

Health Ministry Spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari Said on Monday That Some 337 More Iranians Have Died From Coronavirus Disease Over the Past 24 Hours Bringing The Total Deaths to 32,953

IRAN NEWS

Head of Thermal Power Plant Holding Says a 10-Percent Increase In the Operational Readiness (OR) Of Iran's Thermal Power Plants Over the Past Decade Has saved The Country More Than \$3.5

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Insulting Holy Prophet of Islam, Hated by All Wise People
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Iran's Frozen Money Stands at \$40b
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Speaker Strongly Condemns Insult to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

TEHRAN (MNA) – The speaker of the Iranian Parliament strongly condemned the insult to the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) in France.

“In recent days, the low-minded enmity of the leaders of France with the Prophet of Islam Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) has hurt the feelings of believers around the world,” said Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf in the open session of Parliament on Monday. “Those who do not tolerate the slightest words to themselves have now increased their ugliness and disrespect in their enmity with Islam and all the heavenly religions showing that they know nothing of humanity, kindness, and peace among human beings,” he added. **See Page 7**

Negotiating Is Enemies' Tactics to Surrender Iran



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces slammed the enemy's bid for negotiations with Iran as a tactic to force the Islamic Republic to surrender to the U.S.

Addressing a videoconference on civil defense on Monday, Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri dismissed the idea of negotiations with the US as a nonstarter.

“The enemy's purpose is to make the Iranian nation cave in to the strategies and policies imposed by the U.S.,” the general warned.

“They want to bring Iran to the negotiating table, but the result of such negotiations has been already determined, and that is Iran's surrender to the U.S.,” Major General Baqeri added. The top commander underscored that capitulation runs completely counter to the goals of the Islamic Republic. He then highlighted the significant position of Southwest Asia in determining the world leadership.

Referring to the geopolitical and geostrategic theories, which term some points in the world as “geopolitical heartlands and pivots,” the top commander said, “Today, there is no doubt that the pyramid of world power in Southwest Asia determines world supremacy and leadership.”

“Any power that can dominate this region will stand at the top of this pyramid,” he added. Baqeri noted, “The Islamic Revolution was formed [in 1979] in an extremely sensitive region, and it has been following its divine goals and ideals and valuable mottos, such as revealing the role of external domination, supporting the oppressed and self-reliance of the Iranian nation.”

Therefore, he added, it is normal that the country is facing multiple threats on its path by those trying to dominate the region. “The Islamic Republic of Iran, without any expectation of interest from neighbors, has relied solely on its religious and revolutionary principles to seek to take control of its own affairs and reach self-reliance.”

He underlined the country's undisputed will to continue the path of development, stressing that no threat can ever stop the Iranian nation from realizing such a goal.

Baqeri said that enemies' threats are no more military in nature but rather in cyber, technology, and chemical ones so Iran's Civil Defense must be fully ready to identify and counter them.

He added that it is not clear whether the coronavirus, which Iran and the world are challenging with, is a threat or a natural phenomenon to fight with.

Iran's Civil Defense Organization is a place to cooperate and connect the organizations, government, and armed forces altogether.

He noted that Civil Defense helps Armed Forces against enemies' threats which are changing continuously.

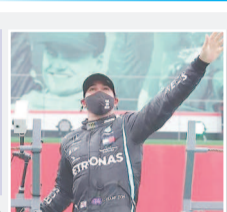
4 INTERNATIONAL

Iraqis Rally to Revive Year-Old Revolt Against the System
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8 SPORT

Hamilton Overtakes Schumacher With Record 92nd Win
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China's PE Imports From Iran Surge in September

BEIJING (Dispatches) - Chinese polyethylene (PE) imports from Iran surged to 257,000t in September, up by 160pc from August, after falling for five consecutive months since April.

Imports of high-density polyethylene (HDPE) from Iran increased the most among all PE grades to 158,000t in September, up by 180pc from August and a 6pc rise from the same period in 2019.

Imports of low-density polyethylene (LDPE) from Iran moved up to 85,000t in September from 32,000t in August. Purchases of linear low-density polyethylene (LLDPE) from Iran reached 13,500t last month, up by 60pc from August.

China imported more Iran-origin cargoes in September to make up for a shortage caused by higher-than-expected domestic demand during the peak season in September. **See Page 7**

U.S. Assures India Over Chabahar Port

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - The Trump administration has reassured the Indian government that the development of Chabahar Port in Iran will not be impacted by U.S.'s latest sanctions on Iranian banks. The economic sanctions could effectively lock Tehran out of the global financial system.

This freezes any U.S. assets of those blacklisted and generally stops Americans from dealing with them, at the same time extending secondary sanctions to those who do business with them. Tensions between the United States and Iran have soared since Trump unilaterally withdrew in 2018 from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal struck by his predecessor and began re-imposing U.S. sanctions that had been eased under the accord. Mike Pompeo, the U.S. Secretary of State, said their maximum economic pressure campaign will continue until Iran is willing to conclude a comprehensive negotiation that addresses the regime's malign behavior. “Our sanctions are directed at the regime and its corrupt officials that have used the wealth of the Iranian people to fuel a radical, revolutionary cause that has brought untold suffering across the Middle East and beyond.” **See Page 7**

Dark Days Ahead for Oil-Rich Persian Gulf Economies

DUBAI (Dispatches) - Oil-dependent economies are in a real quandary. Sliding markets, lowering demand and strong output capacities are set to hit the single-product, oil-rich economies of the Middle East, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said in a recent report.

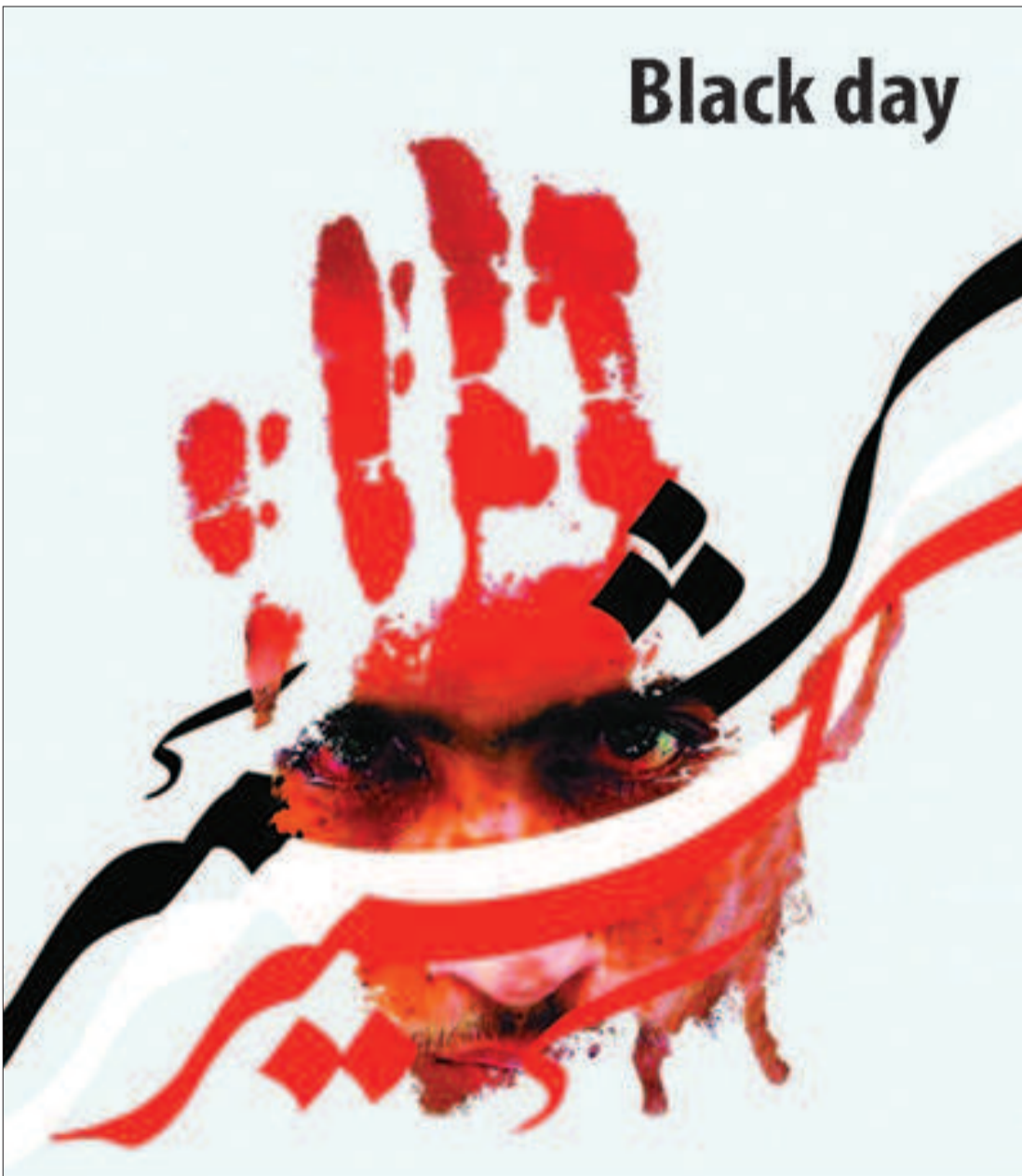
These oil-rich Persian Gulf states are now expected to see a six per cent real gross domestic product (GDP) contraction this year, the report said. Real GDP growth for the states in the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) averaged 4.7 per cent from 2000 to 2016.

“On average, we will see growth going negative (in 2020) by 6.6 per cent for oil-exporting countries,” Jihad Azour, director of the IMF's Middle East and Central Asia department, told CNBC. While oil prices have recovered from their historic plunge, international benchmark Brent crude is still trading nearly 40 per cent below pre-pandemic levels. And the IMF isn't projecting that oil prices will stage a dramatic recovery anytime soon.

The IMF believes prices will stay in the \$40-to-\$50 range in 2021. That's still half the \$80-per-barrel figure Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) kingpin Saudi Arabia needs to balance its budget.

Even future projections aren't rosy. IMF sees oil prices staying between \$40 and \$45 until at least early next year, adding it could “be between \$40 to \$50 next year overall.”

