

**Iran's Health Ministry  
Spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari  
Said on Saturday That Some  
195 More Iranians Have Died From  
Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)  
Over the Past 24 Hours**

# IRAN NEWS

**Iranian Foreign Minister  
Mohammad Javad Zarif Yesterday  
Met and Held Talks With His  
Chinese Counterpart Wang Yi on  
Bilateral Relations and Recent  
International Developments**

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## Iran Reminds Europe of Its “Heavy Responsibility” Over U.S. Sanctions

TEHRAN (IFP) - A senior Iranian diplomat says Europe shoulders a heavy responsibility with regards to the United States’ fresh sanctions on a number of Iranian banks.

Iran’s ambassador to international organizations in Vienna Kazem Gharibabadi Europe should take action to counter Washington’s anti-Iran moves.

“Europe should not simply settle for expressing regret over such destructive moves by the U.S.,” he said.

He added if Europe’s claim of advocating human rights is true – a claim about which there are serious doubts – then Europe should take action.

“Europe has a heavy responsibility, both in terms of countering the United States’ anti-human rights moves .... and with regards to making good on its commitments under the JCPOA,” he said.

He said the U.S., on the one hand, claims it has not slapped sanctions on food and drug imports into Iran, but, on the other, blocks financial channels available to pay for those imports.

“By now, everyone must have become aware of this dirty U.S. game,” he said. **See Page 7**

## Women Can Register To Run for President

**IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK**

TEHRAN - Guardian Council Spokesman Abbasali Kadkhodaei said women can register as candidates to run for president.

Women can register as candidates in the upcoming presidential elections without let or hindrance, Kadkhodaei told reporters in Tehran on Saturday.

He added that other arguments around the issue need to be resolved on a gradual basis.

In late August, the Iranian deputy interior minister in charge of elections said the country’s next presidential elections will be held on June 18, 2021.

Jamal Orf said with the Guardian Council’s approval, June 18 was set for holding presidential, council and midterm parliamentary and Assembly of Experts elections.

Meanwhile Kadkhodaei said there are legal measures for Iran to pursue the U.S. sanctions in international communities. **See Page 7**

## Gov’t Warns: Wear Mask Or Pay 50,000 Toman Fine



**IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK**

TEHRAN - Cash fines for Iranian citizens not respecting health protocols amid the coronavirus outbreak have been determined, and were announced by President Hassan Rouhani.

“Based on the decision adopted today by the National Coronavirus Headquarters, anyone who appears in society without a mask will be fined 500,000 rials, which must be paid in two weeks’ time,” President Rouhani said during a Saturday meeting of the National Coronavirus Headquarters.

“If those who have contracted coronavirus and are going through their quarantine period appear in society during the obligatory quarantine term will have to pay IRR 2 million in fines for each time they commit the offence,” he said.

The fines must be paid to the Health Ministry’s bank account to be announced by authorities accordingly, he added. The president noted everybody in society must wear face masks.

He further said police, Basij forces and health officials will monitor the enforcement of the directive.

He added that, businesses, too, are obliged to abide by health protocols.

“Business owners must not only observe health directives, but also offer services only to people who comply with these protocols,” he noted.

“Businesses which fail to abide by health protocols, will first be reminded to comply; the next time, they will be fined IRR 3 million; they will have to pay IRR 10 million the third time, and if they breach health protocols for the fourth time, their businesses will be closed,” he said.

The president said taxi drivers will be fined as well if they themselves fail to wear masks or if they give a ride to passengers not wearing masks.

President Rouhani underlined that \$100 million has been allocated to purchasing COVID-19 diagnosis kits.

He also stressed the need for rapid detection of COVID-19 cases in the efforts to contain the pandemic in Iran.

The president said he has ordered the allocation of \$100 million to the purchase of foreign testing kits that diagnose coronavirus in at most 20 minutes.

The domestic production of such rapid test kits is also underway, he noted, saying a “major development” is going to take place in the COVID-19 testing process in the country with 10,000 additional daily tests.

He then noted the government will also provide funding for 10,000 extra coronavirus tests.

He underline that the elderly make up most of the coronavirus fatalities, urging old people to be more careful.

The president also thanked all those who observe health protocols.

## Iranian Tanker Departs for Persian Gulf Carrying Venezuelan Heavy Oil

CARACAS (Reuters) - An Iranian-flagged oil tanker left Venezuela on Friday for Iran’s Kharg Island, Refinitiv Eikon data showed, after the vessel loaded 1.9 million barrels of heavy crude at the South American country’s Jose oil terminal.

The shipment marks the latest example of cooperation between the two OPEC nations this year as they step up commercial ties to try to rescue their respective oil industries, both of which are under intense pressure from U.S. sanctions.

The very-large crude carrier (VLCC), registered in shipping databases under the name Horse, discharged 2.1 million barrels of Iranian condensate to be used as diluent for Venezuela’s extra heavy oil production in September.

It then loaded Merey heavy crude, Venezuela’s flagship grade, for export under a deal between state-run oil companies Petroleos de Venezuela and National Iran Oil Company (NIOC), according to a PDVSA source.

PDVSA referred to the vessel as the “Master Honey” in its internal export schedules, seen by Reuters.

The vessel arrived in Venezuela and loaded crude without transmitting its location, as required under international shipping law in most cases, until about 2 a.m. (0600 GMT) on Friday, the Refinitiv Eikon vessel-tracking data showed.

PDVSA did not respond to a request for comment. Its export schedules did not list the cargo’s destination cargo.

Many oil tankers have changed their names and even their managing companies after visiting Venezuelan ports this year to avoid U.S. sanctions, according to public shipping registries and Refinitiv Eikon data.

The United States has sanctioned PDVSA as part of a series of measures to try to oust Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro. It has imposed sanctions on Iran’s oil industry to try to thwart the country’s nuclear program.

Washington took no action to disrupt Master Honey’s voyage, or a separate flotilla of three Iranian tankers that brought fuel to gasoline-starved Venezuela last week.

## Tehran Hits Back at Trump Over Outburst of Profanity

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has hit back at U.S. President Donald Trump after he went on expletive-ridden rant while once again threatening the Islamic Republic.

Speaking during a two-hour phone conversation with conservative radio host Rush Limbaugh on Friday, Trump said, “Iran knows that, and they’ve been put on notice: If you f--- around with us, if you do something bad to us, we are gonna do things to you that have never been done before.”

The profanity was censored on the slightly delayed radio broadcast, but was captured on Limbaugh’s livestream and memorialized in a transcript on his website.

Iran Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh responded to Trump, tweeting that the Iranians would not be intimidated and would rather “choose response to U.S. crimes,” including illegal sanctions and the January assassination of top anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani in Iraq.

The spokesperson for Iran’s permanent mission to the United Nations dismissed the U.S. president’s words as electioneering. **See Page 7**

## World Urged to Confront U.S. Unilateralism

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – An Iranian deputy foreign minister deplored the US regime’s lawless policies and violation of international norms, calling for global action against unilateralism and resolution of disputes through peaceful means.

Addressing an online meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) on the sidelines of the 75th General Assembly of the United Nations, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Mohsen Baharvand said the only way to de-fang militant unilateralism is to double down on multilateralism and respect for international law.

**Following is the text of his speech, released by IRNA:**

**Mr. Chairman,**

Our world is increasingly misaligned: not by our choice or our lack of vision, but because of the actions of a minority—desperate to reverse the clear re-pivoting of global power and wealth in the ongoing transition toward a post-Western world order. **See Page 7**

## Iran Renews Condemnation of Use of Chemical Weapons

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iranian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN Majid Takht-Ravanchi on Friday renewed condemnation in the strongest possible terms the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances.

The full text of the statement by Takht Ravanchi at the United Nations Security Council on “the situation in the Middle East – Syria / chemical” is as follows:

**In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate,  
The Most Merciful,**

**Mr. President,**

First, I would like to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Council for the month of October and assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation.

As a major victim of chemical weapons in contemporary history, Iran continues to condemn in the strongest possible terms the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere and under any circumstances.

Iran also reiterates its call for the balanced, full, and non-discriminatory implementation of the CWC and upholding the authority of the OPCW. **See Page 7**



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# Tehran Welcomes Nagorno-Karabakh Ceasefire

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian Ambassador to UK Hamid Baeedinejad noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the Nagorno-Karabakh ceasefire and urges both sides to resolve their issues through diplomatic settlement.

In a tweet on Saturday, Baeedinejad wrote that after ten hours of negotiations, the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia agreed to declare a ceasefire on Saturday and both sides are scheduled to hold further talks to resolve their differences.

He went to say that the Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the ceasefire and considers the decision as a step towards resolving tensions in the region.

