





## Zarif to Visit Moscow to Discuss JCPOA, Nagorno-Karabakh

TEHRAN (MNA) – Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said that Iranian FM is scheduled to visit Moscow to discuss Nagorno-Karabakh and issues of mutual interests.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova made the announcement on Thursday, saying that Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif is to visit Moscow on November 25 to meet with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov to discuss Nagorno-Karabakh and issues of mutual interests.

The two top diplomats are also to discuss the latest developments in the Persian Gulf, the issues related to the JCPOA, Syria, Afghanistan, Zakharova said.

## Iran Key Transit Route as 1,400 Flights Pass Through Iranian Skies Daily

*IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK*

**TEHRAN - President Hassan Rouhani says some 1,400 flights pass through the skies over Iran daily, which indicates the significance of the country as a major air transit route.**

The president said Iran enjoys a unique geographical position as it lies on major air, rail and road transit routes.

He noted Iran's transit privilege also contributes to the country's economy and political relations.

"The issue of transport and transit is very important in foreign relations. Iran's geopolitical situation, in particular, is of significance. Iran enjoys a very important status in terms of linking the north of this region to its south, and the east of this region to its west," he said.

"Iran can link the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman and the Indian Ocean to our northern regions, Central Asia, Russia and Northern Europe. Again, due to its situation, Iran can link the east and west of Asia," he said.

President Rouhani underlined that Iran is implementing various transportation projects which facilitate the transit of goods and people via Iranian soil.

"Very good measures have been adopted in the domain of road and railway construction. In the coming weeks, we will inaugurate the Khaf-Herat railroad whereby Iran's rail network will be connected to that of Afghanistan for the first time," he said.

"There are other very important railway projects in the offing as well, and we hope we will inaugurate most of them by the end of the tenure of the current administration," he said.

President Rouhani also lashed out at the United States for seeking to stop transport routes from passing through Iran.

"We have been facing US officials' cruelty over the past few years. One of the plots



they hatched against the Iranian nation was to not allow the region's key transit routes to pass through Iran.

They made a lot of efforts to achieve that end," the president said.

"Of course, they mostly failed due to the status of Iran," he noted.

13 motorway and airport projects around the country officially start operation at President's order through video conferencing.

President Rouhani on Thursday inaugurated hundreds of kilometers of roads in southern and central Iran.

Rouhani ordered the beginning of the first and second parts of the 63-kilometre-long East Bypass of Isfahan, 97 kilometres from the Southern Coastal Highway Corridor in Hormozgan, the second lane of the 24-km Southern Bypass of Kerman, and 10 airport projects in Isfahan, Tabriz, Mashhad, Shahroud and Gorgan via video conference.

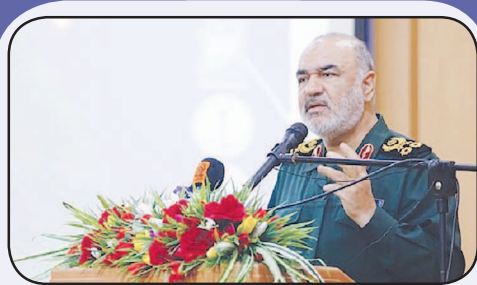
Over 3.14 trillion tomans of credit have been spent on these projects.

Governor-General of Hormuzgan Province Fereydoun Hemmati said that 97 kilometres of road were inaugurated today in the provincial city of Jask, and 171 more kilometres are under construction in five projects.

In another online ceremony, President Rouhani inaugurated a 63-kilometre freeway in Isfahan province, central Iran. The plan will reduce pollution and accidents, and eases traffic.

The Government has worked out different projects all over the country in line with guidelines of the Supreme Leader called "Surge in Production" for the current Iranian year (started March 20, 2020).

## No Geographical Limit For IRGC to Defend Iran's Interests



TEHRAN (MNA) – Major General Hossein Salami said that IRGC would not restrict its activities to a specific geographical region when it comes to protecting Iran's security and vital interests.

Speaking in a ceremony of joining of Shahid Roudaki ocean-going warship to the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Navy, the Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Hossein Salami said that Islamic Iran today is a sign and manifestation of the invincible will of a great nation in the face of vast pressures.

IRGC would not restrict its activities to a specific geographical region when it comes to protecting Iran's security and vital interests, he added.

"If anybody seeks to threaten the interests of this great nation and country, they will definitely find no safe spot on Earth," Salami warned.

He further mentioned Iran's success in playing a prominent and unique role in ensuring security in the Persian Gulf, which he said has strategic importance to the world economy.

Salami also explained the IRGC's defence strategy that is coupled with offence tactics, cautioning the enemies that any threat or act of aggression will turn the IRGC into a fully offensive force.

He went on to say that the IRGC Navy's defense capabilities cover a broad range of tactics such as combat in close range, close combat in faraway areas, and remote combat.

## U.S. Presence Is Not in Interest of Regional Security

TEHRAN (IP) - The Special Assistant to the Speaker of the Iranian Parliament for International Affairs said: "The experience of the U.S. military interference in Iraq and Afghanistan proved that the presence of US forces is not in the interest of regional security."

In a meeting with Hungarian Ambassador to Tehran Zoltan Varga-Haszonits on Wednesday, Hossein Amirabdollahian emphasized Tehran's strategy for the withdrawal of US troops from the region, saying, "The assassination of Lieutenant General Ghasem Soleimani, the late commander of the IRGC's Quds Force, had accelerated the US withdrawal from the region."

Amirabdollahian, referring to the 90-year-old history of diplomatic relations between Iran and Hungary, said: "The policy of the Iranian parliament is based on increasing interactions at various levels with friendly countries, including Hungary."



He stressed: "There are many potentials in the fields of agriculture, tourism, technical and engineering services to improve the level of relations between Iran and Hungary."

