trump? Was it Iran that set fire to the negotiating room or the US? We still have not left the negotiating table. ... When Mr. Trump threatens to wage a war or to increase sanctions and, at the same time, calls for talks, it is logical that no one in the whole world would accept that. Trump withdrew from the JCPOA because John Bolton had promised him to topple the Islamic Republic in three months’ time. They made every effort, but failed [to achieve their goals], so they are lying when they say they seek negotiations. ... We should not forget that the one who rudely left the negotiating room was Trump. So, Iran always remains in the negotiating room, and if the U.S. creates the conditions for returning to the negotiating room that it has left, we and the other five signatories to the JCPOA will be in the room.”

COVID-19...

FROM PAGE 1

She pointed out: “Provinces of Tehran, Isfahan, Qom, East Azerbaijan, South Khorasan, Semnan, Qazvin, Lorestan, Ardabil, Khuzestan, Kermanshah, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Gilan, Bushehr, Zanjan, Ilam, Khorasan Razavi, Mazandaran, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Alborz, West Azerbaijan, Markazi, Kerman, North Khorasan, Hamadan, and Yazd are regarded as red zones.”

According to the Health Ministry Spokeswoman, provinces of Kurdistan, Hormozgan, Fars, and Golestan are on alert.

Bremen Confirm Klaassen In Talks With Ajax

BERLIN (Dispatches) - Bundesliga side Werder Bremen confirmed Saturday that Netherlands playmaker Davy Klaassen is in talks with Dutch giants Ajax and could leave before the transfer window closes early next week.

"If the offer is right," from Ajax, "Davy will leave us," said Bremen sports director Frank Baumann after Saturday's 1-0 win over Arminia Bielefeld. "There were one or two (other) offers, but they were not to our satisfaction." The transfer window closes in Germany on Monday, the day before it shuts in the Netherlands.

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Juve Squad in Isolation After COVID-19 Positives

TURIN (Reuters) - Italian champions Juventus announced on Saturday that their entire squad have gone into isolation after two staff members tested positive for COVID-19.

Juventus, who are scheduled to host Napoli on Sunday, confirmed those returning positive tests were "neither players nor members of the technical or medical staff". "This procedure will allow all members who tested negative to the controls to carry out regular training and match activities, but will not be allowed contact with outside the group," the club said in a statement here.

8 IRAN NEWS

SPORTS

MONDAY OCTOBER 5, 2020

Djokovic Sweeps Past Galan Into Last 16

PARIS (Reuters) - Top seed Novak Djokovic continued his imperious progress at the French Open with a 6-0 6-3 6-2 drubbing of Colombian Daniel Galan to effortlessly reach the last 16 for the 11th straight year on Saturday.

The 33-year-old was rarely extended by his 153rd-ranked opponent and even found time to double up as a court sweeper when the match was briefly interrupted by rain.

Djokovic, like 12-time champion Rafa Nadal, has reached the fourth round without the loss of a set although things will toughen up with powerful Russian Karen Khachanov up next.

The 33-year-old Serb won the first set in 28 minutes and when he broke for a 2-0 lead in the second set a rare 'triple bagel' looked a possibility.

But Galan, a lucky loser from qualifying, got on the board with a rasping forehand winner which brought loud cheers from the small crowd on Court Philippe Chatrier.

With heavy rain falling and the new roof sliding slowly across, meaning Galan was exposed to the elements and Djokovic was not, the Serb ordered the chair umpire to halt play after his opponent slipped during a rally on the muddy baseline.

After groundsman with wheelbarrows had spread more clay across the court to improve the slimy surface, a laughing Djokovic offered a hand, grabbing a sweeper, before resuming his day job with the roof closed.

Djokovic was surprised the roof had not been closed earlier.

"I saw the forecast and it didn't look good at all," he said. "If you have a roof why not use it. I thought we lost quite a bit of time."

He has certainly not been wasting any time so far in the French capital and once play resumed the outcome was never in doubt, although Galan did make the world number one work up a sweat with some courageous tennis of his own.

Djokovic, bidding for his second title at Roland Garros and 18th Grand Slam, saved four break points in a competitive third set



before completing his 71st French Open match win, taking him past Roger Federer into second place behind Nadal who has 96.