## Rouhani, Putin Discuss JCPOA, COVID-19, Karabakh Truce



Putin and Rouhani conferred on maintaining cooperation on the Russian anti-COVID19 vaccine.

The dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan was originally erupted over the mountainous region of Nagorno-Karabakh and changed into a six-year war (1988-1994), Armenia took control of the region, as well as seven counties around it. Some 35,000 people were killed and 800,000 were displaced.

In May 1994, the two countries accepted a ceasefire, but international efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), aka Minsk Group, have been fruitless so far.

**MOSCOW (IRNA) - President Hassan Rouhani in a phone call with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin welcomed the ceasefire in Karabakh and stress holding more talks to solve this conflict.**

Putin informed President Rouhani of Russia's mediation efforts for de-escalating tensions in Karabakh.

Rouhani expressed support for the agreement achieved through Russian, Armenian, and Azeri foreign ministers' consultations aiming to establish a ceasefire and also start of talks for achieving a peace solution.

Both sides underlined preserving the Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Bilateral cooperation in economic and commercial fields were among other topics discussed by both sides.

## Iran Welcomes Cessation of Hostilities In Nagorno-Karabakh

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in a message on Saturday that Iran welcomes cessation of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh, urging neighbors to engage in substantive dialogue.

"Iran welcomes cessation of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh as step toward peace," Zarif wrote in his Twitter account on Saturday.

"We urge our neighbors and to engage in substantive dialogue based on respect for international law and territorial integrity," he added. "We appreciate constructive efforts of our Russian neighbors," Zarif noted.

Earlier, President Hassan Rouhani expressed deep concern about vicious cycle of violence in Karabakh, saying that the conflict should come to an immediate end and not to spread to the region.

## New Navy Achievements to Be Unveiled in Two Months

TEHRAN (MNA) – Commander of the Iranian Navy Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi announced on Saturday that Iran's new navy achievements will be unveiled by the end of December.

He informed that the homegrown 'Dena Destroyer' besides Iran's first minesweeper will be unveiled in December.

Iran's first minesweeper is meant to remove or detonate naval mines in Iranian coastline, ports, and water territories, he said.

According to him, the first Iranian vessel that is capable of carrying helicopters and drones will also be unveiled by the said time. Khanzadi explained the vessel, dubbed as the "Persian Gulf", has a range of missile and weapons capabilities and can float in the oceans for long periods of time. Refueled, it can travel around the earth three times, he said.

The Iranian commander described the Iranian navy as a symbol of Iran's authority in the seas which is updating its military capacities in a dynamic way. Iranian military experts and technicians have in recent years made great headways in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the armed forces self-sufficient in the arms sphere.

As reported earlier, the Iranian Navy has developed a new version of submarine-launched missiles that were fired in a recent naval exercise in the Sea of Oman. Iran is constructing several new Fateh submarines, one of them is equipped with an advanced propulsion system that is independent of air and allows the submarine to stay longer underwater.

## Tehran, Moscow Discuss to Resume Flights

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran's Ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali met and held talks with Head of Russia's Federal Air Transport Agency Alexander Nerdako on the resumption of flights between the two countries.

Referring to the good relations between Tehran and Moscow in various fields, Jalali stressed the need to facilitate travel for the Iranian businessmen and students.

He called for resuming flights between the two countries.

Stating that Iran-Russia ties and their officials' efforts to increase these relations are significant, Nerdako, for his part, said that the coronavirus has mostly affected Russian international flights, especially the airline Aeroflot.

Due to the spread of coronavirus, out of 78 international airports in Russia, only 7 airports in 7 provinces operate international flights, he added, saying that although decisions on the resumption of flights and the lifting of restrictions on international flights will be taken by the Coronavirus Combat and Prevention Headquarter in Russia, the request of the Iranian envoy will be transmitted to the chairman of headquarter.

During the meeting, some technical issues related to the flight of Mahan Airlines on the Tehran-Moscow-Tehran route were discussed and the Head of Russia's Federal Air Transport Agency provided the necessary instructions to solve the problems.

## U.S. Sanctions on Iranian Banks Futile in Supplying Basic Goods

TEHRAN (MNA) – Secondary sanctions on Iranian banks have no effect on the supply of foreign exchange for basic goods, said an official from the Central Bank of Iran (CBI).

Stating that the U.S. new sanctions against 18 Iranian banks and financial institutions have only political, media and propaganda implications, Hamid Ghanbari International Director General of Central Bank of Iran said that all the Iranian banks on the recent list were sanctioned when the United States withdrew from the JCPOA.

Therefore, nothing new has happened in relation to these financial institutions, he added.

Explaining the reasons why these sanctions did not work, Ghanbari said that if a bank has not been yet sanctioned and it is sanctioned for the first time, this will affect the brokerage relationship of that bank and foreign banks will review their financial relations with the sanctioned bank according to the sanctions imposed.

Despite the most severe sanctions imposed on the country's banking and financial system, foreign exchange for basic goods and machinery required by production units has been provided, he added, saying that in the first six months of this year, \$ 5.3 billion of foreign exchange for basic goods has been provided.

The U.S. Treasury Department on Thursday imposed fresh sanctions on Iran's financial sector, targeting 18 banks in an effort to further choke off Iranian revenues.

It claimed in a statement that the prohibitions did not apply to transactions to sell agricultural commodities, food, medicine or medical devices to Iran, saying it understood the need for humanitarian goods.

Tensions between Washington and Tehran have soared since Trump unilaterally withdrew in 2018 from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal struck by his predecessor and began re-imposing US sanctions that had been eased under the accord.

## Shajarian Body Laid To Rest in Tous

MASHHAD (IRNA) - Mastero Mohammadreza Shajarian, Iran's Classic Music legend, and world-acclaimed vocalist was laid to rest in the city of Tous near his hometown, Mashhad, on Saturday morning.

Shajarian, who suffered from cancer for years, passed away at a hospital in Tehran on Thursday.

His funeral procession was held in a restricted manner due to health protocols imposed by COVID19 pandemic to prevent the spread of the deadly virus.

Big screens were installed across Mashhad streets to allow his fans to watch the funeral procession live.

Shajarian's family had asked for his body to be buried near the tomb of Ferdowsi, the Great Iranian poet.

## All Capacities Mobilized To Fight Coronavirus

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Deputy Chief of Iran's Army for Coordination Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said all capacities of the army have been mobilized to help in the fight against the coronavirus outbreak in the country.

"All units of the Iranian Army are fully prepared to mobilize the capacities of their hospitals and medical centers to serve people amid the COVID-19 crisis," Sayyari said in remarks on Friday.

The Army is also ready to set up field hospitals wherever across the country when the need arises, he added.

According to Iran's Health Ministry, the number of people who have died from the coronavirus in the country has risen to over 28,000 and the total number of confirmed cases to 492,378.

Over 401,000 people infected with COVID-19 have recovered from the disease after being admitted to the hospital.

## U.S. New Sanctions, Anti-Human Crime

PARIS (IP) - Iran's Ambassador to France Bahram Qasemi described the U.S. sanctioning of 18 Iranian banks trading with foreign companies mainly to supply food and medicine, as an anti-human criminal act.

In a tweet on Friday, Bahram Qasemi said the US Treasury has intensified its insane actions against the Iranian people by intensifying its maximum pressure, especially with the beginning of Donald Trump's presidency and the increase of sanctions policies from the day after the U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The U.S. politicians need to know that the world is bigger than they imagine and that Iran will eventually overcome its problems despite increasing barriers to treating some diseases, he noted.

The U.S. Treasury Department sanctioned 18 Iranian banks on Thursday.

## All Facilities Mobilized to Serve Coronavirus Patients

TEHRAN (IP) – Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami said the ministry will spare no effort to provide maximum assistance to the country's medical network in the fight against the coronavirus.

General Hatami said from the beginning days of the coronavirus outbreak the ministry of defense mobilized all its facilities including defense infrastructures and production lines started to fight the outbreak through producing items such as masks, disinfectants, screening-specific thermal smart cameras among other items.

He pointed to the increase in the production of health equipment by the armed forces' medical centers and National Taskforce of Fighting Coronavirus as well as the increase of the COVID-19 patients' admission by the hospital of the defense ministry and stressed that the ministry will spare no effort to provide maximum assistance to the country's medical network.

Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami made the remarks on Saturday following the order of the Commander-in-Chief of Armed Forces Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei to General Staff of the Armed Forces to devote the full capacity of the armed forces' medical facilities to the coronavirus-infected patients.

## Knowledge-Based Companies Play Great Role in Iran Economy

GOLESTAN (IP) - Vice President for Science and Technology Soren Sattari visited Golestan Province yesterday and inaugurated several technological projects.