He also thanked the Hungarian government for its cooperation and assistance in solving the problem of a number of Iranian students

following the Coronavirus pandemic.

For his part, the Hungarian Ambassador to Iran emphasized the importance of developing relations and cooperation between the two countries in the economic, educational and cultural fields, saying: "Hungary will spare no effort to strengthen relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and expansion of bilateral interactions is on the agenda of the Hungarian government and parliament."

Zoltan Varga-Haszonits also welcomed the expansion of Hungarian-Iranian relations in political, cultural, scientific, and technological fields, and called for the strengthening of parliamentary cooperation between the two countries.

## Pompeo's Maximum Pressure Policy Reaches Maximum Failure

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said in a Twitter message late on Wednesday that the outgoing U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's policy of maximum pressure has reached maximum failure.

"The outgoing @SecPompeo's frustration is understandable. His "max pressure policy reached a max failure..." I discussed w/ @PressTV, the US economic terrorism against Iran, JCPOA's future, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, situation in Afghanistan & more," he tweeted late on Wednesday.

In related remarks earlier on Wednesday, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in a message stressed that the U.S. is still a member of the UN and expressed Iran's readiness to negotiate terms for regaining JCPOA participant terms.

"The U.S. is still a UN member," Zarif wrote in his Twitter account.

"If it meets its obligations as such under UNSCR 2231, we will fulfill ours under the #JCPOA. If the US then seeks to re-join the JCPOA, we're ready to negotiate terms for it to regain its 'JCPOA Participant' status," he added.

## Iran Axis of Security, Stability in Region

TEHRAN (MNA) – Stating that the United States creates insecurity to sell its military weapons, Top Military Aide to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said that Iran is the axis of security stability in the region.

Yahya Rahim Safavi referred to Iran as a strategic connecting point between Asia and Europe, saying the country has an irreplaceable and unique geopolitical position in the world.

Iran is the leading power in the West Asian region and has a high capacity in various fields, including technology, he added.

Iran has built its relations with Eurasian countries on the basis of common interests and threats, he said, adding that Iran is the axis of security stability in the region and the safest country in Southwest Asia.

Stating that behind every insecurity in the region, there are traces of American arms companies, Rahim Safavi said that the United States creates insecurity to sell its military weapons.

He highlighted that Iran is a strong, stable and secure country that can also play a role in creating security in Eurasia.

## Iran's Strategy Peace, Friendship

TEHRAN (IP) - The commander of the Navy of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), emphasized that Iran's peace and friendship strategy is accompanied by public security.

Admiral Alireza Tangsiri, commander of the IRGC Navy at the ceremony of the Martyr Rudaki oceangoing warship' joining to the IRGC Navy, emphasized that Iran's strategy is peace and friendship with public security and said: "Security cannot be bought and will only be achieved in the shadow of peace and mutual respect to each other's interests."

The commander of the IRGC Navy mentioned Martyr Rudaki oceangoing warship as a vessel equipped with all kinds of weapons and added that this heavy vessel is a messenger of peace, friendship, brotherhood, and security.

Emphasizing that defending Islam is not limited to borders, Admiral Tangsiri said: "Law of the sea allows the navy to be present 12 miles from any country."

The commander of IRGC Navy also stated that maritime sovereignty is Iran's right today, adding: "Presence offshore and in the Indian Ocean is our right, and its realization means maritime sovereignty."

## Iranian, Afghan Provinces Urge Expansion of Mutual Ties

TEHRAN (MNA) – Governor-General of Khorasan Razavi province and the Chairman of the Herat Provincial Council emphasized the need to improve ties between the two provinces.

During their meeting in Mashhad, the Governor-General of Khorasan Razavi province Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian pointed to the historical, cultural, and religious background and commonalities between Iran and Afghanistan and said Iran expects the level of cooperation between Herat and Khorasan Razavi provinces to increase.

Pointing to the role of border provinces in enhancing the interaction between Iran and Afghanistan, Motamedian hoped for a boost in bilateral trade considering the two government's policy of increasing bilateral trade and economic exchange.

"We are fully prepared for the activation of Iran-Afghanistan Dogharoon cross border gate round the clock," he added.

Motamedian also informed that the Khaf-Herat railway is to be inaugurated within days and that upon its completion of the Khaf-Herat railway project the trade ties between both countries will increase too.

The chairman of the Herat provincial council, Kamran Alizai for his part, referred to religious, cultural, and language commonalities between Iran and Afghanistan and said that cooperation between the two countries in all sectors, especially in the field of border issues should be expanded.

Tehran and Kabul have recently discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation especially holding a joint economic commission between the two countries, signing of a comprehensive document on cooperation between the two countries, and opening the Khaf-Herat railway.

## Iran Underlines Expanding Transit Route of Goods With Azerbaijan

BAKU (IRNA) - Iran's Ambassador to Azerbaijan Republic Abbas Mousavi said on Thursday that using RoRo ships in the Caspian Sea is a need of today and tomorrow, stressing the need to expand the transit route of goods with this country.

Following a visit to the international port of Hosan, on his Twitter page, the Iranian ambassador described the prospects of diversification of transit routes between Iran and Azerbaijan Republic as promising.

"I saw three ships of our country unloading Iranian goods, which was promising. The use of RoRo ships in the Caspian Sea is a need of today and tomorrow," Mousavi said.

International Port of Hosan has been operating as one of the largest ports of Azerbaijan in the Caspian Sea since 1956, through which oil and petroleum products, construction materials, agricultural products and other goods are transported.

## Tehran, Lisbon Confer on Visa Issues Under Pandemic

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran's Ambassador to Portugal in his meeting with the Consular Director-General of Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs discussed visa issuance procedures for Iranians living and studying in Portugal under the pandemic.