Crude oil demand is a key variable, yet “addition to global supplies that could come from alternative energies” is now expected to play a significant role in determining the direction of the crude markets. **See Page 7**



Black day

Supreme Leader:
 We hope that the Kashmir issue will be resolved in the best possible way, which guarantees the rights and interests of the people of this region, and the people of Kashmir will enjoy comfort and peace.

Iranian Passengers Resume Traveling to Iraqi Kurdistan

SANANDAJ (IRNA) - Iranians resumed traveling to Iraqi Kurdistan on October 25, said director general of Bashmaq Customs House on Sunday. Farid Haq-Panah said that according to the border affairs director of the other side and based on guidelines of Ministry of Regional Affairs of Iraqi Kurdistan, Iranians can enter it with an official passport (with at least six months validity date) through the three official borders of Bashmaq in Marivan, Haji Imran in Piranshahr and Parviz Khan in Qasr-e Shirin.

Upon arrival, they are tested for the Covid-19 at the Iraqi Health Unit, and if the result is negative, they are allowed to enter the region, he said. Passengers leaving the border, especially Iraqis, are advised to pay attention to the type and amount of goods they carry, because according to the instructions received, customs officers stationed in the passenger hall will prevent exit of basic goods including flour, bread, rice, oil, sugar, meat (red and white) even in small amounts.

Insulting Holy Prophet Of Islam, Hated by All Wise People

TEHRAN (IP) - judiciary chief has condemned the insult of the French leaders to the Prophet of Islam, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), stressing that this insult is not only hated and condemned by all Muslims but also hated by all intellectuals in the world.

Seyed Ebrahim Raisi said on Monday that insulting the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH) in France is insulting the beliefs of all Abrahamic religions.

Raisi added: "When someone does something wrong that is pursued and dealt with by the government, it is very different from acting against all the Abrahamic religions, and the French government also supports this hideous act."

The chief of Iran's judiciary has stated that what has been done in France in this regard is against human rights.

Calls to boycott French goods are growing around the world after President Emmanuel Macron's comments against Islam and Muslims.

Macron on Wednesday accused Muslims of separatism and vowed not to give up cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammed.



Reacting to a violent incident attributed to a police force which went viral, the Judiciary Chief said that any offence from anybody in any job will be prosecutable and no organ or body can offend the law and the Judiciary will confront with offenders. He added that people should be aware of enemies' moves who want to misuse of any incident in the country to ruin the position and reputation of the organs or persons.

The Judiciary Chief added that enemies have started a psychological war against the revolutionary bodies and police force in the country by blowing up any mistake from the staff of those organs.

Reacting to Supreme Leader's remarks on avoiding disrespecting the officials, he said criticism is different from disrespect, reiterating that insult is condemned no matter it happens to an official or an ordinary person.

U.S. Regime Complicit in Iran's COVID-19 Deaths

TEHRAN (IFP) - Ministry of Foreign Affairs says the U.S. government's sanctions against the Iranian nation have made the Coronavirus pandemic even more deadly and brutal in Iran.

"Corona's proven deadly, vicious and brutal everywhere, but it's worse in Iran as it has a cruel collaborator: U.S. regime," the Foreign Ministry said in a Monday tweet.

"U.S. has elevated maximum pressure to Health Terrorism and targeted Iranian people with inhuman sanctions while they're fighting the pandemic," it added.

"We'll overcome but NEVER forget," the tweet read. The trade of humanitarian goods, such as food, medicine and medical devices, is theoretically allowed by the U.S., but European companies refuse to do business with Iran, fearing secondary American sanctions.

The bans imposed on the Iranian banking system have dissuaded many pharmaceutical firms from doing business with Iran.

The United States in June activated a set of sanctions it had imposed on Iran's shipping network six months ago, in a move expected to further hamper imports of food and medical supplies into Iran at a time when the country is fighting to contain a deadly coronavirus outbreak.

Macron's Islamophobic Remarks Show He's Politically Immature



TEHRAN (IFP) - Iran's top security official has lashed out at French President Emmanuel Macron for his Islamophobic remarks, advising him to read history more and not pin his hopes on the U.S. and Israeli support.

In a Monday tweet, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani described Macron's "Islamophobic" remarks as "unwise behavior" and an indication of his "political immaturity".

"Otherwise, he would not have taken such an offensive move against Islam in order to realize his dream of leading Europe," Shamkhani noted.

"I advise him to read history more, and not pin his hopes on the support of the declining America and the decaying Zionism," he added.

Shamkhani's comments came after numerous Muslim states and peoples denounced Macron's persisting support for blasphemy in his country against Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

"We will not give in, ever," Macron tweeted on Sunday. The tweet served to back up his earlier support for a French teacher's displaying of cartoons insulting of the Prophet of Islam in his class under the pretext of "freedom of speech."

"France will never renounce caricatures," Macron had declared on Wednesday, defending the teacher for "promoting freedom."

Muslims Not to Let Insulting Islam's Prophet to Be Normalized

TEHRAN (MNA) - Majlis stressed in a statement that the religious zeal of Muslims around the world will not allow false, anti-human and anti-Islamic currents to normalize the process of insulting the Prophet of Islam.

More than 240 members of the Iranian Parliament condemned in a statement the French president's remarks insulting the Prophet of Islam (PBUH).

In recent days, the whole world has witnessed how the French government proved its demonic nature by supporting the inhumane act of one of the country's publications in blatantly insulting the Prophet of Islam Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH), the statement read.

This catastrophe is the clear result of so-called modern thinking that has dominated the French government for years and has given them nothing but the abomination of inhuman societies, it added.

The statement went on to say that undoubtedly, such behavior under the pretext of freedom of expression is itself the greatest oppression to freedom of expression. "Which healthy nature does agree to defend the insulting the sanctities of more than one billion Muslims in the world by relying on freedom of expression?"

Of course, the truth is that the French President did not say these words for defending freedom of expression. Rather, this audacity and arrogance is part of a larger plan to slow down the accelerating process of Islamism of the French people, which has terrified this government, it stressed.

The intense pressure that the French government is putting on the Muslims of this country these days is also in this direction, the statement added.

The members of the Iranian Parliament strongly, along with the believers, the justice-seekers and the Muslims of the world, condemn the heinous and vicious acts of the leaders of France.

It stressed that the religious zeal of Muslims around the world will not allow false, anti-human and anti-Islamic currents to normalize the process of insulting the Prophet of Islam.

Desecration of Prophet of Islam Pursued by Int'l Zionism

TEHRAN (MNA) - The Secretary-General of the World Assembly of Islamic Awakening issued a statement condemning the insult to the Prophet of Islam (PBUH).

In a statement issued following the recent insult to the Prophet of Islam in France, Ali Akbar Velayati said, "Following the global condemnation, we expected them to prevent publishing a magazine in France that have insulted the Prophet of Islam. However, the application of double standards and behaviors caused this polytheistic and anti-religious thinking to penetrate into the educational system of this country."

"Extremism and desecration of the Prophet (PBUH) are two sides of the same coin used by international Zionism and global arrogance against pure Islam," he added.

"False claimants of human rights, under the pretext of freedom of expression, commit the most insulting acts, crimes and evils, and in the face of the slightest opposition and criticism, they impose the most severe

punishments and encounters, while they call themselves claimants of freedom of expression and human rights," Velayati noted.

He highlighted, "The great and unforgivable sin of the supporters of these actions, who, in the guise of freedom of expression and modernity, have endorsed and encouraged the insulters, will surely cause response from Muslims, freedom-lovers and justice-seekers in the world," adding, "It will lead to the growing unity and solidarity of the Muslims, the awakening of the individuals of the Islamic societies, and the universal condemnation of these sinister movements."

"Condemning the heinous crime and insult, the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought calls on all Muslims to thwart these anti-Islamic conspiracies while maintaining their vigilance and awareness," he added.

The statement came as French President Emmanuel Macron said his country "will not give up cartoons" insulting the prophets.

Iran Sets Up Radiation Defense Bases

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Iran has established radiation defense bases in provinces hosting nuclear facilities, head of the Civil Defense Organization said.

In remarks at a videoconference on Monday, Brigadier General Gholam Reza Jalali said the radiation defense bases have been set up in five provinces of the country with nuclear sites and facilities.

The bases have been established as part of a mechanism for dealing with the threats of possible radiation leaking from nuclear sites, he added.

The commander also noted that the Civil Defense Organization has formulated a strategy known as the urban defense document to protect the cities and offer a modern model for urban development in accordance with the security and defense regulations.

Iran Has Found Ways to Skirt U.S. Sanctions

TEHRAN (MNA) - Abolfazl Amouei, the spokesman for the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said on Monday that Iran has found ways to get around U.S. sanctions and tackle economic challenges.

"The other side has been reneging over the past years, inflicting heavy losses by imposing sanctions on the Iranian nation and government, and even blocking access to humanitarian goods such as food and medicine. Of course, the country has found ways to circumvent sanctions and solve problems, but the point is that U.S. policy has caused damages to the country that must be compensated by the other side," Amouei said.

The lawmaker stressed the importance of using domestic capacities and increasing interaction with neighbors to prevent the impact of sanctions on the country's economy and counter U.S. policies.

He added, "Asian countries are a unique opportunity for the Islamic Republic to revive its economy and create new capacity."

According to Amouei, Iran should place overcoming the U.S. sanctions high on its agenda in such circumstances. "We must strengthen the domestic economy in such a way as to eliminate the effect of sanctions. In other words, when the country's domestic economy is strengthened, no foreign power can use its power to put pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Amouei pointed out that if Iran boosts domestic production, countries using sanctions in their foreign policy will be unable to impose sanctions on Iran.

New Japanese Ambassador To Tehran Appointed

TEHRAN (IP) - The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Tokyo congratulated the appointment of the new ambassador of Japan to Tehran.

The Iranian embassy in Tokyo on Monday on its Twitter account congratulated the arrival of the new Japanese Ambassador to Tehran "Aikawa Kazutoshi" and the beginning of a new era for the development of friendly and historical relations between the two countries.