Sattari visited the Science and Technology Park of Golestan Province, knowledge-based companies, creative industrial innovation centers, health innovation centers, and the exhibition of technological products of the Growth Center in Golestan Province. Also, the first rural internet TV in Iran was inaugurated during Sattari's visit to Golestan province. On the sidelines of these visits, Sattari said that there are currently about 5,400 knowledge-based

companies in Iran and these companies have played a great role in the Iranian economy.

Sattari stated that the effectiveness of technology businesses can be seen in solving society's problems and creating added value, adding that the link between technology businesses and people's lives must be inseparable by the culture of investing in creative ideas of young people.

36 knowledge-based companies which are members of Golestan Science and Technology Park and 95 innovative nuclei are operating in the growth center of technology units of this park.

### In the name of God

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT



### BRIEF NOTICE OF TWO-STAGE GENERAL INTERNATIONAL Tender No.9901360

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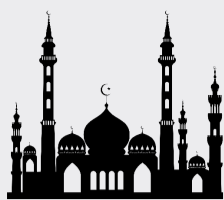
Accordingly, the prospective bidders specialized and experienced in the said area may visit Esfahan Steel Company's Website at [www.esfahansteel.ir](http://www.esfahansteel.ir) to get the Tender documents no later than 28.10.2020, and deliver their bids max. up to 25.11.2020 through one of the following addresses:

ESCO's Confidential Secretariat Office, Near to Bank Melli, Esfahan Steel Company, End of Zob-Ahan Highway, Esfahan, Iran. Or Email address [toa@esfahansteel.ir](mailto:toa@esfahansteel.ir)

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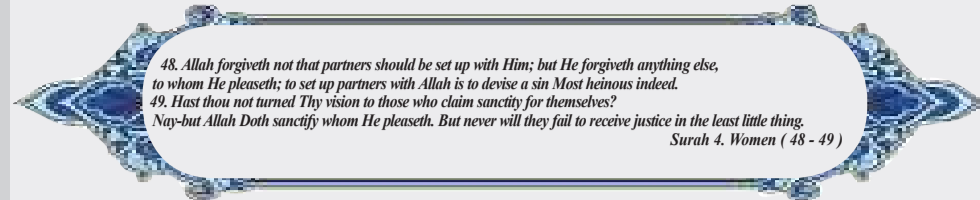
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Public Relation of Esfahan Steel Co.



## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:51
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:52
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:45
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:08



# IMIDRO Seeking Mining Cooperation With Australia

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN – Head of Iranian Mines, Mining Industries Development and Renovation (IMIDRO) calls for cooperation with Australia on mining sector especially in fields of education, exploration, extraction and new technology.**

In a meeting with Australian Ambassador to Tehran Ms. Lyndall Sachs, Mr. Khodadad Gharibpoor pointed to the priorities of the IMIDRO in cooperation with Australia, adding that exploration and extraction in depth of the earth are of the main needs of Iran for expanding its mining sector and it is willing to take advantage of Australian companies' experiences and knowledge in research, development and technical knowhow.

He then referred to this point that Australia is one of the biggest mining countries with related technical knowhow, adding that small mining companies in Iran are also interested in cooperation with Australia in fields of education, exploration and extraction.

Gharibpoor reiterated that it is necessary officials of both countries to support development and strengthening of cooperations between their private sectors.

He then underscored Iran's position in the steel production in the world, noting that while most major steel producing countries have faced slump in their productions in the first half of the current year, Iran has faced 10 percent growth in steel production.



He went on to say that it is expected Iran to produce over 30 million tons of steel ingot that half of it would be exported.

Gharibpoor also said that Iran has plans to increase steel production capacity in the southern course of the country, stating that currently two 10-million-ton steel production projects are in the works in southern Iran, and imports of iron ore from Australia is one of the appropriate options for those projects.

According to Gharibpoor, each one of the projects needs 30 million tons of iron ore annually. He also emphasized that cooperation with Australia for provision of iron ore is one option for both countries to boost their economic relations.

Meanwhile, Australian Ambassador, for her part, said that Australian companies despite current existing restrictions have always had interactions with their Iranian counterparts in the mining sector as well as food industries. Sachs also welcomed the proposal for signing the MoU and called for reviewing the topics in the MoU for cooperation to sign it.

She also pointed to holding a mining IMARC conference in Australia, saying that the current edition of the conference will be held on October 27, 2020 in a virtual format but they can arrange for presence of IMIDRO representative for delivering speech in the next year edition.

## Commodities Worth Over \$221m Traded on IME

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Over 543,582 MT of commodities worth over \$221m were traded last week on the Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME).



According to the report from IME International Affairs and PR, on the domestic and export metal and mineral trading floor of IME, 195,262 MT of various products worth close to \$99m were traded last week.

On this trading floor, 187,340 MT of steel, 5,520 MT of aluminum, 70 MT of copper, 120 MT of molybdenum concentrates, 12 MT of precious metal concentrates, 660 MT of zinc ingot as well as 40 MT of lead ingot were traded by customers.

The report declares that on domestic and export oil and petrochemical trading floors of IME, 346,891 MT of different commodities with the total value of \$125m were traded.

On this trading floor, 87,100 MT of VB feed stock, 114,258 MT of bitumen, 73,083 MT of polymer products, 37,322 MT of chemical products, 23,000 MT of lube cut oil, 2,712 MT of insulation, 2,226 MT of base oil, 1,500 MT of coke, 150 MT of argon as well as 7,200 MT of sulfur were traded.

Moreover, the agricultural trading floor of the IME played host to trading of 100 kg of saffron threads.

Furthermore, 1,429 MT of commodities were traded on the side market of the IME.

## SHTA Continues Activities Despite New Banking Sanctions



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Chairman of Iran-Switzerland Chamber of Commerce says the new U.S. sanctions on 18 Iranian banks will not affect humanitarian trade between Iran and Switzerland

Speaking to IRNA, SharifNezam-Mafi pointed to dispatch of three medical consignments through Swiss Humanitarian Trade Agreement (SHTA) since July, adding that recent U.S. sanctions on 18 Iranian banks will not have any effect on this humanitarian trade.

He added that recent secondary sanctions imposed by the U.S. on 18 Iranian banks have nothing to do with SHTA activities, adding that agreements have been in a way that no sanctions can affect it or affect trade for imports of basic items like medicine and grains.

Nezam-Mafi added that new sanctions so far have not affected the SHTA theoretically, expressing hope that it would not affect practically this humanitarian channel, adding that since the imposition of new sanctions no disrupte has been seen in the trade yet.

He went on to say that as the U.S. election approaches, banking sanctions in this stage can be considered a propagation for some group who are facing probable defeat in the election in order that to create hurdles in way of normalization of Iran-U.S. ties in the next government.

Nezam-Mafi further said that Iran due to previous sanctions and its pullout of the FATF has been out of the global banking network, adding that recent sanctions may have more consequences for the private banks and create hurdles in way of their daily transactions but it makes no difference for traders.

He added that traders of grains and medical equipment can continue their activities with no concern through the SHTA, adding that this channel has been devised in a way that the country can provide its basic goods.

Nezam-Mafi concluded that since July that the first batch of medicine cargo arrived in Iran from Switzerland, two more medical equipment has been traded.

## Imports of Basic Goods Accelerating

TEHRAN (MNA) - The deputy head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said the imports of the basic commodities into the country have been accelerating in the past few months, IRIB reported on Saturday.

Iran's non-oil trade was declined in the first few months of the current year due to the outbreak of coronavirus but the government implemented several programs for boosting the level of trade.

According to the official, currently, over 3.402 million tons of basic goods are stored in the country's ports, among which corn, with 1.623 million tons, is the top imported item.

As reported, some 2.376 million tons of the mentioned goods have been stored in Imam Khomeini port.

Also, 15 vessels containing 586 thousand tons of basic goods are being unloaded, while 10 vessels containing 584 thousand tons of commodities are waiting to dock at the ports.

Jamal Orounqi put the total number of containers in the country's ports at 102 thousand TEUs and noted that the number of full imported containers is over 30,000 that contain basic goods such as rice as well as non-essential items.

## NPC Delays Petchem Showcase Due to Pandemic

TEHRAN (Shana) - The director of the 14th IranPlast International Exhibition said the showcase was originally scheduled for November which is now delayed until December 25.

According to the National Petrochemical Company (NPC), Ayoub Banavi said the 4-day event, which brings together top petrochemical and chemical companies from Iran and other countries was deferred to December from November 14-17 due to the spread

of the coronavirus in the country.

He said 400 companies had so far registered in the showcase which will now be held on the Petrochemical Industry Day.

The interested companies and exhibitors may visit iranplast.ir to learn more about the event.

Iranplast is one of the most important industrial events in Iran where polymer and plastics producers showcase their latest achievements in the industry.