Meanwhile Petra Kvitova required all her firepower to subdue Canadian teenager Leylah Fernandez as she overcame a terrible start to win 7-5 6-3 and reach the French Open fourth round on Saturday.

The 30-year-old Czech struck 32 winners and needed every one of them to halt her young opponent's dream debut.

Kvitova was caught cold on a clammy Court Suzanne Lenglen as she trailed 5-1 in the opening set against last year's French Open junior champion who played beautifully early on.

Kvitova had to save a set point at 1-5 and another at 3-5 before her power game really began to have an impact.

She won nine games in a row to take charge but the 5ft 4ins Fernandez, the youngest player left in the draw, never looked flustered as she continued asking questions of her fellow left-hander with clever shot-making.

Fernandez recovered one break of serve in the second set and, with Kvitova showing signs of anxiety, had two more break points to level the set at 4-4 but Kvitova held firm to move 5-3 ahead with a superbly-angled volley.

There was a fair amount of relief in Kvitova's expression as she hammered a winner for victory, offering some warm words to her opponent at the net.

Twice Wimbledon champion Kvitova has reached the fourth round in Paris for the fifth time and will be starting to fancy her chances with China's unseeded Shuai Zhang up next.

Caputo Fires Sassuolo Top With Crotone Brace

MILAN (Dispatches) - Sassuolo will be top of Serie A overnight after Francesco Caputo struck twice in a confident 4-1 over Crotone that continued their positive start to the new season, as Napoli announced another coronavirus case ahead their match with Juventus.

Roberto De Zerbi's exciting team are on seven points after three games and cannot be caught until Sunday with Udinese and Roma sharing just one point between them ahead of their match later Saturday.

They are a point ahead of five teams, including Napoli -- who take on champions Juve on Sunday -- Inter Milan and Atalanta, who are all expected to challenge for the Serie A title this season.

Caputo, known as "Ciccio" in Italy, was on Friday called up for Italy ahead of matches against Moldova, Poland and the Netherlands between October 7-14, and the 33-year-old celebrated with a clinical performance that takes him to three goals in as many games this season.

He struck from the penalty spot in the 58th minute to put the hosts in the lead, just nine minutes after Simy had levelled Domenico Berardi's first-half opener with a penalty of his own for Crotone.

The forward made it 3-1 with five minutes remaining after being put clean through by Berardi before Manuel Locatelli completed the rout with a close range finish deep into stoppage time.

The other match scheduled for after Sassuolo's win, Genoa's home clash with Torino, was postponed earlier in the week followed a raft of Covid-19 cases for the hosts which rose to 22 among playing and coaching staff on Saturday.

Both Napoli and Atalanta announced new cases among playing staff on Saturday, with Gennaro Gattuso's side now counting midfielder Eljif Elmas among those with the virus after Poland international Piotr Zieliński was revealed as testing positive on Friday.



club since leaving Paris Saint-Germain at the end of June.

The 33-year-old is PSG's all-time top scorer, scoring 200 goals in seven seasons at the Parc des Princes.

Cavani Set to Join Man Utd

LONDON (Dispatches) - Manchester United are reportedly set to bolster Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's options up front with the signing of Edison Cavani on a free transfer, according to reports in the English and French media on Saturday.

The Uruguay forward has been without a club since leaving Paris Saint-Germain at the end of June.

The 33-year-old is PSG's all-time top scorer, scoring 200 goals in seven seasons at the Parc des Princes.

The Daily Mail reported Cavani will sign a two-year deal at Old Trafford worth £210,000 (\$270,000) a week after tax.

As a free agent, Cavani is still free to sign for a new club outside the transfer window, but French media reported the deal will be concluded before Monday's transfer deadline.

Cavani could even make his debut against his former club as United open their Champions League campaign away to PSG on October 20.

The English giants have been criticised by fans for their lack of activity in the transfer market.

Dutch midfielder Donny van de Beek is United's only signing of the transfer window so far with the Red Devils refusing to match Borussia Dortmund's asking price for long-term target Jadon Sancho.