Iran's Ambassador to Portugal Morteza Damanpak Jami in his meeting with the Consular Director-General of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs talked about the delay in the extension of the residency permit of Iranians living in Portugal, the visa issuance procedures, and the two countries' cooperation on judicial assistance and extradition of criminals.

Damanpak wrote in his Twitter account: "In a meeting with the Consular Director-General of Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we talked about the delay in the extension of the residency permit of Iranians reside in Portugal, the visa certification process and two countries' cooperation on judicial assistance and criminals extradition".

In the time of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, a number of Iranians living abroad, especially students studying in foreign countries, who have returned to Iran are facing visa extension problems and could not return to the countries for residence or education.





## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:50
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:13
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:19
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:47

105. We have sent down to thee the Book in truth, that thou mightest judge between men, as guided by Allah, so be not (used) as an advocate by those who betray their trust;  
106. But seek the forgiveness of Allah, for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

Surah 4. Women (105 - 106)

## Constructive Negotiations Can Resolve Tehran-Ankara Trade Problems

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN – Commercial attache of Embassy of Turkey in Tehran Mr. Abdullah Oskay met Deputy Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) for International Affairs Mohammad-Reza Karbasi and during the meeting both sides emphasized developing trade between Iran and Turkey because of strong determination of policy-makers and activists in different economic sectors of both states.**

In the meeting, Karbasi explained the latest development on the bilateral trade between Iran and Turkey and the hurdles for bilateral trade since early March due to the Coronavirus pandemic which has become a big challenge for trade between Iran and Turkey and caused the trade volume drop sharply.

He also called for a strong determination from activists of different economic sectors of both countries for resumption and expansion of activities.

Karbasi noted that the trade volume of Iran and Turkey was around \$1.5b in the first seven months of 2020 which shows a considerable decline comparing to the same period last year. He added that this had made it more difficult to touch the target set for bilateral trade of \$15b.

He noted some of imposed restrictions especially in transit and customs formalities as well as imposing ban on imports and exports can be easily resolved through constructive talks between both states.

He reiterated that Iranian statesmen and private sector have always been supportive of developing and easing economic relations with Iran, adding that the ICCIMA expects, despite all created economic difficulties, more cooperation to be shaped for removing the challenges for developing trade between both states especially by Turkey.

Karbasi deplored that due to the current inconsistencies, Iranian exports to Turkey and European states in the field of transportation and transit of goods are facing huge costs and hurdles.



He also called for acceleration in holding talks on preferential trade between Iran and Turkey and called it a necessary action for economic activists for expanding cooperation, stipulating that despite good relations of both states, they still need agreements to improve the cooperation level in the current condition.

Karbasi noted due to the restrictions because of the pandemic, economic relations are necessary to continue by using virtual capacity and it is also necessary economic activists and investors of both countries to be supported more, and a reference should be set up for settling the disputes.

He further said that auto-making, apparel and textile, home appliances, energy and petrochemical sectors are of major fields for bilateral cooperation.

Meanwhile Turkish Commercial Attache Mr. Oskay, for his part, emphasized that deepening economic ties have great impact on political ties.

He then pointed to the raised problems by Mr. Karbasi regarding delay in passage of trucks in the joint borders as well as customs formalities, adding that Turkey's Trade Ministry will pursue these issues and would take necessary actions.

He admitted that the health protocols have also created problems for Turkey's businessmen and they are facing with return of 15 percent of their exported goods from the borders. But he reiterated that these problems can be solved through mutual cooperation.

Oskay noted that developing the preferential tariffs is important for Turkey and Turkey's Trade Ministry presented its proposed list of the goods to Iran in July.

He stated that Turkish economic activists are eager to invest in investment and expanding business in the field of mines in all provinces of Iran and especially in Isfahan, Fars and Yazd but they need to get familiar with the existing investment opportunities.

Oskay went on to say that Turkey's small and medium-sized companies can take advantage of capacities in Iran for investment and it needs promotion and propagation about advantages of the investment.

## Tehran, Islamabad Seek Easing Bartering Goods

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Director-General of the Asia-Pacific Office at Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Reza Seyed-Aghazadeh and Pakistan Embassy's Trade and Investment Counsellor Masood Ahmed on the eve of the Ninth Iran-Pakistan Joint Economic Committee meeting met in order to coordinate necessary preparations for the meeting.

Mr. Seyed-Aghazadeh said that in the meeting both sides pointed to finalization of the list of goods for the free trade agreement and expressed hope that with the exchange of the lists before the start of the ninth joint economic committee meeting, new round of trade talks would be held concurrent with the meeting.

Since 2006 the preferential trade between both countries have come into effect, and it is expected with signing the free trade agreement, a better condition for developing trade and investment between Iran and Pakistan would be provided, Seyed-Aghazadeh added.

He said Pakistan is Iran's fifth export destination market and in the first seven months of the current year, the country has exported goods worth of \$492m to Pakistan and in return, goods worth \$107m have been imported.

He reiterated that Iran has capacity of exporting \$14b to Pakistan and to this end, besides removing all general hurdles in way of trade, it needs efforts and cooperation of private and state sectors of Iran and creation of legal infrastructures and developing ways for exchange of goods between both states.

## Tehran, Moscow Keen on Trade Cooperation, Halal Products

MOSCOW (IRNA) - President of International Association of Islamic Business Marat Kabayev, Iran's Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali and Managing Director of Anzali Free Zone Mohammad Vali Rouzbehan in a virtual conference on Wednesday stressed the need for promoting trade and export and import of halal meat.

The virtual conference was hosted by the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Moscow with the aim of examining trade of halal products and ways to expand this type of trade between the two countries.

International Association of Islamic Business is a trade union in Russia, the main aim of which is to promote Islamic trade, focusing on the production, export and import of halal meat. The entity was established to unite businessmen from Russia and other countries, regardless of nationality, is creating jobs such as producing, exporting and importing halal meat with the support of entrepreneurs, taking into account the spiritual values of Islam.