## 1st Phase of Goreh-Jusk Pipeline Project Online by March 2021

TEHRAN (Shana) – The first phase of the Goreh-Jusk oil pipeline project will come on stream by the end of the current calendar year to March 20 2021.

The phase entails the operation of pump houses No. 2 and 4, receiving stations 1 and 2, pigging, as well as the final terminal.

According to the Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC), Ali Jafarzadeh, project manager of the Goreh-Jusk crude oil transfer pipeline project, said testing the pumping houses as well as the final terminal starts in December and ends in early February.

He stated that the purpose of launching the first phase is to transfer 350,000 barrels of crude oil, and added: "So far, this phase has made about 70% physical progress and the executive operations are underway according to plan."

The project manager of the project stated: "The commissioning of sections of pumping houses 1, 3 and 5 is also on the agenda."

Jafarzadeh noted that this is for the first time in the Middle East that 42-inch gate valves are produced by an Iranian knowledge-based company, adding the 25 42-inch gate valves required by the project, whose raw materials were even supplied by local companies, would be delivered to the project by November this year.

## Annual Housing Rental Inflation Exceeds 24%

TEHRAN (MNA) - The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) announced that the inflation rate of housing rentals in the 12 months ended on September 21 reached 24.3 percent, IRNA reported.

As reported, point-to-point inflation rate for house rent rose 28.9 percent in summer (June 21-September 21) compared to the same period past year.

The rental price index of residential units in urban areas reached 195.8 in the summer of this year, registering an increase of 2.7 percent compared to the previous season.

In the mentioned season, the highest seasonal inflation rate was related to Hamedan province with an increase of 16.4 percent, and the lowest was related to Sistan-Baluchestan province with an increase of 3.8 percent.

Back in August, the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) released a report which showed that rent price in Tehran city increased 27 percent in the first month of the summer (June 21-July 21) from its previous month.

## Iran's H1 Aluminum Output Tops 200,000 Tons

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's aluminum production reached 211,779 tons during the six calendar months to September 21, indicating a 71% hike compared with the similar span of the last year.

According to the latest data released by the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization, Iran Aluminum Company (IRALCO) topped the list with 95,723 tons of the total output.

IRALCO was followed by Hormozal Aluminum Company with 45,444 tons, Almahdi Aluminum Company with 33,988 tons, SALCO with 25,000 tons and Iran Alumina with 11,227 tons.

Iranian manufacturers rolled out 36,866 tons of aluminum during the six calendar month (August 22 to September 21), to register an 84% jump compared with the last year's corresponding month.

Alumina power production reached 121,691 tons during the first half, up 4\$ year on year.

Iran plans to reach the annual production of 1.5 million tons of aluminum ingot by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025-March 2026).



## Four Dead, Several Injured In Beirut Fuel Tank Explosion

BEIRUT (Reuters) - Four people were killed and several more were wounded when a fuel tank exploded in a Beirut building on Friday, the Lebanese Red Cross said.

The explosion caused a large fire to break out in the building in the Tariq al-Jadida neighborhood, a security source said.

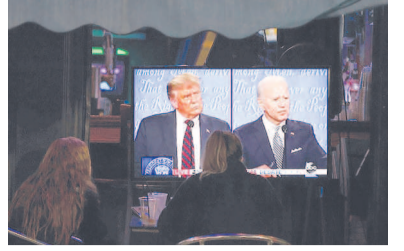
One person was critically wounded, while several others were treated for smoke inhalation, the Red Cross and a hospital source said.



## U.S. Presidential Debate Set for October 15 Officially Cancelled

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The next United States presidential debate has been cancelled, the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) confirmed late Friday, after US President Donald Trump and his Democratic challenger, Joe Biden, disagreed this week over the possibility of holding the event virtually.

In a statement, the CPD said the debate, which was scheduled to take place on October 15 in Miami, would not be held. "The CPD will turn its attention to preparations for the final presidential debate scheduled for October 22," the commission said.



## Armenia, Azerbaijan Agree Ceasefire, Start of Substantive Talks



BAKU (Dispatches) - Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed on Saturday to a ceasefire and to begin "substantive talks" over the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh after nearly two weeks of fierce clashes.

Bitter fighting in the central Asian region has claimed hundreds of lives, forced thousands to flee, and stirred fears of a full-blown war that could suck in regional powers Turkey and Russia.

Speaking after 11 hours of Moscow-mediated talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the warring sides had agreed to a ceasefire from "12 hours 00 minutes on October 10 on humanitarian grounds." It was not immediately clear whether the pause in fighting would come into effect at noon in Moscow or the local time in Karabakh. During the ceasefire -- mediated by the International Committee of the Red Cross -- the parties will exchange bodies and prisoners, Lavrov said, reading from a statement.

"Concrete parameters of the ceasefire will be agreed separately," the statement added.

Russia's top diplomat also said that Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to start negotiating a peaceful solution to the territorial dispute.

"Azerbaijan and Armenia begin substantive negotiations with the purpose of achieving a peaceful settlement as soon as possible," Lavrov told reporters, adding that such talks would be mediated by France, Russia and the U.S.

Renewed fighting over Karabakh -- an ethnic Armenian region of Azerbaijan that broke from Baku's control in a devastating war in the early 1990s -- has claimed some 400 lives and forced thousands of people from their homes.

The heavy clashes erupted late last month, with both sides blaming the other for the biggest outbreak in violence since a 1994 ceasefire left the status of Karabakh in limbo.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, who has repeatedly vowed to use his military to retake the breakaway province, said earlier that the talks represented a historic opportunity for Armenia.

"We are giving Armenia a chance to settle the conflict peacefully," he said. "This is their last chance."

Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said his country was "ready for the resumption of the peace process" led by international brokers.

Heavy clashes continued into Friday, Armenian and Azerbaijani defence officials said, with further civilian deaths reported, even after Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the Moscow meeting and appealed for a ceasefire on humanitarian grounds.

Shelling started again in Stepanakert, the provincial capital of Karabakh, where an AFP journalist heard several explosions and saw the remains of a rocket in a crater next to a cemetery for dead soldiers.

A spokesman for the Armenian defence ministry told reporters on Friday that fighting continued despite the negotiations in Moscow.

## Kyrgyzstan President Calls in Military as Protesters Clash in Streets



BISHKEK (Reuters) - Kyrgyz President Sooronbai Jeenbekov declared a state of emergency in the capital Bishkek on Friday and ordered the military to end days of unrest, as supporters of rival political groups fought on the streets.

A Reuters journalist in the capital heard gunshots and saw demonstrators from rival groups throwing rocks and bottles at each other and scuffling. One opposition politician was reported to have been wounded.

"Today we are witnessing a real threat to our statehood," Jeenbekov said, explaining the move, a day after the Kremlin said it needed to prevent chaos in the former Soviet republic.

Earlier the president had said he was ready to resign once a new cabinet was appointed - which could happen on Saturday, when parliament plans to convene in his residence, according to a deputy speaker quoted by local news website Akipress.

## Pelosi Unveils Bill to Assess Presidential Capacity

WASHINGTON (AFP) -- U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Donald Trump's chief rival in Congress, proposed a commission Friday to assess a president's capacity for carrying out his duties -- a move that highlights concerns about Trump's health weeks before the election.

Despite the conspicuous timing of the unveiling, Pelosi insisted that "this is not about President Trump," who has been treated for Covid-19 for the past week and is desperate to return to campaigning.

"He will face the judgment of the voters," the top Democrat said. "But he shows the need to create a process for future presidents."

Pelosi introduced legislation that would create what she called a commission on presidential capacity to discharge the powers and duties of the office.

The bill would establish a 16-member bipartisan panel of medical experts and former executive branch officials. But with Republicans controlling the Senate, it is highly unlikely that the bill will become law.

The panel would fulfill a process established under the U.S. Constitution's 25th Amendment that was ratified in 1967, after John F. Kennedy's assassination.

Pelosi said the move would preserve "stability if a president suffers a crippling physical or mental problem," and provide guidance for the transfer of power to the vice president if needed.

Despite the proclamation that the bill is intended to address future presidents, Pelosi directly addressed Trump's health and how it has raised concerns.

"Clearly he is under medication. Any of us who is under medication of that seriousness is in an altered state," she told reporters.

"He has bragged about the medication that he has taken, and again, there are articles by medical professions saying this could... have an impact on judgment."

Trump, who is trailing in the polls, fired back angrily on Twitter -- and turned the issue against his election rival Joe Biden and running mate Kamala Harris.

## Pakistan Bans TikTok Over Immoral Content

ISLAMABAD (AFP) - Pakistan on Friday banned the wildly popular video sharing app TikTok, as authorities press their clampdown on "immoral" content.