The Iranian Embassy in Tokyo wished Aikawa Kazutoshi success and prosperity. Prior to the inauguration of Aikawa Kazutoshi, Mitsuogo Saito was the Japanese Ambassador to Iran, who has served as Japan's Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran since October 2018.

At the end of his mission in Tehran on October 7, Mitsuogo Saito met with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and said farewell.

Iran, Pakistan Sign MoU To Boost Border Relations

TEHRAN (MNA) - According to an official in the Governorate of Sistan and Baluchestan, Iran and Pakistan signed an MoU so as to boost bilateral trade relations in the common borders of the two countries.

Cross-border trade between Iran and Pakistan is of great importance, and in this regard, Sistan and Baluchestan province of Iran and Balochistan province of Pakistan, as the only provinces bordering the two countries, play a major role in the development of trade relations between the two countries, said Mandana Zangane, Sistan and Baluchestan Governor's Deputy Coordinator for Economic Affairs.

Zangane went on to say, "A joint cross-border trade committee has been formed between Sistan and Baluchestan Province of Iran and the Balochistan Province of Pakistan so as to detect and resolve the problems of traders and expedite border exchanges between the two countries."

Being hosted by Quetta of Pakistan, the eighth meeting of the committee held with the aim of improving bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries, especially in the common border between the two provinces, she said.

According to Zangane, after three intensive negotiations, a memorandum of understanding consisting of 28 clauses was signed at the meeting.

Zarif Terms Insulting Muslims as Abuse of Freedom of Speech

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in a Twitter message on Monday described insulting Muslims as abuse of the freedom of speech.

"Muslims are the primary victims of the 'cult of hatred'—empowered by colonial regimes & exported by their own clients," Zarif wrote in his Twitter account.

"Insulting 1.9B Muslims—and their sanctities—for the abhorrent crimes of such extremists is an opportunistic abuse of freedom of speech," he added.

"It only fuels extremism," he noted.

In recent years, the French magazine Charlie Hebdo has repeatedly published insulting cartoons about the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH).



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:48
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:32
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:58
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:23

72. There are certainly among you men who would tarry behind: If a misfortune befalls you, they say: "Allah did favour us in that we were not present among them."
73. But if good fortune comes to you from Allah, they would be sure to say - as if there had never been ties of affection between you and them - "Oh! I wish I had been with them; a fine thing should I then have made of it!"
Surah 4. Women (72 - 73)

Iran's Frozen Money Stands at \$40b

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Deputy Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) says Iran's frozen money in other countries stands at around \$40b, reiterating that the amount of forex resulted by the exports which has not been repatriated to the country by the private sector is around \$6b

Speaking to ILNA, Hossein Selahvarzi refuted allegations on the amount of the frozen money of Iran in the overseas banks and also allegations that exporters have not repatriated major part of their earned forex to the country.

He said the amount of Iran's frozen forex in foreign banks is around \$40b, adding that the private sector has repatriated their forex earned from exports to the country and they have just failed in bringing back some \$6b.

He criticized the Central Bank and other officials who claim some \$27b has not been repatriated to the country and called it a wrong figure. He added that the alleged figure belonged to 2018 and 2019.

Selahvarzi reiterated that in 2018 and 2019, the policies of the Central Bank were in a way that they could let exporters repatriate 70 percent of their forex.

He reiterated that the forex resulted from the exports by the private sector which has not been repatriated stands at \$6b and exporters are trying to repatriate it after resolving problems.

He also criticized the Central Bank for saying that some of the exporters have been cardboard sleepers, saying that the bank is totally wrong.

He said since the Central Bank has no enough data bank and domination on the



identities of the exporters, it gives wrong addresses.

Selahvarzi also criticized wrong policies of the Central Bank especially in the past two years, saying that change of policies has created headache for the exporters. He added that these policies have led to emergence of novice and small exporters and currently the number of exporters in the country exceeds 20,000.

He said allocating dollar based on the government rate of 4200 toman was a wrong decision which led to emergence of new exporters and waste of the national forex.

He reiterated that such a waste of forex resources for import of non-essential goods like cosmetics has put the country in a condition that it is facing with shortage of dollar for import of medicines and basic goods.

Selahvarzi also reiterated the forex policy-maker is currently after ways to manage and increase the forex resources and since it cannot earn more money through sales of oil, it has focused on non-oil export revenues.

He emphasized he believes the forex resulted by exports should be repatriated into the country.

He also said that he has asked the Central Bank to reveal the names of those exporters who have not repatriated their forex which is said they have been cardboard sleepers.

France Is Not a Heavy Weight in Iraq Market

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Chairman of the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce says Iran, China, Turkey and some Arab countries like Saudi Arabia and Oman are the major exporters to Iraq and other countries have no significant presence in this country's market and only some projects are handed over to other countries.

Speaking to ILNA on the launch of campaign for boycotting the purchase of French goods in Iraq, Yahya Al-e Eshaq said only some countries like Iran, China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Oman are the major exporters to Iraq and other countries have no significant presence there and just sometimes some projects are handed over to other countries.

He added that currently there are no major projects in Iraq unless during the recent visit of Iraq prime minister to France and Germany some contracts have been signed, and currently the French are not in charge of any important project in Iraq.

Touching upon on the gas sector, he said Iraq has its major gas imports from Iran and other issues are in the preliminary stage, and recent claims and launching campaign are more psychologically important.

CBI Governor Stresses Controlling Inflation a Major Priority



TEHRAN (MNA) - The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Abdolnasser Hemmati stressed controlling inflation as the major priority of the bank in the current economic condition, IRIB reported.

"Given the threats of escalating inflation [for the economy] by imposing serious damage to the middle and lower classes of society and creating uncertainty as well as preventing sustainable production, it is logical that society expects the central bank to focus on controlling inflation," Hemmati wrote in an Instagram post on Sunday.

Despite the hardship that people are enduring because of the sanctions, Iran's economy has not collapsed as the United States imagined, and it is showing signs of moving away from the recession; so all efforts by the central bank should be aimed at controlling inflation in any way possible to further stabilize the economy, the official said.

"Over the past two years, the central bank has been under increasing pressure, mainly due to the sanctions and the negative supply shocks, especially at a time when the accumulated liquidity force is being drained on prices, since other problems, including the coronavirus outbreak and the budget deficit, have led to the inevitable escalation of liquidity growth," he wrote.

Implementing monetary policies to deal with negative supply shocks is difficult even under normal circumstances, let alone in the Iranian economy, which also faces a lot of structural problems, he said.

"The main task of the central bank is to stabilize prices and then to prevent a recession and maintain production, however, according to economic theory, clearly it is not possible to achieve many goals with a limited number of tools," the governor added.

Hemmati had previously said that the positive balance in Iran's non-oil trade is an indication that the country's economy is moving forward.

Like many other countries around the world, Iranian economy has been struggling with the negative impacts of the coronavirus outbreak in addition to the problems caused by the U.S. sanctions.

Iran-Australia Trade Is Done Via Intermediaries

TEHRAN (ILNA) - Iran-Australia exchanges are carried out by intermediary countries, the Vice President of the Iran-Australia Chamber of Commerce said.

Mohammad Hassan Didehvar said "Most of our problems in exporting and importing with Australia are related to the banking system, which is done by the intermediary country."

"The rial value of Iran's imports and exports to Australia has increased. We have a lot of problems in dealing with Australia, which goes back to sanctions and does not allow lots of goods to be exported and imported."

He added that our exports to Australia include non-oil commodities and are only made by the private sector.

"The value of Iranian imports from Australia was approximately 626 thousand kilograms of non-oil commodities worth \$8.561 million during the first 6 months of the current fiscal year," the Iranian official said.

Didehvar added that in the first six months of the year, Iran's exports to Australia were more than 4 million kilograms worth \$9.45 million.

FAO Boosts Iranian Experts' Knowledge of Agricultural Water Saving, Water Productivity

TEHRAN (FAO) - The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as part of its multilateral project to support Iran in reducing the agriculture water consumption in the Lake Urmia basin, equips Iranian experts with the requisite knowledge and skills to implement the advanced approach of Real Water Savings (REWAS) in the agriculture sector.

Like many other Asian nations, and due to projected population growth, economic development and associated water demands, the country is expecting to experience growing water scarcity over the following years.

In these circumstances, and considering a growing body of evidence revealing that many of the traditional water saving technologies are ineffective, FAO and the Urmia Lake Restoration Program (ULRP) link arms, providing an eLearning opportunity for Iranian officers and researchers from the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad, the Ministry of Energy, ULRP and a number of academic institutions, on using REWAS. This training enables Iranian experts to estimate real water savings and water productivity in the Urmia Lake basin, and evaluate the impact of field-scale crop-water interventions on basin-scale water savings, more accurately.

The eLearning program is provided by FutureWater research and consulting organization under the FAO Water Scarcity Initiative for Asia and the Pacific.



"REWAS provides the decision-makers with an insight of water flows at the farm, irrigation system, and basin scale. It leads to a higher awareness of the factors involved in achieving real water savings and improving the water productivity of the agricultural sector," said Jonna van Opstal, Water Productivity Expert at FutureWater, who

also led this virtual training.

"REWAS is using the concept of 'following the water.' In this approach, drainage, runoff and percolation to the groundwater are no longer considered as 'losses,' because downstream users often use these recoverable waters. This concept resolves a paradox in the water sector where more efficient technologies are expected to reduce water demands, but in reality, lead to higher water consumption and exacerbating the water scarcity problems," added van Opstal.

As per this expert, adopting such an approach can stop the false belief that high-tech irrigation methods (e.g. drip irrigation) save high amounts of water. It likewise supports the development of better water governance, which can regulate the expansion of unsustainable irrigated areas by evaluating real water savings.

FAO, being the lead UN agency in promoting climate-smart agricultural and sustainable rural development, supports its Member Countries in developing and implementing policies, measures and practices that facilitate addressing the risks and threats posed to the agriculture sector and rural communities.

Largest Iranian Containership Docks at Shahid Rajaei Port

TEHRAN (MNA) - The director general of Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Organization announced that the largest Iranian containership has docked at Shahid Rajaei Port in south Iran.