Addressing the meeting, Iran's envoy Jalali said that given the US unilateralism and oppressive sanctions against Iran and Russia, it is necessary to use regional capacities to resolve the problems caused by sanctions, including the capacities of the International Association of Islamic Business.

He stated that the volume of foreign investment between Islamic countries and non-Islamic countries is very low and about 11 percent of its main capacity, adding that in order to get out of this situation, there is a need for synergy and unity among Islamic countries.

Stressing the need to strengthen and develop the private sectors of Iran and Russia to increase trade between them, Jalali said, "We need to create a synergy between the private sectors of the two countries."

President of International Association of Islamic Business Marat Kabayev, for his part, emphasized that the focus of the club's work is on the production, export and import of halal meat and voiced the union's readiness to cooperate in this field, as well as other economic activities with Iran.

Managing Director of Anzali Free Zone Mohammad Vali Rouzbehan also referred to the capacities of the two countries in the field of food, agriculture and industry, as well as proper land, air and sea communications and called for development of trade relations between the two countries.

## Cyprus Envoy Visits Iran's 11th Ceramic Biennial



TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran-Cyprus ties date back to a thousand years ago and we hope to return to our glorious era of artistic cooperation between the two countries, the Cyprus envoy said during his visit to the 11th National Ceramic Biennial.

The relationship between Iran and Cyprus dates back to a thousand years ago and we hope to return to our glorious era of artistic cooperation between the two countries, the Cyprus Ambassador to Tehran Petros Nacouzis said during his visit to the 11th National Ceramic Biennial of Iran, which is underway at Niavaran Cultural Center in northern Tehran.

Nacouzis also met with Ebadreza Eslami, the director of the center, and the two sides talked about the exchange of cultural and artistic activities between the two nations.

Given the long history of the cultural relations between Iran and Cyprus and the importance of keeping it going, the two sides spoke about sisterhood agreements between Niavaran Cultural Center and similar centers in Cyprus.

"We look forward to organizing cultural and artistic events by Iranian artists in Cyprus and hosting Cypriot artists in Tehran," said Eslami, who is also an advisor to the deputy culture minister for artistic affairs.

They also emphasized the importance of scientific, cultural, and artistic exchanges through holding workshops for artists of the two countries.

The biennial, which was inaugurated October 31, showcases a total of 94 works by 87 Iranian artists. The artworks are on display until the end of November.

The International Academy of Ceramics (IAC) is the "spiritual sponsor" of the biennial this year.

Located in Geneva, Switzerland, the academy was founded in 1952 by Henry J. Reynaud, who chaired the academy until his death in 1964.

The goal of the IAC is to stimulate friendship and communication between professionals in the field of ceramics in all countries.

## Italian Embassy Holds Webinar on Supporting Business With Iran

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The Italian Embassy in Tehran hosted an online conference on Wednesday to discuss ways to support joint business and bilateral trade ties between the Italian and European Union's companies and their Iranian counterparts.

The webinar dubbed "The Iranian Market between Restrictions and Opportunities; The Instruments to support SMEs" was held in cooperation with the Italian-Iranian Chamber of Commerce in Rome.

The event, which hosted 130 Italian SMEs (small and medium size enterprises), provided participating companies with practical and updated information on the opportunities for joint cooperation and also highlighted various instruments made available to Italian companies by Italian and EU institutions to support their business with Iran. The webinar was held in cooperation with the Italian-Iranian Chamber of Commerce in Rome.

In his greetings, the Italian Ambassador in Tehran Giuseppe Perrone said that the meeting was part of a series of initiatives organized by the Embassy to provide concrete support for bilateral trade relations.

He noted that Italy's Embassy to Iran will extend practical support to Tehran-Rome economic relations within the framework of a series of initiatives.

The Italian Embassy had organized, on July 22, a Business Forum on "Economic Relations between Italy and Iran in the current context: non-oil sectors, EMS's role, EU support", in cooperation with the European House Ambrosetti and the Tehran Chamber of Commerce. More than 800 entrepreneurs and professionals both from Italy and Iran took part in that event with hundreds of virtual B2B meetings held.



## Iranian-Made Ocean-Going Warship Joins IRGC's Naval Fleet

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The naval fleet of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has received a domestically-built ocean-going warship capable of carrying aircraft, drones and missile defense systems.

The heavyweight, multipurpose vessel, which has been designed for long sea journeys, joined the IRGC's Navy during a ceremony on Thursday, with senior military and government officials in attendance.

The 400-ton warship, which is 150 meters long and 22 meters wide, can carry different types of aircraft, drones, helicopters and operational vessels as well as missile, air defense and radar systems. It was named Shahid Roudaki warship after martyred IRGC Navy commander Abdullah Roudaki.

The vessel is equipped with three-dimensional phased-array radars, surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles, advanced communication systems for electronic warfare, and a Khordad 3 air defense system, all of which are designed and put into operation by Iranian experts.

The vessel — which resembles a floating marine city — can carry out combat, logistical and intelligence-gathering missions in the ocean aimed at establishing stable security in maritime transportation lines and providing assistance to the commercial and fishing fleets belonging to the Islamic Republic and regional countries.

Speaking during the ceremony, the IRGC chief commander said the main mission of the Shahid Roudaki ocean-going warship was to ensure the security of sea routes and perform assistance, rescue and combat operations in special circumstances. The basis of our action is to first prevent the enemy from even thinking about any threat and foil it before it is formed, said Salami. "That is the full meaning of the concept of deterrence."

## Oil Ministry Denies Cyber Attack

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Oil Ministry officials have denied rumors that the country's gas transfer network came under a cyber-attack in recent days.