Chinese-owned TikTok which has become a global sensation with its short video clips has a huge user base among young Pakistanis, with some attracting millions of followers.

But it has come up against backlash in the ultra-conservative Islamic country, where in recent months several dating apps including Tinder and Grindr have also been banned and YouTube threatened with shutdown.

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) on Friday said TikTok had failed to adhere to two warnings, which had demanded it block "immoral, obscene and vulgar" content.

"The application failed to fully comply with the instructions, therefore, directions were issued for blocking of TikTok application in the country",

the PTA said in a statement.

Pakistanis were unable to access the app on Friday evening.

Arsalan Khalid, a digital media adviser to Prime Minister Imran Khan, has previously claimed the "exploitation, objectification & sexualization of young girls on TikTok" was causing pain to parents.

Earlier this week, Pakistani TikToker Jannat Mirza became the first in the country to reach 10 million followers, with lip-syncing and slow motion clips among her content.

"TikTok is a major source of entertainment for lower and middle class Pakistanis, as well as illiterate citizens that includes half the population as it is video based and easy to use," said Usma Khiliji, a digital rights activist, who said the ban violates freedom of speech.

Campaigners have long criticized the creeping censorship and control of Pakistan's internet, printed and electronic media.



## North Korea Holds Rare Predawn Military Parade



SEOUL (Reuters) - North Korea held a military parade early on Saturday to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of its ruling Workers' Party in a rare predawn event, South Korea's military said.

The anniversary, celebrated with a raft of concerts and festivals, was closely watched around the region as it was seen as an event where leader Kim Jong Un could deliver messages to domestic and foreign audiences.

Analysts had said the North might unveil new strategic weapons, but state media has not released any images or reports on a parade.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it spotted signs that a parade involving large-scale military equipment and personnel took place in the capital Pyongyang but gave no further details. "There was a sign that North Korea conducted a military parade this morning at Kim Il Sung Square, mobilising large scale equipment and personnel," it said in a statement.

"South Korea and U.S. intelligence authorities are closely monitoring developments, including for the possibility that it was the main event."

It was the first time that the parade has been held in the wee hours, and Kim was expected to have attended, a military source told Reuters.

"But I wouldn't read too much into the timing for now because we don't know whether state media would report on the parade," the source said on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the issue.

South Korean officials said this week that Kim could use the event as a "low intensity" show of power ahead of the U.S. presidential election in November, as denuclearisation talks with Washington have stalled.

In August, Kim told a key politburo meeting that the anniversary celebrations must be "prepared at the best level with peculiar style as a great political festival."

For weeks commercial satellite imagery has shown thousands of North Korean soldiers practicing marching, and South Korean officials have said the North could use the parade to unveil a new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), or a new submarine-launched ballistic missile.



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## Irish Budget Deficit Set to Hit 6% of GDP

DUBLIN (Reuters) - Ireland's budget deficit is set to hit 6% of gross domestic product this year, narrower than the 7.4% to 10% range forecast early in the coronavirus pandemic, Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe said on Friday.

Ireland has collected much more tax so far this year than it expected in April when it forecast that a big fall in tax receipts and a huge increase in spending could

lead to a deficit of up to 30 billion euros.

Donohoe said the deficit would reach 21 billion euros, provided current COVID-19 restrictions were not tightened further. A no-policy-change estimated deficit of 14.5 billion euros for 2021 will be updated next week when the government announces its budget stimulus measures for next year.



## Huawei Ousted From Heart of EU

STOCKHOLM (Reuters) - Orange and Proximus have picked Nokia to help build 5G networks in Belgium as they drop Huawei amid U.S. pressure to exclude the Chinese firm from supplying key telecoms equipment.

The moves are among the first by commercial operators in Europe to drop Huawei from next-generation networks and come after months of diplomatic pressure from Washington, which alleges Huawei equipment could be used by Beijing for spying.

The Belgian capital Brussels is home to the NATO alliance and the European Union's executive and parliament, making it a matter of particular concern for U.S. intelligence agencies. "Belgium has been 100% reliant on Chinese vendors for its radio networks - and people working at NATO and the EU were making mobile phone calls on these networks," said John Strand, an independent Danish telecoms consultant.

"The operators are sending a signal that it's important to have access to safe networks." The United States welcomed the decisions by Orange Belgium and Proximus, which have a network sharing agreement. "This is the latest example of evaporating Huawei deals and further confirmation of this worldwide momentum towards trusted vendors," said Keith Krach, the U.S. undersecretary at the State Department for economic growth, energy and the environment.

Huawei, the world's biggest telecoms equipment supplier, strongly denies the U.S. allegations and has been highly critical of calls to ban it from 5G contracts. However, it said on Friday it accepted the decisions by Orange Belgium and Proximus, which confirmed an earlier Reuters exclusive.

"This is the outcome of a tender organised by operators and the result of the free market," a Huawei spokesman said. "We embrace fair competition, the more diversified a supply chain the more competitive it becomes," he said, adding Huawei had been supplying equipment in Belgium for more than a decade and its commitment remained unchanged. The decisions leave Liberty Group's Telenet as the only mobile carrier in Belgium yet to say which supplier it will use for its next mobile networks. Telenet currently relies on equipment made by China's ZTE, and plans to announce its 5G decision in the first half of 2021, a spokeswoman said. The deals to supply radio gear to Orange Belgium and Proximus are a boost for Nokia, which struggled to make headway in the 5G market earlier this year even as Huawei was under pressure.

"I have tried to become RAN (radio access network) supplier to Orange Belgium since 2003 when the company was still Mobistar. Here we are, finally," tweeted Tommi Uitto, president of Nokia Mobile Networks.

The companies did not disclose a value for the contracts.

Nokia shares were up 3% in afternoon trading.

Orange Belgium and Proximus said Ericsson would supply the core of their 5G networks, a smaller slice of business. EU members have been stepping up scrutiny of so-called high-risk vendors. This subjects Huawei's governance and technology to critical examination and is likely to lead other European operators to strip it from their networks, analysts say.

Nokia and Ericsson have been the main beneficiaries of the challenges facing Huawei. From Bell Canada and Telus Corp in Canada to BT in Britain, the Nordic companies have been grabbing market share from the Chinese firm.

Separately, Nokia said it had won a contract to provide data management software to Telefonica UK, which said the Finnish firm would replace the less than 1% of Huawei kit in its network.

## G20 Leaning Towards Extending Debt-Payment Freeze

PARIS (Reuters) - A consensus is emerging among G20 nations to extend a debt-payment freeze next week for poor countries for an additional six months, a French finance ministry source said on Friday.

Members of the Group of 20 economic powers and the Paris Club of creditor nations agreed in April to suspend until the end of the year debt payments owed to them by poor countries to free up resources for tackling the coronavirus outbreak.

G20 finance ministers are due to take a decision on what to do after the end of the year when they hold an online meeting next Wednesday, the source said.

"The number we think we will land on is six months, which seems reasonable as that will give time to evaluate the impact of the crisis on debt sustainability," the source said.

After six months, the debt servicing freeze could be extended for those countries still facing liquidity problems to cover maturities falling due.

More in-depth debt restructurings could be considered at that time for countries whose debt burdens were deemed unsustainable, the source added. Unlike the debt-payment freeze, such treatment would be considered on condition that private sector creditors also participated, there was an IMF program for the debtor country and if there is comparable treatment among all official public sector creditors.

Private sector lenders have faced criticism for not also freezing debt payments owed to them, while China has been singled out for not suspending payments owed to state-owned China Development Bank.

## Microsoft to Let Employees Work From Home Permanently

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Software giant Microsoft will let employees work from home permanently if they choose to, U.S. media reported on Friday, becoming the latest employer to expand work-from-home provisions prompted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Verge said most Microsoft employees are still at home as the health crisis drags on, and the company doesn't expect to reopen its US offices until January of next year at the earliest.

But when it does, workers can choose to work from their residences permanently,

although in that case they will have to give up their office space.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has challenged all of us to think, live and work in new ways," Microsoft's Chief People Officer Kathleen Hogan said in a note to employees obtained by the tech news outlet.

"We will offer as much flexibility as possible to support individual workstyles, while balancing business needs and ensuring we live our culture."

In a statement to AFP, a Microsoft spokesperson didn't address whether work-from-home would be made permanent but said, "Our goal is to evolve the way we work over time with intention -- guided by employee input, data and our commitment to support individual workstyles and business needs while living our culture."

The Verge report said employees will need approval from their managers to work remotely on a permanent basis, but can spend less than 50 percent of their week outside the office without approval.

Some employees won't be eligible for remote-work arrangements, such as those who work in Microsoft's labs or train other employees.

In its memo, the company co-founded by Bill Gates said it is possible for its workers to relocate across the United States or perhaps overseas, The Verge reported.