The containership, Rayen, has embarked for the Persian Gulf waters from China and has docked at five international ports including Shahid Rajaei Port, Alireza Mohammadi Karajiran said on Monday.

Her carrying capacity is 14500 TEU and her current draught is reported to be 10.6 meters, he said, adding that her length overall (LOA) is 366 meters and her width is 48 meters.

The vessel Rayen is a Container Ship built in 2018 and currently sailing under the flag of Iran.

MSC Official Hails Role of Media On Reflecting Achievements

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

ISFAHAN – Director of public relations of Mobarakeh Steel Company (MSC) hailed the role of media in reflecting the achievements and capabilities of knowledge-based organizations.

Iraj Torabi pointed to the capabilities and capacities of media especially the role of printed media, stipulating that the performance of the media prevents knowledge and science from being archived; therefore, the management of MSC intends to transfer its management pattern, achievements and technical knowledge to other organizations and other industries, and in fact the channel for the link of these effective issues is the media.

He went on to say that the convergence of management and staff in the company and on the whole, the performance of the company caused all staff in all organizational levels to accept management patterns and tie themselves to them. He also noted that ultimately a condition was provided that the company is today witnessing materialization of valuable achievements.

Torabi reiterated hence, this appropriate structure as a model should be transferred to other organizations and Mobarakeh Steel Company is ready for any cooperation in this regard.

He went on to say that this company is successful and effective in research and development of organizational culture, production and development, adding that achieving these items are considered a necessity for other organizations.

He then acknowledged the position of the media in reflecting the capabilities in the society, saying that the media space due to its dynamism and pursuit of the news in all levels is able to scrutinize the weaknesses, to pursue them immediately and to cover them smartly.

Torabi reiterated that Mobarakeh Steel Company is an international company and it is proud that productions of this Iranian company are distributed in the international markets.

He noted that the media may point out some issues and this is a constructive opportunity for officials to take advantage it. He added for example, consultation with media in the social responsibilities field and their suggestions are of these opportunities.

Torabi also pointed to the activities of the company during the coronavirus pandemic in the country, saying that MSC has cooperated with hospitals for providing medical equipment as well as needed oxygen.



Ramkalawan in Historic Seychelles Vote Win

VICTORIA (Dispatches) - Wavel Ramkalawan on Sunday won the Seychelles presidential election, the first opposition victory since the Indian Ocean archipelago's independence from Britain over four decades ago.

Ramkalawan -- an Anglican priest who won enough votes in the first round to clinch the presidency on his sixth attempt -- called for unity after his victory.

"It is important to find how we can reconcile our people to go forward," the 59-year-old said as his jubilant supporters began celebrating in the streets of the capital Victoria.

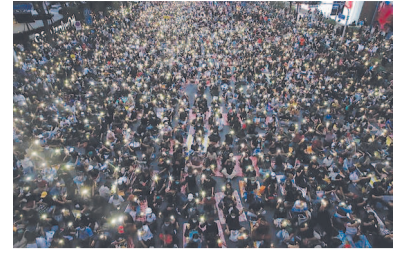


Thai Opposition Tells PM to Resign

BANGKOK (Reuters) - Thailand's biggest opposition party called on Monday for Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha to resign, as parliament opened a special session called by the former junta leader to discuss months of protests.

Student-led demonstrations which initially demanded the departure of Prayuth and a new constitution have increasingly turned their attention to the monarchy, calling for reforms to curb the powers of King Maha Vajiralongkorn.

"The prime minister is a major obstacle and burden to the country. Please resign and everything will end well," said Sompong Amornvivat, leader of the opposition Pheu Thai party, the largest single party in parliament.



Iraqis Rally to Revive Year-Old Revolt Against the System



BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Thousands of Iraqis took to the streets Sunday on the first anniversary of a revolt against a political system failing to deliver basic services and against the growing influence of militias.

The mobilization kept up the protest movement's key demand for the ouster of the entire ruling class accused of corruption. "We want to achieve our objective of building a new Iraq," Ali Ghazi, a demonstrator from the southern city of Nasiriyah that has been also at the centre of protests, told AFP.

About 600 protesters were killed and 30,000 wounded in clashes with security forces in Baghdad and the south last year, before the movement launched last October lost momentum and then ground to a halt due to the coronavirus pandemic. A campaign of targeted assassinations of leading figures of the revolt followed, with the United Nations pinning responsibility on militias.

The burgeoning protests helped usher in Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi in May, but he has yet to deliver on any major reforms. A World Bank report says one in three young people is unemployed in Iraq, OPEC's second-biggest oil producer.

With lifeline oil prices plummeting, the knock-on effect has been brutal for the average Iraqi, with salaries delayed and basic services sorely lacking.

In a flat, technocratic speech on Saturday, the intelligence chief turned prime minister struck a tempered tone between appeasing protesters and warning against an escalation. Kadhemi repeatedly urged security forces not to fire at demonstrators but also called on protesters to "respect the uniform".

Riot police clad in bulletproof vests, helmets and plastic shields were lined up Sunday near major bridges close to the Green Zone, the home of government offices, parliament and the U.S. embassy.

Kadhemi's influence is being tested against a backdrop of armed factions.

He also faces a rising tide of resentment from young protesters intent on breaking the status quo based on sectarian loyalties since the 2003 US invasion.

On activist messaging boards online, protesters said they would ramp up their demands this year and head to the high-security Green Zone.

Military spokesman Yahya Rasool has urged crowds to stay put in nearby Tahrir Square, warning that moving outside the capital's iconic protest epicentre "was not in anyone's interest".

The Green Zone, a no-go zone for ordinary Iraqis, is separated by Al-Jumhuriyah bridge from Tahrir.

On the bridge, hundreds of protesters atop concrete barriers Sunday shouted slogans in memory of fallen "martyrs", waving Iraqi flags and portraits of those killed.

Security forces also sealed off other bridges over the Tigris River.

Chileans Vote by Millions to Tear Up Pinochet's Constitution

SANTIAGO (Reuters) - Chileans poured into the country's main squares on Sunday night after voters gave a ringing endorsement to a plan to tear up the country's Pinochet-era constitution in favour of a new charter drafted by citizens.

In Santiago's Plaza Italia, the focus of the massive and often violent social protests last year which sparked the demand for a new magna carta, fireworks rose above a crowd of tens of thousands of jubilant people singing in unison as the word "rebirth" was beamed onto a tower above.

With more than three quarters of the votes counted, 78.12% of voters had opted for a new charter. Many have expressed hopes that a new text will temper an unabashedly capitalist ethos with guarantees of more equal rights to healthcare, pensions and education.

"This triumph belongs to the people, it's thanks to everyone's efforts that we are at this moment of celebration," Daniel, 37, told Reuters in Santiago's Plaza Nunoa. "What makes me happiest is the participation of the youth, young people wanting to make changes."

Pakistan's PM Accuses Macron of Attacking Islam

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan accused French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday of "attacking Islam", after the European leader criticized Islamists and defended the publication of cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed.

Khan's comments follow statements Macron made last week after a French teacher was beheaded near Paris after he had shown cartoons of the Prophet during a class he was leading on free speech.

Macron said the teacher "was killed because Islamists want our future."

In a series of tweets, Khan said the remark would sow division.

"This is a time when Pres Macron could have put healing touch & denied space to extremists rather than creating further polarisation and marginalisation that inevitably leads to radicalisation," Khan wrote.

"It is unfortunate that he has chosen to encourage Islamophobia by attacking Islam rather than the terrorists who carry out violence, be it Muslims, White Supremacists or Nazi ideologists." Macron already sparked controversy earlier this month when he said "Islam is a religion that is in crisis all over the world".

The French teacher became the target of an online hate campaign over his choice of lesson material -- the same images that sparked a bloody assault by Islamist gunmen on the offices of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, the original publisher, in January 2015. Caricatures of Mohammed are forbidden by Islam.

Blasphemy is an explosive issue in ultra-conservative Pakistan, where anyone deemed to have insulted Islam or Islamic figures can face the death penalty.

"By attacking Islam, clearly without having any understanding of it, President Macron has attacked & hurt the sentiments of millions of Muslims in Europe & across the world," Khan said.

In an address to the United Nations last month, Khan, a populist leader who has been known to play to Pakistan's hardline religious base, blasted Charlie Hebdo for re-publishing the cartoons, saying "wilful provocations" should be "universally outlawed".



Belarus Police Fire Stun Grenades at Protesters

KYIV (Reuters) - Belarusian police used stun grenades against protesters on Sunday as tens of thousands of people headed towards Independence Palace in the capital Minsk demanding that President Alexander Lukashenko resign.

Protesters carrying the red-and-white flags of the Belarusian opposition movement scattered as loud bangs and flashes lit up the city's streets after nightfall, videos showed.

The police action came hours before the expiration of an ultimatum set by the opposition: Lukashenko must resign by midnight or face a national strike.

Explosions and white smoke filled residential areas as people hid behind vehicles and ran from police, the videos, shared online by reputable news organisations, showed. Law enforcement confirmed that riot control weapons had been used and detentions had taken place, the TASS and RIA news agencies reported.

The videos could not be immediately verified by Reuters.

Earlier on Sunday, crowds streamed through the capital shouting "strike", waving flags and beating drums on the 11th straight weekend of mass protests since a disputed election plunged the country into turmoil.

Twelve metro stations were closed, helmeted riot police patrolled the streets and mobile internet

services were disrupted in Minsk. Two journalists were detained ahead of the protest, a local journalists' association said.

Tens of people were detained and security forces used tear gas in the western town of Lida, the Russian news agency RIA quoted the regional branch of the interior ministry as saying.

A former Soviet collective farm manager, Lukashenko has ruled Belarus for more than a quarter of a century and has shown little inclination to quit, buoyed by loans and the offer of military support from traditional ally Russia.

The president's main opponents have been jailed or fled into exile following the Aug. 9 election, which Lukashenko's opponents accuse him of rigging to win a sixth straight term. He denies electoral fraud.

Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, his main electoral challenger, has led calls for exile for a national strike to begin on Monday if Lukashenko refuses to release all political prisoners and resign to make way for a new election.

"Today at 23:59 the term of the People's Ultimatum will expire, and if the demands are not met, the Belarusians will start a national strike," she said in statement. Lukashenko has signalled that he would ignore the ultimatum.