Ministry Spokesman Kasra Nouri said that claims about disruption caused to the supply of gas due to an alleged cyber-attack on the network were simply untrue. Nouri told the official IRNA news agency that the national gas network has been functioning properly in recent days. A spokesman of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) also denied remarks made by a member of the Iranian parliament that cyber-attacks had disrupted the flow of gas across a major part of the network in Iran.

"No attack has occurred targeting the country's gas facilities and we strongly deny any rumor in this regard," Mohammad Asgari told the IRIB News. Shahriar Heidari, deputy head of the parliamentary Committee on National Security and Foreign Policy, said earlier on Wednesday that enemies of the country had launched fresh cyber attacks targeting the country's key infrastructure in a bid to compensate their inability to confront Iran militarily.



## India's Coronavirus Cases Pass Nine Million

EW DELHI (AFP) - India's coronavirus cases passed nine million on Friday, as the world's second-worst-hit country saw hospitals in the capital New Delhi under pressure and graveyards fill up.

India has now registered more than 132,000 deaths, according to the latest official figures, which are widely seen as understating the true scale of the pandemic.

The total number of infections in India is second only to the tally in the United States, which has recorded 11.6 million cases and more than 250,000 deaths.



## Mexico Covid-19 Deaths Exceed 100,000

MEXICO CITY (Dispatches) - Mexico said Thursday its coronavirus death toll had risen above 100,000, becoming the world's fourth country to pass the grim milestone.

"Today in Mexico we have 100,000 people who have lost their lives due to Covid-19," deputy health minister Hugo Lopez-Gatell told a news conference.

The health ministry announced 576 more deaths in its daily update, taking the total to 100,104, behind only the United States, Brazil and India. The overall number of infections registered now stands at 1,019,543 in the nation of more than 128 million, up 4,472 from the previous day.



## Azerbaijan Reclaims Disputed Land In Karabakh Peace Deal



BAKU (Dispatches) - Armenia was due to hand over disputed territory to Azerbaijan on Friday as part of a contentious Russian-brokered peace accord that ended weeks of brutal fighting over the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

The Armenian residents of Azerbaijan's Aghdam district hurriedly picked pomegranates and persimmons from trees surrounding their homes and packed vans with furniture, AFP journalists said, before fleeing before the official deadline to cede the mountainous province.

"We wanted to build a sauna, kitchen. But now I had to dismantle everything. And I'll burn down the house with everything I own when I leave," Gagik Grigoryan, a 40-year-old electrical worker, told AFP before abandoning his home. Columns of tanks and troop transporters filled with waving Armenian fighters rolled out of the territory through dense fog ahead of Friday's deadline to vacate the region.

Fierce clashes between Azerbaijan's forces and Armenian separatists broke out in late September in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. The brutal war lasted six weeks, leaving thousands dead and displacing many more.

The longstanding ex-Soviet rivals finally agreed to end hostilities last week under the framework of a Russian-brokered accord that sees Moscow deploy peacekeepers to the region and requires Armenia to cede swathes of territory.

Separatists in Nagorno-Karabakh and several surrounding districts captured the territory and claimed independence that has not been recognised internationally, even by Armenia, following a post-Soviet 1990s war that left some 30,000 dead. As part of last week's peace deal, Armenia agreed to return some 15 to 20 percent of the Nagorno-Karabakh territory captured by Azerbaijan in recent fighting, including the historical town of Shusha.

The exchange of territory was originally due to begin Sunday, with Armenians in the Kalbajar district fleeing en masse before the official deadline for Azerbaijan's takeover.

But Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev postponed the deadline by one week over "humanitarian" considerations.

In addition to Friday's deadline to cede Aghdam, Armenia will hand over the Kalbajar district wedged between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia on November 25 and the Lachin district by December 1.

The Russian peacekeeping force of some 2,000 troops has deployed to the administrative centre of the region, Stepanakert, and set up checkpoints and observation posts along the strategic Lachin corridor connecting Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia.

While Armenians in the provinces to be handed over to Azerbaijan have left in an exodus, the Russian mission on Thursday said it had bussed some 3,000 residents back to Stepanakert and other regions who had fled during the six weeks of heavy shelling.

Most of Azerbaijan's south-western district of Aghdam has been under the control of Armenian separatists since 1993. Before the post-Soviet war it was inhabited by some 130,000 people -- mostly ethnic Azerbaijanis who were expelled from their homes.

Armenia's health ministry said earlier this week that more than 2,400 of the country's fighters had been killed in the fighting. Azerbaijan has not revealed its military fatalities.

## Georgia Affirms Biden's Victory as Trump Attempts To Undermine Election

DETROIT (Reuters) - After a painstaking recount, Georgia officials confirmed on Thursday that President-elect Joe Biden defeated President Donald Trump in the battleground state on Nov. 3, further narrowing the president's dubious effort to overturn the election results.

The result of the six-day hand recount of the state's 5 million ballots had been widely expected, despite baseless allegations from Trump and his allies that Georgia's vote tallies were suspect because of widespread fraud.

Amid a series of losses in court, Trump's re-election campaign has shifted to a new strategy that relies on persuading Republican state legislators in crucial states to ignore the election results and intervene on Trump's behalf, according to three people familiar with the plan.

The campaign has filed multiple lawsuits to try to challenge the results in battleground states that Biden won, as election officials across the country have affirmed that there is no evidence of major irregularities. Judges in three states delivered new legal setbacks to the campaign on Thursday, rejecting claims of improper vote counting.



## Pakistan PM Visits Kabul, Pledges Support for Afghan Peace

KABUL (Reuters) - Pakistan will do everything it can to help reduce violence in Afghanistan following an upsurge in Taliban attacks, Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Thursday on his first visit to Kabul since taking office more than two years ago.

Peace talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government began in September in the Qatari capital Doha but have stalled, and the Taliban still refuses to call a ceasefire. Its attacks have sometimes prompted U.S. airstrikes to protect urban areas.