Those that relocate may see their salaries change depending on where they go, and while the company will cover expenses for employees' home offices, it won't cover relocation expenses.

As of the end of June, Microsoft employed 163,000 people, 96,000 of them in the US, according to a securities filing.

Some major tech firms have already allowed permanent work-from-home arrangements including Facebook, whose boss Mark Zuckerberg said half of the social network's staff could be permanently working remotely within five to 10 years.

## UK Economy Stumbles in August



LONDON (Reuters) - Britain's economy struggled to grow in August, setting back its recovery from the coronavirus lockdown, and finance minister Rishi Sunak was due to announce more help to slow a rise in jobs losses as a second wave of COVID-19 infections hits.

Gross domestic product rose by 2.1% from July, official data showed, not even half the median forecast in a Reuters poll of economists and the slowest increase since the economy began to recover in May from a record slump.

Much of what growth there was in August was down to a one-off government restaurant subsidy programme.

Finance minister Rishi Sunak was due to announce later on Friday a plan to support jobs in businesses that may be ordered to close to slow a resurgence of COVID-19 infections. Economists said the data also raised the chance of more stimulus from the Bank of England.

"The sharp slowdown in growth indicates that the recovery may be running out of steam, with output still well below pre-crisis levels," Suren Thiru, head of economics at the British Chambers of Commerce said.

"The increase in activity in August largely reflects a temporary boost from the economy reopening and government stimulus, including the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme, rather than proof of a sustained 'V'-shaped recovery."

More than half of the economy's growth in August came from accommodation and food, where output surged by 71.4% thanks to the government's one-month meals subsidies, more people taking holidays in Britain and the easing of lockdown restrictions.

Kate Nicholls, head of the UK Hospitality trade body, said new COVID-19 restrictions introduced in September had weighed on the hospitality sector again.

"Today's figures show our economy has grown for 4 consecutive months, but I know that many people are worried about the coming winter months," Sunak said.

"Throughout this crisis, my single-focus has been jobs - protecting as many jobs as possible, and providing support for people to find other opportunities where this isn't possible. This goal remains unchanged."

## U.S. Imposes Sanctions on Nicaragua Bank

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States imposed sanctions on a Nicaraguan bank and two senior officials, expanding pressure over the leftist government's crackdown on protests and alleged corruption.

The Treasury Department said it would freeze any U.S. assets and ban transactions with the Caruna bank as well as Nicaragua's attorney general and the secretary of the presidency.

The Treasury Department alleged that President Daniel Ortega used Caruna, which stands for Cooperativa De Ahorro Y Credito Caja Rural Nacional, as an unregulated slush fund that takes money from the state oil company to provide patronage to supporters.

It accused the attorney general, Ana Julia Guido De Romero, of leading efforts to charge prisoners detained for peaceful protests, including some arrested for delivering water to a group of mothers on a hunger strike as they sought justice for their children.

The latest move "promotes accountability for the Ortega regime and those who are attempting to further its atrocious activities," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement.



"The United States will continue to take the necessary steps to support the Nicaraguan people and pressure the Ortega regime to cease repression, respect human rights and allow the conditions for free and fair elections that would restore democracy to Nicaragua."

President Donald Trump's administration has been raising pressure on Nicaragua as well as its leftist allies Cuba and Venezuela.

It has already imposed sanctions on Ortega as well as his wife, Vice President Rosario Murillo.

A leader of the left-wing Sandinista movement, Ortega was re-elected in disputed polls in 2016 for a term that ends in 2022.

More than 300 people died as security forces put down protests in 2018 that sought earlier elections after Ortega pushed social security reforms.

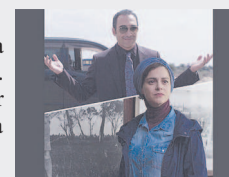
## “Once Upon a Time a Woman” To Be Screened at Florida Festival

TEHRAN (MNA) – An international film festival in Florida of the United States will be hosting the film “Once Upon a Time a Woman” directed by an Iranian filmmaker.

The Iranian film “Once Upon a Time a Woman” directed by Jalil Akbari Sehat will be Screened in the competitive section of an International Film Festival which is held

annually in Florida, USA.

“Once Upon a Time a Woman” depicts the story of a woman who is suffering from an incurable disease. At the same time, she is in search of finding his brother who has gone to Kenya; however she reaches a new knowledge of life.



## Fearing Biden Tax Hikes, Wealthy Americans Rush to Change Estate Plans

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Wealthy Americans are scrambling to change their estate plans before year-end, worried that Democrat Joe Biden will win the U.S. presidential election and raise taxes, say financial advisers to the moneyed set.

The biggest concern is that the White House and Congress could get swept up in a “Blue Wave” of Democratic wins that give Biden the power to propose and pass a sweeping set of tax reforms.

Wealthy people are especially nervous that an exemption allowing individuals to leave up to \$11.58 million to heirs, free of estate or gift taxes, could be cut before it expires in 2025.

Democrats want to raise estate taxes to the “historical norm,” according to the party’s platform. That could mean slashing the exemption to \$5.49 million, the figure in place before Republican President Donald Trump signed a sweeping tax bill that included benefits for corporations and wealthy Americans in 2017, advisers said.

It is unclear how the election will go or what, if any, tax reform will pass. Tax code changes can also be complex and time consuming. But as Biden has climbed in the polls, rich people are rushing to set up trusts and revise existing ones before year-end to avoid 2021 tax consequences, advisers said.

“The \$11.58 million question is, ‘What is going to happen to the gift and estate tax exclusion?’” said Toni Ann Kruse, a New York estates lawyer who counsels ultra-high net worth people. “We don’t know who will win the election or control the House or Senate - and all of those factors will play into what could happen.”

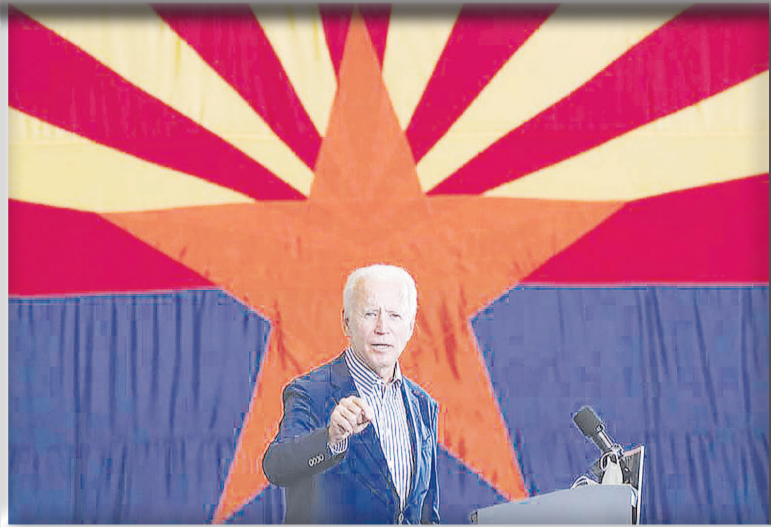
Biden would also “return the estate tax to 2009 levels” to fund paid family and medical leave, according to his website.

His plan also includes raising taxes on long-term capital gains, which is the profit earned by selling assets whose values have appreciated. Taxpayers with income above \$1 million would pay a 39.6% income tax on the profit, instead of the current tiered approach that maxes out at 20% for individuals with \$441,450 or more income.

In a statement, Biden campaign spokesman Andrew Bates reiterated the candidate’s intent to change tax law in ways that benefit less affluent people.

“Joe Biden is running to rebuild the backbone of this nation - the American middle class - by ensuring that our economy rewards work and not just wealth,” he said.

The uptick in requests for estate changes intensified in June when Biden pulled ahead of Trump in polling, advisers said. Several firms said they have been overwhelmed by requests since then, and expect business to pick up more toward the end of the year.



Tax-related workflow is triple the norm at Miller Samuel Inc, a New York-based real estate appraisal firm, said Chief Executive Jonathan Miller.

“We are flooded with requests for gift and estate tax appraisals right now,” he said.

New York estate and tax planning lawyer Philip Michaels has added around 15 high net worth clients during the last several months who are revising estate plans.

Rockefeller Capital Management, a financial advisory firm in New York, is holding virtual events for customers while working with legal and tax advisers to sort through nuances of possible legislation, said Joe Roberts, Senior Wealth Strategist.

Clients are worried about a “quick turn and drastic departure” from the status quo, Roberts said.

At the same time, some customers are worried about making decisions too early. That is because trusts created to use lifetime exemptions are not easily unwound.

“It’s a lot of money to give away,” Indianapolis estate planning lawyer John Olivieri said of some of his clients. “People are struggling with, ‘Do I really want to give this away?’”