Armenia, Azerbaijan Agree to New Humanitarian Ceasefire

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States

on Sunday said a new humanitarian ceasefire will take effect on Monday in the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, even as fresh fighting erupted between the two sides.

The latest ceasefire is due to take effect at 8 a.m. local time (12 a.m. EDT) on Oct. 26, the U.S. State Department and the governments of Azerbaijan and Armenia said in a joint statement.

"Congratulations to Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, who just agreed to adhere to a cease fire effective at midnight. Many lives will be saved," U.S. President Donald Trump wrote on Twitter. The announcement came after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo held separate meetings with the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Washington on Friday.

"Those meetings were joined by the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, formed to mediate the conflict and led by France, Russia and the United States, which described them as "intensive discussions" on the ceasefire and the beginning of talks about core elements of a comprehensive solution.

The Minsk Group said its co-chairs and the foreign ministers agreed to meet again in Geneva on Oct. 29.

A senior administration official expressed confidence that this ceasefire would hold. "U.S. leadership with support from Russia and France brings additional hope that the ceasefire will lead to a lasting peace settlement," said the official.

But the eruption of new fighting on Sunday and the collapse of two previous ceasefires brokered by Russia raised questions about the prospects for this fresh push to end the clashes in Nagorno-Karabakh, a part of Azerbaijan populated and controlled by ethnic Armenians.

The fighting that broke out on Sept. 27 over the disputed territory has surged to its worst level since the 1990s, when some 30,000 people were killed.

Local officials in Nagorno-Karabakh on Sunday accused Azeri forces of firing artillery on settlements in the areas of Askeran and Martuni during the night. Azerbaijan said its positions had been attacked with small arms, mortars, tanks and howitzers.



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S/p, Sauna
J, balcony
Fully Furn

Shanon (adviser)

Elahieh Villa (\$4000)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
S, J, & pkg
green yard
Fully Furn

Parsian brand new

((\$2000) Velenjak
260sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, F.F

Elahieh (\$1800) 220sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, balcony, F.F
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OCTOBER 27 – WHY BLACK DAY IS OBSERVED!

Background

Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control and across the globe observe October 27 as Black Day. It is the darkest day in the history of Kashmir as on this day in 1947 India had forcibly occupied Jammu and Kashmir by landing its army in Srinagar against the will of the Kashmiri people and in total disregard to the Indian Independence Act and Partition Plan. Under the Partition Plan, Indian British Colony was divided into two sovereign states, India (comprising Hindu majority areas) and Pakistan (consisting of Muslim-majority areas of Western provinces and east Bengal). Every year, 27th October is marked by complete strike in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and rallies, seminars and demonstrations in the illegally occupied territory, Azad Kashmir and world capitals.

As per the understanding behind the Partition Plan, the than Princely States were given the choice to accede either to Pakistan or India on the basis of their geography and demography. Being a Muslim-majority state, with 87% Muslim population, Kashmir was a natural part of Pakistan as both shared strong bonds in respect of religion, geography and culture. But, unfortunately, the then Hindu ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh, destroyed the future of Kashmiri people by announcing its accession to India under a controversial document, Instrument of Accession, thus laying the foundation of the Kashmir dispute. Many observers including prominent British historian, Alastair Lamb, and noted Kashmiri researchers, Abdul Majid Zargar and Basharat Hussain Qazilbash, deny the existence of such a document with the argument that had it been there, the Indian government must have made it public either officially or at any international forum. Even Indian Archives Department has now declared that the document is lost and the announcement has put question marks on the very existence of the document.

Kashmir in the United Nations

The people of Jammu and Kashmir strongly resisted India's illegal occupation of their soil and they launched a movement to liberate it from the Indian yoke. Their resilience forced India to seek the help of the world community to settle the Kashmir dispute. Sensing a humiliating defeat to its armed forces, India approached the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on January 01, 1948. The World Body in its successive resolutions nullified the Indian invasion and called for holding of an impartial plebiscite under its supervision to allow the Kashmiri people decide their fate by themselves. Unfortunately, these UN resolutions and the pledges made by Indian leaders remain unfulfilled even after the passage of several decades, resulting in the continued suffering of the Kashmiri people.

Kashmiris' revolt and mass uprisings

Disappointed over the failure of all the efforts aimed at resolving the Kashmir dispute through peaceful means for decades, the people of IIOJK intensified their freedom struggle in 1989 to secure their right to self-determination. This movement gave sleepless nights to the Indian rulers. They responded this popular movement with the brute military might. The people of IIOJK added a new dimension to their freedom movement in 2008. They hit the streets in thousands during mass uprisings in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2016. However, most of the time, Indian troops and police personnel used brute force

against these peaceful demonstrators, killing hundreds of them. Since the mass uprising triggered by the extrajudicial killing of popular youth leader, Burhan Wani, on 8th July in 2016, besides killing over 1280, the troops have caused injuries to more than 29,200 people by firing pellets, bullets and teargas shells on protesters. During this period, more than 10,280 people have suffered pellet injuries and over 395 of them have lost their eyesight in one or both eyes.

Indian state terrorism

India is using every brutal tactic to continue its illegal hold on Jammu and Kashmir for the past over seven decades. Since 1989 till 1st September 2020 alone, Indian troops had martyred 95,667 Kashmiris, widowed 22,918 women, orphaned 107,798 children and molested or gang-raped 11,219 Kashmiri women. While the whereabouts of thousands of innocent youth subjected to disappearance in custody remain untraced, the discovery of thousands of mass graves across the territory has raised concerns about their safety. However, despite exhausting all its resources and resorting to the worst kind of state terrorism during the past over seven decades, New Delhi has miserably failed to intimidate the people of IIOJK into submission.

Modi's 5th August onslaught

Narendra Modi-led fascist Indian government has put the peace of the entire world in perils by abrogating Article 370 of the Indian Constitution that granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir and annexing it with India on August 05, 2019. It also divided IIOJK into two federally administered union territories - Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. After repealing the Article 370, New Delhi put the illegally occupied territory under strict military siege, confining millions of Kashmiris to their homes and arresting thousands. Continued curfew, restrictions and communications blackout led to humanitarian crisis in IIOJK. At the same time, Indian troops intensified violent cordon and search operations across the territory. The Modi government imposed several federal laws and introduced new domicile rules in IIOJK. In gross violation of the UN resolutions and the international law, it has granted domicile status to thousands of non-Kashmiri Hindus including some IAS officers. The local people fear that more than 800,000 Indian soldiers and over 600,000 migrant labourers present in the territory might also be granted the domicile status in the coming days. The BJP regime, as part of its anti-Muslim policies, is also replacing the Muslim names of important places and departments with Hindu names in IIOJK. The birth anniversary of former Chief Minister, Sheikh Abdullah, and Kashmir Martyrs' Day on July 13 have been dropped from the list of public holidays. The Modi govt has initiated the process of delimitation of Lok Sabha and assembly constituencies in IIOJK with an aim to give more seats to Hindu-dominated areas of Jammu division. At the same time, it has flouted a new political front of its collaborators led by Altaf Bukhari in the name of Jammu Kashmir Apni Party. The basic objective behind all these unilateral illegal measures is to convert IIOJK's Muslim majority into a minority by settling Indian Hindus in large numbers. It is also aimed at damaging the essence of the UN resolutions on the Kashmir dispute and affect the results in India's favour if New Delhi is compelled to hold a plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir at any point of time in the future.

Pakistan's support to Kashmir cause

The Pakistani leadership has always represented the Kashmiris' aspirations and never betrayed the faith reposed on them by the Kashmiri people. It was his commitment to the interests of the people of Kashmir that drove father of the nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, to visit Jammu and Kashmir three times before 1947. He had rightly termed Kashmir as the "Jugular Vein" of Pakistan. Prime Minister, Imran Khan, in his address to the UN General Assembly, drew world's attention to the worsening humanitarian crisis in IIOJK after Modi government's 5th August illegal move. He repeatedly warned the world that Modi government's Hindutva policies and aggressive posture posed serious threat to the peace in the region and the entire world. Pakistan's Foreign Ministry is consistently updating the world leaders on the Indian brutalities in IIOJK. The Pakistan Parliament has passed several resolutions since August 05, last year, expressing solidarity with the oppressed people of IIOJK and condemning India's illegal actions in the territory. The Army Chief, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, has repeatedly expressed Pak Army's support to the Kashmir cause. He has declared that Pakistan is ready to fight till last bullet and last soldier for Kashmir.

Positive developments

The Kashmir dispute has become the focus of attention at the global level after the illegal actions taken by the Modi regime on and post August 05, 2019 in IIOJK. Pakistan's arduous efforts and the grave human rights situation caused by the continued military siege in the illegally occupied territory convinced the UNSC to hold its session on Kashmir three first time after the period of over 50 years. The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and the US President Donald Trump have repeatedly offered mediation to resolve the Kashmir dispute in the wake of heightened tension between Pakistan and India. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, several members of UK parliament and US lawmakers as well as world bodies including the OIC, the Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have expressed serious concern over the grim human rights situation in IIOJK. Even the International watchdog, the Genocide Watch in a statement expressed fears of genocide against the Muslims living in IIOJK and the Indian state of Assam.

Conclusion

This is the context of the observance of October 27 as Black Day by the Kashmiris all across the globe. The observance is aimed at sending a loud and clear message to the world community to take stock of the miseries of the Kashmiri people and come forward in a big way to ensure a solution of the lingering Kashmir dispute in accordance with their wishes. It is also intended to send a strong message to New Delhi that the Kashmiris reject its illegal occupation of their homeland and that they would continue their struggle till they achieved their inalienable right to self-determination promised to them by India and the world through several UN resolutions. The solution of the Kashmir dispute has become more imperative following India's action to change the disputed status and demographic composition of IIOJK for ensuring permanent peace in the region and the world at large.

(Compiled by Muhammad Raza Malik. The writer is a Senior News Editor at Kashmir Media Service and can be reached at razamalik849@yahoo.com)

Lee Kun-hee Who Made Samsung a Global Powerhouse Dies



SEOUL (Reuters) - Lee Kun-hee, who built Samsung Electronics into a global powerhouse in smartphones, semiconductors and televisions, died on Sunday after spending more than six years in hospital following a heart attack, the company said.