"... despite the talks in Qatar, the level of violence is rising, so my idea of choosing this time to come was to assure you that Pakistan will do everything - whatever is possible we will do - to help reduce this violence," Khan told a joint news conference with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani.

Ghani reiterated his government's support for a "comprehensive political settlement for an enduring peace within the framework of our values".

Mistrust has long clouded bilateral ties due to Pakistan's covert support for the Taliban over the past two decades. As the militants later began launching attacks inside Pakistan, it accused Afghanistan of stirring trouble within its borders.

The United States views Pakistan as having a key role in the peace talks, particularly given its influence over the Taliban leadership, though Islamabad says that influence has waned.

Afghan government officials told Reuters Kabul wants Islamabad to pressure the Taliban into winding down the violence and agreeing a ceasefire and to improve bilateral economic ties.

"The focus will be mainly on the peace process but we won't keep our hopes high," said a source in the Afghan presidential palace.

In the last six months, according to Afghan interior ministry data, the Taliban has carried out 53 suicide attacks, while 1,210 civilians are among the thousands killed in violence linked to the insurgency.



Khan's visit comes days after the Pentagon announced it would reduce the number of U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan from 4,500 to 2,500 by mid-January.

President Donald Trump, due to leave office on Jan. 20 after losing this month's presidential election to Democrat Joe Biden, is seeking to end the 19-year war in Afghanistan, the United States' longest conflict.

## More Than a Dozen Killed in Uganda Protests

KAMPALA (Dispatches) - Sixteen people have been killed in two days of violent clashes between Ugandan security forces and supporters of detained opposition leader Bobi Wine, police said Thursday, as tensions flared two months before a presidential election.

Ugandan security forces fired teargas and rubber bullets at angry protesters who set fires, barricaded roads and looted stores in the capital Kampala, as calls mounted for calm ahead of the January 14 elections.

The popstar-turned-presidential candidate Bobi Wine, whose real name is Robert Kyagulanyi, was still in detention after being arrested on Wednesday for allegedly violating coronavirus measures at his rallies, over the large crowds attending.

"The death toll is now 16, with 45 injuries, some serious injuries," Kampala police chief Moses Kafeero told AFP, without giving details of those killed.

"About 350 people have been arrested for participating in violent acts including looting, destruction of property, traffic disruption, theft and robberies during the riots," he added.

Protests kicked off on Wednesday, when police said seven

were killed, after Wine's detention ahead of a rally. Wine is considered the main challenger to veteran president Yoweri Museveni who is seeking a sixth term in power.

Pockets of protests continued throughout the day in Kampala and other major towns, with youths barricading roads, starting fires and engaging in running battles with police who lobbed tear gas and fired rubber bullets at protesters, and in some cases, fired live bullets.

The Red Cross said late Wednesday it had treated dozens of injured following "scuffles involving the police and the rioting masses", including 11 people for gunshot wounds.

While the military and police maintained a heavy presence, by the evening the situation had deteriorated with robberies taking place and shops being looted.

An AFP journalist saw hooded men stopping vehicles in a suburb of Kampala, and robbing passengers before police opened fire on the perpetrators.

"My phone, money and handbag has been taken," said 42-year-old Flavia Namutebi, a Kampala businesswoman who was in a taxi that was robbed.

"They said they want money to bail out Bobi Wine," she said.



## Turkey's Behavior Widening Its Separation From EU



BRUSSELS (Reuters) - Turkey's rhetoric on Cyprus is aggravating tensions with the European Union and Ankara must understand that its behavior is "widening its separation" from the 27-nation bloc, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said on Thursday.

"We consider the recent actions and statements by Turkey related to Cyprus contrary to the United Nations resolutions and further igniting tensions," Borrell told a news conference after a meeting of EU foreign ministers.

"We consider that it is important that Turkey understands that its behaviour is widening its separation from the EU ... In order to return to a positive agenda, as we wish, will require a fundamental change of attitude on the Turkish side." He was referring to comments by Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, who called for an equal "two-state" solution in Cyprus during a visit earlier this week to the breakaway Turkish Cypriot north of the island. Erdogan also said Turkey and Northern Cyprus would no longer tolerate what he called "diplomacy games" in an international dispute over rights to offshore resources in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Turkey is an official candidate for EU membership.

Cyprus has been split along ethnic lines since a Turkish invasion in 1974 triggered by a brief Greek-inspired coup. Only Ankara recognises Northern Cyprus as an independent state and it has no diplomatic relations with the government of Cyprus, which is a member of the EU.

Cyprus called Erdogan's visit "provocative and illegal".





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## ECB Gives Banks a Year to Get Real on Climate Risk

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - The European Central Bank said on Wednesday it would start dissecting euro zone banks' exposure to climate change in 2022 and set its capital requirements accordingly. Banks will, for example, be told to factor in risks to their shares in carbon-intensive companies and to their property in locations that are prone to extreme weather or other environmental hazards, according to a guide produced by the ECB earlier this year.

ECB supervisors will start discussions with lenders early next year but do not plan to translate those into capital demands for another year as banks need time to collect data and change their practices. "Supervisory follow-up actions (in 2021) cannot be ruled out in certain individual cases," the ECB said in its supervision newsletter. "As of 2022, however, the ECB will start conducting in-depth supervisory assessments of bank' practice."



## China to Overtake 56 Nations by 2025 in Per Capita Income Surge

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China's surging economy is set to overtake 56 countries in the world's per-capita income rankings during the quarter-century through 2025, the International Monetary Fund projects.

By that date, China will rank 70th in the world on the metric, putting it close to joining the richest one-third of nations, according to data analyzed by Bloomberg from last month's IMF World Economic Outlook.

The Asian powerhouse is forecast to have per-capita GDP, adjusted for purchasing power, equal to \$25,307 in 2025. That will take it past Argentina, one of the richest countries in the world a century ago and now mired in debt and currency crises.