## Every 40 Seconds, Someone Dies From Suicide

TEHRAN (UNIC) – United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in his message on World Mental Health Day, 10 October 2020, while announcing that nearly 1 billion people live with a mental disorder around the world, said every 40 seconds, someone dies from suicide.



### *The full text of his message reads:*

Around the world, nearly 1 billion people live with a mental disorder. Every 40 seconds, someone dies from suicide. And depression is now recognized as a leading cause of illness and disability among children and adolescents.

All of this was true, even before COVID-19. We are now seeing the consequences of the pandemic on people’s mental well-being, and this is just the beginning. Many groups, including older adults, women, children and people with existing mental health conditions are at risk of considerable medium- and long-term ill-health if action is not taken.

Addressing mental health is central to achieving Universal Health Coverage. It deserves our commitment. Too few people have access to quality mental health services. In low- and middle-income countries, more than 75 per cent of people with mental health conditions receive no treatment at all. And, overall, governments spend on average less than 2 per cent of their health budgets on mental health. This cannot go on.

We can no longer ignore the need for a massive scale-up in investment in mental health. We must act together, now, to make quality mental health care available for all who need it to allow us to recover faster from the COVID-19 crisis.

## China Joins WHO-Backed Vaccine Program Rejected by Trump

BEIJING (Reuters) - China has joined a global scheme for the distribution of COVID-19 vaccine backed by the World Health Organization (WHO), it said on Friday, giving a major boost to an initiative shunned by U.S. President Donald Trump.

Beijing’s latest bid to join the global fight against the coronavirus follows criticism over its handling of the pandemic, which has contributed to a growing unfavorable view of China in advanced nations, a recent survey showed.

“We are taking this concrete step to ensure equitable distribution of vaccines, especially to developing countries, and hope more capable countries will also join and support COVAX,” foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said in a statement.

The statement did not detail the support Beijing will provide to the COVAX programme, which aims to deliver at least 2 billion doses of vaccine by the end of 2021.

In May, President Xi Jinping pledged \$2 billion over the next two years to tackle the pandemic that has killed more than 1 million people. China, where the virus was first reported late last year, is also in talks with the WHO to have its domestically made vaccines assessed for international use.

As many as 171 nations have joined the program to back equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines for rich and poor countries alike. Participants include about 76 wealthy, self-financing ones, but neither the United States nor Russia.

COVAX is co-led by the GAVI vaccines alliance, the WHO and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI).



It is designed to discourage national governments from hoarding COVID-19 vaccines and to focus on first vaccinating the most high-risk people in every country.

But its prospects of success had been dim until recently, as some rich nations, including the United States, chose to sign their own supply deals.

“Vaccine deals are underway and we are fast approaching our initial fundraising target to jumpstart support for lower-income countries,” GAVI’s chief executive, Dr Seth Berkley, told Reuters in a statement.

“What seemed like an impossible challenge just a few months ago - ensuring every country, rich or poor, gets equitable, rapid access to COVID-19 vaccines - is now becoming a reality.”

The move also means China “will be procuring vaccines through the facility for a proportion of their own population, just as with other countries,” a GAVI spokesman said.

China has ample capability to make COVID-19 vaccine and will prioritise supplies to developing countries when they are ready, the foreign ministry added.

China has at least four experimental vaccines in final stages of clinical trials.

Two are being developed by state-backed China National Biotech Group (CNBG), and two by Sinovac Biotech and CanSino Biologics.

It has also inoculated hundreds of thousands of essential workers and other high-risk groups, though incomplete clinical trials have provoked safety concerns among experts.

## Iran Renews...

FROM PAGE 1

In the past several years, based on unsubstantiated allegations, the processes of the CWC, OPCW, and the Security Council have been abused against the Syrian Government.

However, the fact is that in 2014, the head of the Joint Mission to Eliminate Chemical Weapons in Syria, in her final report to this Council, confirmed that Syria has fulfilled all its commitments and that its entire chemical stockpiles have been destroyed.

Later, the OPCW also confirmed the destruction of the entire chemical stockpile of Syria and all its 27 production facilities.

Now, these facts as well as the Syrian government’s significant cooperation with the OPCW and the UN, including its provision to the OPCW of over 80 monthly reports and a large amount of information are being neglected.

Such unproductive policies have not contributed to the resolution of

outstanding questions.

Rather, it has divided this Council, eroded the OPCW’s credibility, and weakened professionalism and consensual decision-making process in that Organization.

Additionally, it has adversely affected the efforts for the full and effective realization of the very purpose of the CWC, namely the elimination of chemical weapons, which is yet to be realized due to blatant failure by the U.S. as the sole major Possessor State Party.

To avoid this situation, the current trend in the Security Council and the OPCW, which has been initiated solely based on politically-motivated objectives of certain countries, needs to discontinue.

We stand ready to do whatever in our power to restore the OPCW’s authority and promote the full and non-discriminatory implementation of the CWC.

I thank you, Mr. President.

## Tehran Reminds...

FROM PAGE 1

The top diplomat said the U.S. has a dark record when it comes to human rights as it has jeopardized the lives of ordinary people through economic terrorism.

“U.S. officials have acknowledged that they will press ahead with their ‘maximum pressure’ policy vis-à-vis Iran to bring the country to the negotiating table with features of their own choice. The U.S. must have realized by now that this strategy is a non-starter in Iran,” he said.

He noted Iran will do whatever it can to counter U.S. moves and cushion the blow from its sanctions.

He dismissed as a “crime against humanity” Washington’s unilateral and illegal sanctions, of whatever type and at whatever stage.

“All domestic, political, international and legal potentialities should be utilized to counter the crimes,” he said.

## Women Can...

FROM PAGE 1

Responding to a question on the U.S. new sanctions on Iranian banks, the Guardian Council spokesman noted on Saturday that there are legal measures to take, adding Iran’s foreign ministry and presidential office are pursuing the case.

Kadkhodaei said that the foreign ministry and presidency could file lawsuits to pursue the case.

His remarks came after Washington on Thursday targeted Iran’s financial sector by imposing sanctions on 18 Iranian banks, in defiance of Europe’s humanitarian objections.

The Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) specified two of the targets as Iran’s Bank Maskan and Bank Keshavarzi. The former is relied on by the most significant part of the country’s 80-million-strong population for loans assisting them in buying houses, while the latter has the biggest stakes countrywide in the agricultural sector.

## Tehran Hits Back...

FROM PAGE 1

“Mr. Trump’s attempt to portray himself as a tough guy is unsurprising as the Presidential election in America is fast approaching,” Alireza Miryousefi told the American weekly Newsweek.

He also noted that Iran would not back down in the face of Trump’s remarks, nor by his administration decision to double down on sanctions or even actions like General Soleimani’s assassination.

“The U.S. is waging a cruel and illegal economic war, tantamount to economic terrorism, on the people of Iran,” Miryousefi said. “The U.S. also cowardly assassinated General Soleimani, a hero in the fight against Daesh and other terrorists, while he was the official guest of the Iraqi government on a peace mission.”

“The people of Iran have proven to be resilient and not intimidated by such inappropriate, irresponsible and empty rhetoric,” he added.

## World Urged to...

FROM PAGE 1

And thus, amid the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, the old guards of hegemony and domination use their declining economic might—coupled with their instruments of death and mass destruction—to defy international norms, from the Paris Convention to the INF and the JCPOA; denigrate global institutions, from WHO to the UN Security Council; and trample fundamental human rights by imposing medieval sieges on entire populations.

Lest we forget, we are all in the same boat—and we need to articulate a credible alternative to these hegemonic impulses. If we fail, none of us will be spared.

Make no mistake: while the rogue regime in Washington is trying to export its militant unilateralism around the world, its efforts rely on the passive unilateralism of those who accept US whims in the wishful hope of escaping its wrath.

### **Dear friends,**

Only we can determine the success or failure of lawless bullies: whether it’s US economic terrorism—perpetrated against the peoples of Cuba, Venezuela, Syria, China, Russia, Iran and an expanding array of other nations—or its shameless attempts to make the brutal apartheid in Palestine permanent.

The only way to de-fang militant unilateralism is to double down on multilateralism and respect for international law.

We must begin at home by resolving our own disputes through peaceful means based on international law.

And, globally, we should resolve to act in unison, to reject unilateralism, and to abandon passive unilateralism through a collective refusal to observe unilateral measures against others.

## Lowry, Fitzpatrick Surge to Halfway Lead at PGA Championship

LONDON (Reuters) - British Open champion Shane Lowry and local favourite Matthew Fitzpatrick both fired seven-under-par 65s in the second round of the BMW PGA Championship to share the lead at the halfway stage on Friday. The duo, who were tied for third after matching opening rounds of 67 on Thursday, went 12-under for the tournament at the Wentworth Club in Surrey to sit a stroke ahead of overnight co-leader Tyrrell Hatton, who stayed in contention with a 67.