Lee, who was 78, grew the Samsung Group into South Korea's biggest conglomerate and became the country's richest person. But he was also convicted of bribery and tax evasion, and he and the empire he built were vilified for wielding huge economic clout, and for opaque governance and dubious transfers of the family wealth.

"Lee is such a symbolic figure in South Korea's spectacular rise and how South Korea embraced globalisation, that his death will be remembered by so many Koreans," said Chung Sun-sup, chief executive of corporate researcher firm Chaebul.com.

Samsung Group affiliates' 326.7 trillion won (\$289.6 billion) in 2019 revenue was worth about 17% of South Korea's gross domestic product, according to Fair Trade Commission data and a Reuters calculation.

Lee died with his family by his side, the conglomerate said. At around 5 p.m. (0800 GMT), Lee's son Jay Y. Lee, vice chairman of Samsung Electronics, wearing a face mask, walked into the Samsung Medical Center where a memorial was being held. The area for the memorial was limited to 50 people, a sign said.

Lee's aggressive bets on new businesses, especially semiconductors, helped grow the conglomerate his father Lee Byung-chull built from a noodle trading business into a global powerhouse with assets worth \$375 billion, including dozens of affiliates stretching from electronics and insurance to shipbuilding and construction. "His legacy will be everlasting," Samsung said in a statement.

China Reconsiders Global Strategy For Yuan



BEIJING (Dispatches) - China is reconsidering its strategy for the internationalization of yuan after completing a comprehensive review recently, according to a senior central bank official.

"As everybody knows in the past, the internationalization of the RMB sticks to the market principles," Zhu Jun, director general of the People's Bank of China's international division, said at the Bund Summit in Shanghai on Saturday. "The role of the authorities was mainly focused on removing the policy obstacles for the free use of the currency. At this moment, we think there are some kinds of complications in the domestic and overseas situations."

The yuan rallied to the strongest in more than two years earlier this week, aided by dollar weakness and China's economic recovery from the virus pandemic. The prospects of a victory by Joe Biden over President Donald Trump in the upcoming U.S. election are also supporting the currency. Trump's trade war with China last year sent the currency to its lowest since 2008.

Zhu said going forward the government can be more proactive with policy support to facilitate the role of the markets. For instance, the central bank can improve bilateral currency swap agreements to better promote trade and investments, and try to coordinate various means of yuan cross-border settlements and payments infrastructure.

The authorities will remove existing obstacles for the yuan's internationalization, with a steady liberalization of the capital account and increasing the RMB exchange-rate flexibility as well as improving liquidity in the bond market, Zhu said.

While China over the years made some progress -- promoting offshore yuan trading, winning official reserve-currency status from the International Monetary Fund and introducing commodity contracts priced in yuan -- the renminbi is a small player on the global stage, with 2% market share.

Bangladesh Seeks \$500m From WB for Covid-19 Vaccines



DHAKA (Dispatches) - Bangladesh has sought \$500 million as support from the World Bank (WB) for procurement, preservation, transportation and distribution of Covid-19 vaccines for the people of the country.

This amount was sought as an additional allocation under the IDA-19 of the World Bank for the current fiscal year (FY21) for ensuing Covid-19 vaccines when invented for all the countrymen as per the desire of the prime minister.

This was discussed at a meeting between Bangladesh and the World Bank held virtually on October 22 evening as part of the Annual Meetings 2020 of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal led the Bangladesh delegation while World Bank Vice President for the South Asia region Hartwig Schafer led the World Bank delegation.

Finance Division Senior Secretary Abdur Rouf Talukder and Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary Fatima Yasmin, and World Bank Country Director Mercy Tembon also remained connected in the meeting, said a Finance Ministry press release on Saturday.

It said that the Bangladesh side requested the World Bank to release \$250 million on urgent basis out of the \$500 million under the Covid-19 Recovery and Response Project to overcome the various Covid-19 related shocks in the country.

Besides, the release said, the Bangladesh side also requested the lending agency for taking necessary steps for speedily disbursing the third installment of \$250 million budget support in the current fiscal year under the World Bank supported Programmatic Jobs Development Policy Credit (DPC) in order to maintain the country's affected labour market, financial and social sectors owing to the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Turkey Ranks 5th in Europe in Wind Turbine Equipment Production



ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey ranks fifth in the list of leading producers of strategic wind turbine components in Europe, according to WindEurope's latest report called Wind Energy and Economic Recovery in Europe.

The report showcased the state of play of the European wind industry and its global competitiveness along with its industrial footprint in Europe.

The report found that in a very competitive market that is worth 50 billion euros globally in 2020, 38 billion euros onshore and 12 billion euros offshore, China takes the lion's share at 45 percent out of the nearly 800 wind turbine component manufacturing sites.

Europe ranks second at 31 percent, where India follows with 7 percent, Brazil with 5 percent, while North America is home to only 4.5 percent of global wind component factories.

The report showcased the state of play of the European wind industry and its global competitiveness along with its industrial footprint in Europe.

The report showed that the top four producers of strategic wind turbine components in Europe are in order of the number of their operational facilities; Germany with 82, Spain with 41, Italy with 17 and Denmark with 13.

Turkey follows these countries with 12 operational facilities, characterizing it as the fifth-largest wind turbine component producer in Europe. Of these 12 facilities, six facilities produce towers, four facilities produce blades and two facilities produce castings. "The steps that Turkey takes in clean energy and clean technologies in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the 11th Development Plan of Turkey are now being reflected in the reports prepared by international organizations," İzmir Development Agency's (İZKA) Secretary-General Mehmet Yavuz told Anadolu Agency in an exclusive interview.

Gov't Introduces Package to Support Coronavirus-Hit Tourism Industry

TEHRAN (IFP) - The government has introduced a new package to support the tourism businesses affected by the COVID-19 crisis, which includes deferrals and bank loans.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicraft said in accordance with the instructions approved by the Economic Working Group to deal with the consequences of the coronavirus outbreak, new

loans are to be paid to affected businesses in the tourism sector.

Deputy Minister, Vali Teimouri, announced on Monday that the working group decided to defer the payment of all expenses and debts of tourism activists (taxes of previous years, employer's insurance shares, repayment of bank instalments, utility bills) until the end of the current Iranian year (to end in mid-March 2021).



Macron Lays Ground for Netting Brexit Compromise on Fisheries

PARIS (Reuters) - France is preparing its fishing industry for a smaller catch after Brexit, industry members said, in a sign that President Emmanuel Macron is laying the ground for a delicate compromise to help the European Union strike a trade deal with Britain.

The EU and Britain are trying to hammer out an agreement over the next three weeks to avoid damaging \$900 billion in annual trade when Britain leaves the bloc's single market on Jan. 1, 2021. Fisheries is among the biggest obstacles.

Macron has publicly taken a hard line on fisheries, saying France would not accept any Brexit pact that "sacrifices our fishermen". He rejected London's demand for annual negotiations on fish quotas in British waters, saying it damages EU industry.

In a first sign of a tentative softening of Paris' stance, however, Macron said after last week's summit of EU national leaders dedicated to Brexit that the French industry will no longer be in the same situation as today after year-end.

Privately, his government has gone further, bluntly telling France's politically influential fishing industry to brace for impact, sources told Reuters, in comments that instantly pushed sterling and British bond yields higher.

France has a total of 20,000 fishermen, on top of 10,000 fish processing jobs. On average in 2011-2015, some 98,000 tons of fish were caught in British waters, representing 171 million euros in turnover and 2,566 direct jobs.

A fourth of France's catch in the northeastern Atlantic was in British waters, according to a French parliamentary report.

As the EU summit was convening in Brussels last week, Macron's Europe minister posted pictures from a visit to the French coastal town of Port-en-Bessin.

"One single objective: to defend and protect the interests of fishermen," Clement Beaune said on Twitter. "We're fighting... for French fishing."

But - in previously unreported exchanges - Jerome Vicquelin, a member of local fishing lobby groups who attended the meeting, said the minister's message was starker when asked off-camera if France would yield.

"I was rather blunt and said: 'It's all well and good you came, but I'm worried because... just a 10-15% cut in turnover... would be a disaster over the long term,'" Vicquelin said he told the Paris envoys in the wheelhouse of fishing boat aptly called L'Europe.

"They were blunt too. They said it won't be the same as before. For me it's clear, they just want to try to limit damages as much as possible," Vicquelin told Reuters.

Asked to comment on Vicquelin's account of the meeting, Beaune told Reuters he had told the industry representatives to no longer expect to maintain "the status quo".



The exchange illustrates France's twin strategy in the Brexit negotiation - talking tough in public while quietly preparing to fish less in British waters from 2021.

In another example of Paris eyeing a possible compromise, a fisheries source told Reuters separately the French government has already asked the industry what concessions would be acceptable to them.

"They asked us if potentially, really potentially we were ready to make concessions," said the source, who declined to be named. "They asked us to think about it."

Many French and other EU vessels now fish in the rich British waters that would be beyond reach if there is no deal. Any agreement would need to fix catch quotas for over a 100 species.

In an early indication of movement on fisheries from London, Britain last month offered a transition period from 2021 to increase its catch gradually rather than overnight.

Speaker Strongly...

FROM PAGE 1

He also strongly condemned the recent heinous acts of the French rulers.

Previously, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman strongly condemned the insult to the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) in France, calling the insult to Islamic values and the beliefs of Muslims unacceptable and rejected.

China's PE...

FROM PAGE 1

Supplies of Iran-origin HDPE and LDPE dropped during June-August because U.S. sanctions prevented some Iranian vessels from entering Chinese ports for customs clearance.

By contrast, China's HDPE imports from the U.S. fell by 29pc from August to 81,000t last month, while LLDPE purchases dropped by 12pc from August to 58,000t. Supplies from the U.S. were reduced following recent hurricanes. But LDPE imports from the U.S. increased to 22,000t, a rise of 43pc from August, which was attributed to robust import demand in China.