Jim O'Neill, the former head of Global Economic Research at Goldman Sachs Inc. who famously created the BRICs acronym for Brazil, Russia, India and China in 2001, says that bloc "could become collectively bigger than the G-7 countries" in the 2030s, referring to the Group of Seven richest nations. "This is almost exclusively because of China, and to a smaller degree India," he says.

There are plenty more remarkable findings in the data, which show large leaps especially among east European and Asian countries. Turkmenistan is projected to be the only country climbing further up the rankings than China, advancing 58 spots. There are also big gains for Armenia, Georgia, Vietnam and Bangladesh. Overall, developing Asian countries will see per-capita GDP rise sixfold in the period. By contrast, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and Central Asia aren't expected to even double their incomes. Among the G-7 economies, average per-capita GDP rose from \$31,471 to an expected \$64,582 in 2025. Italy is the only member forecast to fall sharply down the rankings, to 35th place from 21st.

The U.S. has broadly held onto its standing in the world. It ranked 11th in 2000, with a per-capita GDP of \$36,318, and is set to move up to 9th place. But its neighbors have fared less well. Canada is expected to drop six spots to 24th and Mexico is one of the period's biggest losers, plunging 26 places to 77th by 2025.

In general, Latin American and Caribbean economies have been laggards over the quarter-century. They're also among the hardest-hit by Covid-19 this year, with per-capita GDP forecast to decline in all the region's economies bar Guyana. In Venezuela, things have gotten so bad that the IMF didn't even attempt forecasts — but by 2019, the country's residents had already seen per-capita GDP slump 36% from 2000.

Haiti hasn't recovered from the devastating earthquake of 10 years ago, despite billions of dollars in aid. It's expected to rank 183rd out of 191 measured countries in 2025 — down from 159th in 2000, and the lowest-ranked nation in the Western Hemisphere. Persian Gulf nations, among the world's richest at the turn of the century, have lost ground as the oil price receded. Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia are all dropping out of the global top 20 as living standards stagnate or decline.

Others in the region have been devastated by war and political turmoil. Libya, Syria and Yemen have seen large declines. In Lebanon, the situation is so dire that the IMF expects a 25% contraction in GDP this year alone. The Middle East's woes are reflected in the fact that all five of the countries projected by the IMF to have lower per-capita incomes in 2025 compared with earlier in the century are in the region.

Sub-Saharan Africa remains a laggard in the world economy, although there are some bright spots. While only Seychelles and Gabon had per-capita GDP exceeding \$10,000 in 2000, by 2025 six more economies are forecast to reach or pass that level.

It's in Asia where the increase in living standards is most dramatic.

In China, per-capita GDP roughly doubled from 2000 to 2006, did so again before 2013, and is expected to double once more by 2024 — an annualized growth rate of 9.1% over the 25-year span.

## Japan's Long Run of Falling Exports Slows

TOKYO (Reuters) - Japan's exports extended declines in October but at the slowest pace in almost two years, helped by improvement in Chinese- and U.S.-demand for cars and other items as the world's third-largest economy emerged from its worst postwar slump.

The trade data is likely to encourage policymakers who are counting on external demand to shift Japan's recovery away from government stimulus back to private sector activity, although a coronavirus resurgence has clouded the outlook.

Ministry of Finance (MOF) data out Wednesday showed exports fell 0.2% in October from a year earlier, compared with economists' median estimate of a 4.5% decrease in a Reuters poll. It was the smallest decline in Japan's 23 straight months of export contraction and follows a 4.9% fall in the previous month. Capital Economics Japan Economist Tom Learmouth said the boost from improving exports to the broader recovery was likely to be limited.

"Although export volumes returned to pre-virus levels in October, import volumes bounced back more strongly," Learmouth said. "That supports our view that the boost to growth from net trade will now fade." By destination, shipments to the United States rose 2.5%, a second straight month of increase and the biggest since July 2019 led by demand for automobiles and car parts.

Exports to China, Japan's largest trading partner, increased 10.2%, driven by chip-making equipment, cars and plastic, while those to Asia as a whole rose 4.4%, the first increase in eight months. Shipments to the European Union fell 2.6% in October. Imports fell 13.3% in the year to October, bigger than the median estimate for a 9.0% decrease but slower than the 17.2% fall in September. That brought a trade surplus of 873 billion yen (\$8.38 billion), versus the median estimate for a 250.0 billion yen surplus.



## FAO Calls on Member States to Take Action On Antimicrobial Resistance in Food Chains



TEHRAN (FAO) - Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is a major global threat of increasing concern to human and animal health with serious implications for both food safety and food and nutrition security, and the economic wellbeing of millions of farming households, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) warns.

MR is the capacity of microorganisms — bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites — to resist antimicrobial substances, like antibiotics, that were previously effective in treating infections. As a result, medicines that were once effective treatments for disease have become less so — or even useless, leading to a reduced ability to treat infections successfully.

It is a well-established fact that misuse and excessive use of antimicrobial drugs for treatment and prevention of diseases in the livestock sector, aquaculture and crop production are often associated with the potential risk of emergence and spread of antimicrobial-resistant microorganisms.

There is also clear scientific evidence that food can serve as a vehicle of food-borne exposure to antimicrobial-resistant bacteria. This includes, but is not limited to, foods from livestock and poultry, fish, and fruits and vegetables, that were produced either conventionally or organically.

When humans ingest antimicrobial-resistant microorganisms in food, some bacteria may cause illness. These and other species may also serve as a source of AMR genes that other microorganisms in the gastrointestinal tract, including human pathogens, can acquire.

The most effective approach by far to limit the use of antimicrobials in agriculture is to reduce the need to treat animal and plant diseases. For terrestrial and aquatic animals, this includes the adoption of good management practices such as biosecurity, vaccination and proper nutrition.