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## Three More Inter Players Test Positive for COVID-19

MILAN (Reuters) - A further three Inter Milan players have tested for COVID-19, the Italian Serie A club said on Friday, taking the total to five this week.

Inter, last season's Serie A runners-up, said in a statement that midfielders Roberto Gagliardini and Radja Nainggolan and reserve goalkeeper Ionut Radu had all returned positive tests.

Previously, defender Milan Skriniar tested positive while with the Slovakia national team and Alessandro Bastoni, another defender, tested positive while with the Italian under-21 team.

# Nadal, Djokovic To Play for French Open Title

PARIS (Reuters) - Top seed Novak Djokovic resisted a valiant and inspired fightback from Stefanos Tsitsipas to set up a French Open final showdown with old rival Rafa Nadal on Friday, winning a near four-hour battle 6-3 6-2 5-7 4-6 6-1.

Showing no sign of the physical problems that troubled him during his previous match, Djokovic was initially dominant and poised for a routine win when he had a match point at 5-4 in the third set.

But he had not counted on fifth seed Tsitsipas's incredible spirit as the 22-year-old fought his way back into contention with some dazzling shot-making.

Tsitsipas stole the third set as Djokovic faltered then staved off countless break points in the fourth before dragging the match into an unlikely decider.

His dream of becoming the first Greek player to reach a Grand Slam final faded away as Djokovic calmly re-asserted his authority against a physically-struggling opponent.

Djokovic sealed victory with a forehand winner, nearly two hours after his first match point.

The Serb advanced to his 27th Grand Slam final where he will meet Nadal for the ninth time in a Grand Slam final and 56th time in total.

Victory would earn him an 18th Grand Slam title while Nadal can match Roger Federer's record haul of 20.

While Djokovic, who had lost five of his nine previous French Open semi-finals, was given a fright it always looked as though his vast experience



would prove decisive.

"We have to congratulate Stefanos for this great battle," Djokovic, whose sole French title came in 2016, said on Court Philippe Chatrier.

"I was calm on the surface but inside it was something totally different. I thought that after losing the third set, and the fourth, I was still in control."

Meanwhile Nadal showed no sign of relinquishing his French Open crown as he suffocated Argentine Diego Schwartzman 6-3 6-3 7-6(0) to set up a final with Novak Djokovic.

The Spaniard, chasing a record-extending 13th triumph at Roland Garros, will meet the world number one for the seventh time at Roland Garros, having beaten him six times out of seven, including twice in the two finals they played.

The 34-year-old Nadal, now undefeated in 13 French Open semi-finals, once again relied on his massive forehand to notch up his 10th win in 11 encounters with Schwartzman, who beat him at the Italian Open last month.

Nadal, who advanced into the Paris final without dropping a set for the first time since 2017, will equal Roger Federer's men's singles record of winning 20 majors if he triumphs on Sunday.

Schwartzman, the 12th seed, kept Nadal on court for over three hours but managed only 24 winners in the contest.

"With these conditions it's very difficult, and it's still incredible to be in the final again. Thanks to my team, my family. It's a beautiful moment for me," said Nadal, who has now progressed to the final without losing a set for the sixth time.

"I know with Diego it's very difficult until the end. He's one of the players who makes more (service) breaks on the tour."

## Suarez Cried Over Treatment in Final Days at Barca

MADRID (Reuters) - Luis Suarez has said he was reduced to tears by Barcelona's treatment of him in his final weeks at the club before leaving for La Liga rivals Atletico Madrid and revealed he was not allowed to take part in training matches.

"Those days were very difficult. I cried because of what I was having to go through," Suarez told the Uruguay national team's official media after scoring in Thursday's 2-1 win over Chile in a World Cup qualifier.

"I didn't take the club's message that they were looking for a solution for me in order to mix things up very well. I was hurt most of all by the way they did things, because one has to accept it when a cycle comes to an end."

Suarez became Barca's third all-time top scorer with 198 goals in six years at the club and helped the team win four La Liga titles, four domestic cups and the 2015 Champions League but was forced out with one year left on his contract.

After being told by new coach Ronald Koeman he was no longer in the team's plans, he was excluded from the squad for the team's three pre-season matches before agreeing a switch to Atletico on a free transfer.

"Not everyone knows what happened but the worst thing was going to training and being sent to a different group from everyone else because I was not allowed to play in practice matches," Suarez said.

"My wife could see how unhappy I was and she wanted to see me smile again and when the chance came to join Atletico I had no doubts."

Suarez scored twice goals in Atletico's 6-1 win over Granada on his debut before two frustrating goal less draws against Huesca and Villarreal.

The striker, 33, gave a tearful farewell news conference the day before signing for Atletico while Lionel Messi, his old strike partner, hit out at the club's treatment of the Uruguayan.

"I wasn't surprised that Messi supported me publicly because I know him too well. He knew the pain I was going through, the feeling that I was being kicked out was what hurt me the most," added Suarez.



Milan confirmed in a statement that the Swedish striker had "tested negative" twice in a row, as stipulated in the protocol to be able to lift the quarantine procedure.

Ibrahimovic, 39, sounded a more triumphal note on his social media: "You are cured!"

# Ibrahimovic Cured of Coronavirus

ROME (Dispatches) - AC Milan striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic has been given the all-clear to end his quarantine period and return to action after testing negative for coronavirus, the Serie A club announced on Friday.

The health authority says the quarantine is over, you can go out!", he wrote on Twitter.

The announcement comes a day after Milan said Ibrahimovic had tested positive a second time for Covid-19, putting in doubt his participation in the Milan derby on October 17.

Ibrahimovic first tested positive on September 24.

The derby remains in doubt with two other Milan players and five from Inter currently in self-quarantine.

In spite of his absence, Milan have made a decent start to the season, having climbed to second in Serie A after winning all three of their games and reaching the group stages of the Europa League.

## Int'l Transfer Spending Drops Over 30%

BERN (Reuters) - The amount of money spent on international transfers in the window which closed on Monday dropped by more than 30% compared to the corresponding period last year amid the COVID-19 pandemic, global soccer body FIFA said in a report on Friday.

FIFA announced that a total of \$3.92 billion was spent by clubs worldwide between June 1 and Oct. 5 in the transfer window this year, compared to \$5.8 billion a year ago.

The number of transfers also fell from 9,087 last year to 7,424, down 18%, the report said. The number of those transfers involving a fee was 1,623 compared with 1,222, a decline of 25%.

"Following the interruption of football for more than three months at the tail end of last season... spending on transfer fees in men's professional football declined significantly," said the report.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought football to a standstill worldwide between March and June and, although it has restarted since then, most games have been played without fans or in front of very limited crowds, significantly affecting club revenues.

It also caused the transfer window to be extended until Oct. 5 to allow for a late start to the 2020/21 European club season.

European clubs were by far the biggest spenders with a total outlay of \$3.78 billion. Of that, \$1.25 billion was spent by English clubs followed by Italian teams (\$544 million) and Spanish sides (\$487 million).

However, the report said the women's game seemed less affected and the number of international transfers rose from 385 to 522, up more than 35%, while the amount spent on players nearly doubled from \$455,000 to \$822,000.



## Ancelotti and Calvert-Lewin Win Award Double

LONDON (AFP) - Everton's Carlo Ancelotti was named the Premier League Manager of the Month for September, while Dominic Calvert-Lewin made it a clean sweep for the club as the in-form striker won the Player of the Month prize on Friday.

Ancelotti is the first Everton boss to win the award since David Moyes in 2013.

The Italian claimed the accolade for the fifth time, having won it on four occasions while in charge of Chelsea between 2009 and 2011.

Ancelotti has guided Everton to the top of the Premier League after winning their opening four league matches for the first time since Harry Catterick's team in 1969-70.

Calvert-Lewin's goals and the fine form of Ancelotti's new signings James Rodriguez, Allan and Abdoulaye Doucoure have revitalised Everton.

Praising his players' for their impressive efforts, Ancelotti told Everton's website: "I am really pleased to win this award. I think it is a great achievement for this month. I have to share with my team because they started the season really well. "We hope to continue and to win this award again. I think the key point was the first game against Tottenham.

"Tottenham is a really good team, but we did well and won away. That victory increased our confidence and belief for this season. It was a really good start."

Calvert-Lewin is Everton's first Player of the Month since Romelu Lukaku in 2017.

The 23-year-old has scored six goals in four league games this season and netted on his England debut in the friendly win against Wales on Thursday. "Dominic had a fantastic month. He deserved to be the player of the month. He is young but he has had a lot of improvement," Ancelotti said.