China's PE imports reached a total of 1.82mn t in September, up by 17pc from August and by 36pc on the year. Its HDPE imports climbed to 938,000t, 16pc higher from August, while LLDPE purchases rose by 10pc on the month to 550,000t and LDPE imports increased by 33pc from August to 330,000t.

U.S. Assures India...

FROM PAGE 1

The reassurance to India's development of Iran's Chabahar Port comes ahead of the Indo-US 2+2 ministerial meeting. The American government told New Delhi that sale of agricultural commodities, food, medicine and medical devices to Iran, by the U.S. and other countries, is permitted.

This is not the first time that Chabahar Port has been spared from U.S. sanctions. In June this year, the Trump administration placed new sanctions against Iranian shipping companies. The port, in the Sistan-Balochistan province of Iran, is a hub of activity and one of the country's economic lifelines. It is the only Iranian entity of its kind that has been spared from American sanctions. Because of this exception, Afghanistan is able to import Iranian fuel and Iranian-made goods considered vital for humanitarian assistance, which is also one of the key elements of India's Afghanistan strategy. Notably, on September 28, India shipped a full consignment of 75,000 metric tons of wheat as humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.

Dark Days...

FROM PAGE 1

In September, the International Energy Agency cut its outlook for worldwide oil demand to 91.7 million barrels per day (bpd) for the year. That's a daily contraction of 8.4 million barrels, year on year, and more than the contraction of 8.1 million predicted in its August report. With the second COVID-19 pandemic wave already in play, that demand could go down even further.

OPEC projects an even worse outlook. It slashed its global oil demand projection last month to an average of 90.2 million bpd in 2020, a contraction of 9.5 million bpd year on year, CNBC reported.

OPEC described the crude outlook as "anemic," warning, risks remain "elevated and skewed to the downside." All these projections carry significant connotations to the almost-single-product economies of the oil-rich Persian Gulf states. In line with the IMF projections, the World Bank also believes the economies in the Middle East and North Africa are set to contract more deeply than initially estimated.

The bank revised its estimate to a 5.2 per cent shrinkage this year after an April forecast of a 1.1 per cent contraction, the updated regional economic outlook published last week reported.

Plagued by sanctions and the growing pandemic, the IMF says, the Iranian GDP is also projected to decline by about six per cent in 2020. This would be the third consecutive annual decline in Iran's GDP. In a report released in April, the IMF put Iran's GDP decline in 2019 at 7.6 per cent and in 2018 at 5.4 per cent.

According to IMF estimates, the net debt owed by the Iranian government is now expected to touch \$260 billion by 2020. That's equivalent to 44 per cent of Iran's GDP.

Before the re-imposition of the U.S. sanctions on Iran in 2018, its net debt amounted to less than \$118 billion.

But Iran's oil exports have declined by around 90 per cent from the period before the U.S. re-imposed sanctions on its crude oil exports. The pandemic has also hit Iran and its economy badly, killing thousands and infecting tens of thousands of people.

Oil-rich economies appear in a quagmire.

Cities With the Best Work-Life Balance



LONDON (Dispatches) - Amsterdam has been crowned the top city for work-life balance, with an average of 30.5 hours worked per week.

According to new research by Holland & Barrett, the average night's sleep in the Dutch capital hits up to 8.5 hours, leaving Amsterdammers a luxurious 9.5 hours a day to unwind with family and friends.

Holland and Barrett's Sunlight Cities Index ranks which cities are the best for a better work-life balance, taking into account hours asleep, hours worked and time spent in the sun.

European cities continue to lead the way for a great work-life balance, with Marseille in France coming in second place with 31.5 working hours a week.

Alice Springs, a remote town in Australia's Northern Territory, comes in joint-third place along with Vienna, Austria, with both offering their residents an average working week of 31.9 hours.

Auckland, New Zealand, offers the fifth shortest working week at 33 hours and in sixth place is London, where the average working week is 33.5 hours.

Brussels comes in seventh place with 33.80 working hours a week and in joint eighth place is Copenhagen and Oslo with a 34 hour working week. Rounding off the top ten is Rome with an average working week of 34.15 hours.

Alex Glover, senior nutritionist at Holland & Barrett, at Holland & Barrett, said: "Making time for leisure activities, like getting outdoors, exercising and spending time relaxing with friends and family is so important in looking after your physical and mental wellbeing so it's great to see all these cities offering a good work-life balance."

"Stress can impact our health in so many ways so it's vital to take time to unwind and in such uncertain times it's never been more important to invest our leisure time in self-care."

The study comes following research released last week that showed Harrogate in Yorkshire as the best place to work from home in the UK.

Bath and the Mendip area of Somerset are close behind, ranked second and third, in a Uswitch Remote Working Index survey. The average property price in Somerset is £419,005, while in Mendip it's £328,885.

In the UK, nearly a fifth (17%) of people polled have already moved or want to move due to the increase in remote working. People generally want to move from cities and larger towns to smaller towns and villages.

S. Korea's Trade Volume Dips 18.3%

SEOUL (Yonhap) -- South Korea's combined trade volume dropped 18.3 percent in the second quarter of 2020 from a year earlier amid the new coronavirus pandemic, data showed Sunday.

Asia's No. 4 economy saw its exports and imports reach US\$109 billion over the April-June period, falling \$24 billion from the previous year, according to the data compiled by Rep. Yang Kyung-sook of the ruling Democratic Party.

It marked a further drop compared with the 1.8 percent on-year decrease reported over the first quarter. The country's trade dropped at a similar margin of 21.1 percent on-year in 2009 as South Korea suffered an economic fallout from the global financial crisis.

South Korea's exports, meanwhile, fell 5.8 percent on-year in the first 20 days of October amid the fallout



from the new coronavirus outbreak, customs data showed last week.

The nation's outbound shipments stood at \$25.2 billion in the Oct. 1-20 period, compared with \$26.7 billion a year ago, according to the data from the Korea Customs Service.

By segment, exports of memory chips, a key item, rose 12.1 percent, but those of automobiles declined 7.1 percent on-year in the 20-day period.

Semiconductors account for about one-fifth of outbound shipments in South Korea, home to Samsung Electronics Co., the world's largest memory chip maker, and its smaller rival SK hynix Inc.

In September, South Korea's exports managed to rebound for the first time in seven months helped by increased shipments of chips and automobiles, rising 7.7 percent on-year.

IMF Concerned Over Post-COVID Social Unrest Across Latin America

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The International Monetary Fund is concerned that social unrest will make a comeback in "lots of countries" across Latin America once the COVID-19 pandemic recedes, a top IMF official said.

Economies across Latin America and the Caribbean are forecast to contract as a group by 8.1% this year, with an uneven 2021 bounce at just 3.6%, and most countries are not seen returning to pre-COVID output levels until 2023, the Fund said.

"Some of the determinants of social unease are going to worsen and that generates our concern for the region, for lots of countries in the region," Alejandro Werner, the Fund's director for the Western Hemisphere, said in an interview with Reuters.

"Coming out of the pandemic, we will have a level of economic activity and employment that will be much lower than before, a level of poverty and income distribution that is worse," he added.

Protests that sometimes turned violent rocked countries including Chile, Ecuador and Colombia even before the pandemic hit, fueled by anger over inequality, corruption and government austerity policies.

Just this week, marches to mark the anniversary of the Chilean uprisings became violent in parts of Santiago. Chile will hold a referendum on Sunday on whether to scrap its dictatorship-era constitution, a key demand of the 2019 protests. Werner said the referendum was evidence that Chile was channeling the social concerns through an institutional process.

He said what remained to be seen was if the vote leads to a result that will allow Chile "to continue growing as it has done so in the last three decades, but also achieve more social inclusion and accelerate the social inclusion aspects."

Japan Mulls \$95.5b Extra Budget to Counter Coronavirus

TOKYO (Reuters) - Japan's government is considering compiling an extra budget worth around \$95.5 billion to offset the economic drag caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the Mainichi newspaper reported.

The government is likely to debate using the 10 trillion yen (\$95.52 billion) budget to extend a labour subsidy programme scheduled to end in December and to pay for the distribution of a coronavirus vaccine, the Mainichi reported, without citing sources. Members of the ruling Liberal

Democratic Party are calling for 10 trillion yen in spending, and Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga is likely to formally order an extra budget early next month, the Mainichi said.

The finance ministry and the prime minister's office did not respond when contacted by phone.

The government may consider whether to use some of the funds to extend a popular domestic travel subsidy scheme but is unlikely to offer more direct cash handouts to households, the newspaper reported.



Switchboard:
(+98) (21) 44253448
Public Relations Tel:
(+98)(21) 44253450
Editorial Board: 44253449
Public Relations Fax:
(+98)(21) 44253395
Advertising Department:
Tel/Fax:(+98) (21) 44253335-9/44253234
Website:
http://www.irannewsdaily.com

E-Mail Address:
info@irannewsdaily.com
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Ajax Smash 13 Past Venlo In Record Dutch Win

AMSTERDAM (Dispatches) - Ajax broke their own 48-year Eredivisie record on Saturday when they hammered Venlo 13-0 in the biggest ever win in the history of the division.
Lassina Traore struck five times as the defending champions outdid Johan Cruyff's Ajax, whose 12-1 win over Vitesse Arnhem had stood as the top flight's record win since May 1972 -- the season the Amsterdam club won the league title and the second of their four European Cups.

Carapaz Takes Vuelta Lead at Vuelta a Espana

MADRID (Dispatches) - Ecuadorian Richard Carapaz claimed the Vuelta a Espana overall lead after Spaniard Ion Izagirre won Sunday's sixth stage.
Former Giro d'Italia winner Carapaz took the red jersey from defending champion Primoz Roglic who struggled in wet conditions in the mountains near the French border.
Ineos' Carapaz, 27, made the most of Roglic's tough day in the Pyrenees to take an 18-second lead as the Slovenian fell to 30 seconds behind in fifth.

Hamilton Overtakes Schumacher With Record 92nd Win

LISBON (Dispatches) - Lewis Hamilton became Formula One's record all-time race-winner on Sunday when he claimed his 92nd victory at the Portuguese Grand Prix to pass Michael Schumacher at the top of the list.