Rodrigo Earns Battling Leeds 1-1 Draw Against Man City

LEEDS (Reuters) - Leeds United's Rodrigo Moreno struck his first goal for the club to earn a 1-1 draw at home to Manchester City in the Premier League on Saturday as visiting Pep Guardiola was denied victory against one of the men who inspired him to be a coach.

City's Spanish boss has often spoken highly of Leeds' Argentine coach Marcelo Bielsa, who Guardiola took advice from before going into management at Barcelona, with the two tacticians meeting for the first time in England.

City were dominant early on as they looked to quickly forget their shock 5-2 home defeat by Leicester City last time out, with Kevin De Bruyne almost opening the scoring with a clever free kick in the third minute -- the post denying the Belgian.

Guardiola did not have to wait long, however, for his side to take the lead, with Raheem Sterling darting inside before firing home his first league goal of the season into the bottom corner in the 17th minute. City continued to create chances, finishing the first half having had 12 shots at goal, but Leeds improved after the break, with Rodrigo pouncing on a mistake from City goalkeeper Ederson to equalise in the 59th minute.

The goal was Rodrigo's second Premier League goal and first since January 2011 when he scored for Bolton Wanderers while on loan -- nine years and 272 days ago. It is the second longest gap between a player's first two goals in the competition.

Leeds even had chances to win, with Ederson tipping a goal-bound Rodrigo header onto the bar, but City weathered the storm. The result leaves Leeds in fifth place on seven points from four games ahead of City in 10th with four points from three matches.



10-Man Persepolis Win in Shootout to Reach ACL Final

DOHA (Dispatches) - Iran's Persepolis reached the Asian Champions League final on Saturday with a 5-3 penalty shootout victory over Saudi Arabia's Al Nassr in Doha, despite finishing with 10 men and having lost their key striker to a six-month ban just hours before kick-off.

Ali Shojaei netted the decisive spot kick after Brazilian defender Maicon's effort was saved by Persepolis goalkeeper Hamed Lak in the penultimate round of penalties as the Iranians made their second final in three years. The game finished 1-1 at both full-time and following 30 minutes extra time after Al Nassr's Abderrazak Hamdallah had seen his 36th minute penalty cancelled out by Mehdi Abdi's header six minutes later.

Persepolis prevailed on an eventful day for the Tehran-based club, who learned in the build-up that prolific forward Issa Alekasir would not be eligible to play.

The Asian Football Confederation banned the 30-year-old for a "discriminatory gesture" after he had scored in the previous game against Pakhtakor, of Uzbekistan.

Al Nassr went in front when Khaled Al Ghannam was brought down by Resan and Hamdallah chipped his effort down the middle as Lak dropped to his right. Alekasir's replacement Abdi equalised three minutes before the interval, drifting free of Maicon before heading home Bashir Resan's cross from the right. Persepolis were reduced to 10 when Ehsan Pahlavan's foul on Osama Al Khalaf earned him a second yellow card a minute before the extra-time interval.

After both teams were flawless through the first three rounds of the shootout, Lak dived to his right to deny Maicon and leave Shojaei to score the decisive penalty. The Iranians last reached the final of the Asian Champions League in 2018, where they lost to Japan's Kashima Antlers.



LONDON (Dispatches) - Wayne Rooney's superb late strike gave Derby a 1-0 win at Norwich as the Rams claimed their first Championship points of the season on Saturday.

Beaten in their first three matches, Derby ended that barren run thanks to their former Manchester United star.

Derby captain Rooney curled home with a free-kick from just outside the area in the 87th minute.

It was rough justice on Norwich, who dominated for long periods and wasted a guilt-edged chance to go ahead in the second half when Teemu Pukki missed a penalty after slipping on the rain-soaked turf.

Relegated Norwich have now lost twice in a row after taking four points from their opening two games.

"I knew it was a great chance, especially with a player like Wayne to take it. As everyone knows our captain has great quality and he showed that with his free-kick," Derby boss Phillip Cocu said.

"He had put in a lot of hard work for the team and we were about to take him off but I was certainly glad he was on the pitch when we were awarded the free-kick!"

Reading extended their 100 per cent start to the second tier season with a 1-0 win over Watford at Madejski Stadium.