His win lifted him one clear of Schumacher's 14-year-old record of 91 triumphs after a thrilling inaugural F1 race at the Algarve International Circuit.

After a long hug with his father Anthony who, together with step-mother Linda, had witnessed his historic achievement, Hamilton heaped praise on his Mercedes before joining his race engineer Peter 'Bono' Bonnington and Bottas on the podium.

"I owe this and so much to all these guys here and the team at the factory," said Hamilton. "For their tremendous work, they are always pushing the barrier higher and higher. It is a privilege working with them... Working with them is inspiring."

Hamilton fought back after an early scare, when he led but dropped to third after a rain shower, to demonstrate impeccable tyre management and flawless judgement as he claimed an eighth win in 12 races this year.

The six-time world champion finished 25.5 seconds clear of his Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas with Red Bull's Max Verstappen a familiar third. Hamilton's triumph added another unprecedented feat to his roster of records. He now has the most wins, a record 97 pole positions, a record 161 podium finishes and a record 45 consecutive points finishes.

The 35-year-old Briton extended his championship lead over Bottas to 77 points. A seventh world title, which would equal another Schumacher record, now looks all but inevitable with only five races remaining this year.

The 35-year-old Hamilton said the race had been "tough" and he had suffered cramp. "Yes, it's a very physical sport and I had it in my right calf. I was lifting down the straights and it was painful."

Charles Leclerc was fourth for Ferrari ahead of a surging Pierre Gasly after an excellent drive in his Alpha Tauri.

Carlos Sainz came home sixth for McLaren to beat Sergio Perez, who recovered from a first lap clash with Verstappen, to finish



seventh for Racing Point ahead of the two Renaults of Esteban Ocon and Daniel Ricciardo.

Four-time world champion Sebastian Vettel, in his final season at Ferrari, finished 10th. On a cool and breezy day, with light rain forecast, an appreciative crowd of 27,500 were scattered around the new 90,000-capacity circuit, hosting the first Portuguese Grand Prix since 1996, as the drivers completed the pre-race ceremonial, including an anti-racism salute led by Hamilton, in a Black Lives Matter t-shirt, taking a knee.

At the start, Hamilton led away from his record 97th pole while, from third, Verstappen passed Bottas before the Finn surged back to pass him and his team-mate to take the initiative.

As gentle rain fell, Hamilton slithered, while Sainz, on softs, found grip to take the lead, evading a Verstappen-Perez collision, which sent the Racing Point car spinning. Briefly, it was wild stuff.

In the "ice-rink"-like conditions, the Mercedes men, on mediums, needed time to warm their tyres before catching and passing Sainz on laps six and seven respectively.

By lap eight, Bottas led Hamilton by 1.8 seconds and Verstappen, third, by four. Despite the blustery conditions, normal service was, it seemed, resuming.

Raikkonen, in his record-increasing 324th race, was first to pit from softs to mediums, prompting a series of stops as grip diminished.

"Left front is dead, mate," reported Verstappen before Hamilton echoed that sentiment within two laps. Almost immediately, he set a fastest lap and by lap 20 had closed on Bottas, passing him with a burst of DRS on the straight. Verstappen pitted and re-joined sixth as Hamilton pulled clear.

All this left Hamilton leading his team-mate by 7.3 seconds on lap 30 with Leclerc third, adrift by 27 seconds.

Hamilton pitted after 40 laps, taking hards and slotting in behind Bottas who led again. The Finn suggested a switch to softs, but when he came in Mercedes gave him the white-walled hards.

For the Englishman, recovered from the early dramas, it was almost a Sunday stroll in the park. He led by 12 seconds with 21 laps to go, with little more than light rain threatening his progress on another record-breaking day.

Barca Hit By Coutinho Injury Blow



BARCELONA (Reuters) - Barcelona midfielder Philippe Coutinho injured his left hamstring in his side's 3-1 home defeat to Real Madrid on Saturday, effectively ruling him out of his side's Champions League showdown away to Juventus on Wednesday.

A statement from Barca on Sunday said the Brazilian was unavailable due to the injury, without saying when he would return to action.

Barca's most expensive ever signing, Coutinho, who played the full 90 minutes, passed up a clear chance to put his side ahead in the 'Clasico' when the game was poised at 1-1, missing the target with a header from close range.

The Brazilian had been on a positive run of form in his first season back with the club after spending the last campaign on loan at Bayern Munich, scoring two goals and providing two assists in six competitive matches.

AS newspaper said Coutinho could be out for three weeks. He looks set to miss the game at Juventus plus Barca's La Liga fixtures away to Alaves and at home to Real Betis as well as the Champions League match at home to Dynamo Kyiv.

His injury could spell good news for Barca's two other most expensive players Antoine Griezmann and Ousmane Dembele, who were both left out of the starting line-up against Real Madrid.

Hart Rides to Giro d'Italia Victory

LONDON (Dispatches) - Britain's Tao Geoghegan Hart of Team Ineos won cycling's Giro d'Italia on Sunday ahead of Australian rival Jai Hindley after the final stage race against the clock.

Geoghegan Hart had been on the same time as Hindley going into the final 21st stage but finished 38seconds ahead of the Team Sunweb rider.

"It's going to take a long time to sink in," said the Londoner. "He kept giving me a few seconds and I knew not to take any risks."

"It feels incredible to arrive here in front of the Duomo," Geoghegan Hart said.

World champion Filippo Ganna of Italy was first in the 15.7km time-trial which finished in front of Milan's Duomo Cathedral.

Geoghegan Hart won Saturday's 20th stage, edging Hindley, with for the first time in a Grand Tour two riders going head-to-head for the title in the final time-trial.

But the suspense did not last until the line with Hindley, wearing the pink jersey, dropping 22 seconds at the intermediary stage after 10.3km.

The 24-year-old nevertheless becomes the first Australian on the Giro podium.

Geoghegan Hart, 25, is the second British rider to win the race around Italy, two years after Chris Froome. Neither rider had been their team leader when the race got underway in Sicily three weeks ago. Ineos lost Geraint Thomas to a broken pelvis in stage four.

Sri Lanka to Tour South Africa for Two-Test Series

COLOMBO (Reuters) - Sri Lanka will travel to South Africa in December to play a two-test series, a local media report said on Sunday, marking their return to international cricket after a 10-month gap due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since hosting West Indies for a limited-overs series in February, Sri Lanka cricketers have seen a number of fixtures, including test matches against England and a limited-overs series against India, postponed because of the pandemic.

Dybala a Huge Fan of Roger Federer



TURIN (Dispatches) - Juventus striker Paulo Dybala has admitted he is a huge tennis fan - and primarily because of the great Roger Federer.

In an interview with the Tennis Channel, Dybala confirmed his love for tennis was inspired by the 20-time Grand Slam champion from Switzerland.

"Well at home, we used to watch a lot of sports, the TV was always on, and the sport we watched the most was football, followed by tennis," Dybala said.

"I always had a lot of admiration and respect. I liked Roger Federer's style. I believe that I and many people have him as a tennis reference."

"We try to watch his matches, he has a style and elegance that makes everyone want to be like him."

"I always tried to watch him play so I love tennis because of him."

Dybala went on to reveal he is friends with his fellow Argentine Diego Schwartzman, as he suggested tennis players have a natural all-round ability that would allow them to excel in alternative pursuits.

"I always believe that high performing players excel in several sports," he added.

"I have seen El Peque (Diego Schwartzman), Dominic Thiem, Nole (Novak) Djokovic easily juggling a tennis ball."

"So I think they could do very well on a football pitch - better than a football player could do as a tennis player."

Dybala also saluted Rafael Nadal for his magical display against Novak Djokovic in this month's French Open final, as he joined Federer in winning 20 Grand Slam titles.

"Rafael Nadal won Roland Garros in a match in which he gave no chance to Novak Djokovic," he added. "I think it was more than well-deserved to win his 13th Roland Garros in his career. Something amazing. He matched Roger Federer with 20 Grand Slams. There are no words for this player, no words."

Sabalenka Cruises Past Azarenka for Title at Ostrava Open



OSTRAVA (AP) — Third-seeded Aryna Sabalenka cruised to the title at the inaugural Ostrava Open on Sunday, defeating fourth-seeded Victoria Azarenka 6-2, 6-2 in the first WTA all-Belarusian final.

The big-hitting 22-year-old Sabalenka dominated the match but her former top-ranked opponent was visibly limited by an unspecified health problem in the second set and needed a medical time out and one more brief treatment.

It was the second title of the season for the 12th-ranked Sabalenka after the Qatar Total Open in Doha in February, and seventh overall of her career.

"I hope you'll get better soon," she wished Azarenka in a brief on-court speech after her victory.

The 14th-ranked Azarenka tried to come back after she received treatment when she was 4-1 down in the second set, breaking Sabalenka who then replied immediately with her fifth break and served out the match.

It is a seventh WTA title for the 22-year-old, this latest success sealed with an ace. She had already triumphed once in 2020, having won in Doha in February.

Last month, Azarenka eliminated Sabalenka 6-1, 6-3 in the second round of the U.S. Open before reaching the final.

Saints End Everton's Unbeaten Start



LONDON (Dispatches) - Southampton ended Everton's unbeaten start to the season as goals from James Ward-Prowse and Che Adams sealed a 2-0 win against the Premier League leaders on Sunday.

Everton had gone eight games without defeat in all competitions this term, but they paid the price for a lethargic display at St Mary's.

Carlo Ancelotti's side fell behind to Ward-Prowse's first-half goal and Adams doubled their lead before the interval.

Everton left-back Lucas Digne was sent off for a dangerous challenge on Kyle Walker-Peters in the second half despite his claims he tripped when he stood on the Southampton defender's heel.

Without the suspended Richarlison and injured Seamus Coleman after the stormy Merseyside derby draw with Liverpool last weekend, Everton lacked the drive and quality that had been the hallmark of their strong start to the campaign.

They remain above champions Liverpool on goal difference after a result that should serve as a reality check. Southampton have now only lost twice in 13 league matches and climbed within three points of first place.

An entertaining encounter got off to a fast start when Danny Ings picked out Ryan Bertrand and his pass found Nathan Redmond for a shot that whistled past the post.