In the plant production, the use of the well-established procedures of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)—a systems approach designed to minimize economic losses for crops, and to minimize risks to people and the environment, can both increase yield and reduce the need for antimicrobial treatments.

At the production level, FAO supports the implementation of good hygiene practices and measures to prevent contamination, and the responsible use of antimicrobial medicines to help reduce food safety risks. This continues beyond the farm gate where adherence to good hygiene and manufacturing practices by all food business operators, enforced through a risk-based inspection system, is equally important.

Effective monitoring and surveillance systems that track the use of antimicrobials and the existence of AMR in humans and in food chains are also necessary. One part of such an effort is existing Veterinary Drug Residue Monitoring Programs; these are currently in place in some countries only and often need to be strengthened.

FAO, determined in promoting global efforts to ensure food safety, provides governments with support and training on how to set up and operate veterinary drug residue monitoring programmes effectively. Another way the Organization is helping countries is through FAO Assessment Tool for Laboratories and AMR Surveillance Systems (FAO-ATLASS). With support from FAO, countries can assess their national surveillance and laboratory capacities and identify areas to prioritize when allocating investments.

## Maersk Confident About Shipping Recovery Beyond 2020

COPENHAGEN (Reuters) - Shipping group Maersk said on Wednesday it is confident about the outlook for shipping beyond 2020 as a second wave of coronavirus infections has only had a limited impact on global freight volumes.

Maersk, the world's biggest container shipping line, has recovered faster than expected after the pandemic halted trade around the world, benefiting from higher retail sales in the United States.

"The second wave of coronavirus infections has had relatively limited impact on trade volumes," Chief Executive Soren Skou told a news briefing after announcing third-quarter results in line with preliminary numbers published last month. The company on Tuesday raised its full-year earnings forecast, citing increased momentum in the fourth quarter in global container volumes and freight rates.

Shipping executives last month warned that a rally in freight rates fuelled by surging shipments into the United States could slow because of new COVID-19 lockdown measures.

"One thing we've learned is that it doesn't really matter if a society is in lockdown or not, because consumers spend their money online instead of going to the mall," Skou said. "A lot of the money consumers haven't been able to spend on holidays or at restaurants, bars or sporting events, have instead been spend buying things like flat screen TVs or new shoes," he said. While Skou forecasts global container volumes to contract by 4%-5% this year, he forecasts a return to normal next year with global container volumes slightly above 2019 levels.

Maersk also announced a new share buy-back programme of up to 10 billion Danish crowns (\$1.60 billion), a decision that was "supported by the strong earnings and free cash flow generation seen in 2020."

In line with preliminary numbers announced last month, Maersk said third-quarter sales fell slightly from last year to \$9.92 billion, while earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) rose 39% to \$2.3 billion.

## Oman Talks to Banks About New Loan of at Least \$1b

DUBAI (Reuters) - Oman is discussing a loan of at least \$1 billion with a group of banks, sources said, as the oil-producing Persian Gulf state seeks more funding ahead of heavy debt redemptions over the next two years.

Rated below investment grade by all major credit agencies, Oman issued \$2 billion in bonds last month in a deal which saw lacklustre demand partly because of investor concerns over the country's worsening credit trajectory.

It is now in talks with banks for a loan that would refinance \$1 billion of existing bank debt due in January, said one of the three sources familiar with the matter. A second source said the new facility could exceed \$1 billion.

Oman's ministry of finance did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Oman has \$1.5 billion in international bonds due in June, in addition to the \$1 billion loan due in January, which it took out in 2016 after oil prices plummeted, Refinitiv data showed.

S&P Global Ratings, which downgraded Oman last month, said external debt maturing in the next two years came to \$10.7 billion, or about 7.5% of gross domestic product (GDP).

"Oman will continue to rely on external debt to fund its large government deficits and maturing debt and remain vulnerable to shifts in investor sentiment," the ratings agency said last month.

The oil producer has piled up debt at breakneck speed in the past few years, after oil prices crashed from more than \$115 a barrel in June 2014 to under \$30 in January 2016.

At the same time, Oman's plans to diversify its economy and introduce sensitive tax and subsidies reform dragged under Sultan Qaboos, who died in January after half a century in power. A fiscal reform plan under Sultan Haitham, Oman's new ruler, aims to bring the fiscal deficit down to 1.7% of GDP by 2024, from a preliminary deficit of 15.8% this year.

## UN, Partners Release New Research Roadmap to Guide Recovery From COVID-19

TEHRAN (UNIC) — COVID-19 has exposed stark global inequities, fragilities and unsustainable practices that have intensified the impact of the pandemic. According to UN estimates, in 2020, 71 million people will be pushed into extreme poverty.

To immediately address the complex health, humanitarian and socio-economic consequences while boosting speedy recovery efforts, the UN has released a Research Roadmap for the COVID-19 Recovery, encouraging targeted research for data-driven responses that focus particularly on the needs of people being left behind.

The Roadmap highlights the choice between business as usual, or transformative change that is focused on equity, resilience and sustainability. This transformation requires knowledge of the best way forward, and science represents the world's best chance for generating that knowledge and recovering better from the COVID-19 crisis. Link to the Roadmap: <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/un-research-roadmap-covid-19-recovery>

"We have a historic opportunity for change; for macroeconomic choices and fiscal policies that are pro-poor and that place peoples' rights at the centre of recovery. We must focus on gender equity and invest in public services and other measures that will help close the widening gap on inequalities and lead to a greener future," said United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed in the report.



### UN Research Roadmap for the COVID-19 Recovery

Leveraging the Power of Science for a More Equitable, Resilient and Sustainable Future

In an interdependent world—shared risk means shared responsibility. Designed to complement the existing UN Framework for the Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19, the Roadmap identifies 25 main research priorities and key scientific strategies to support a recovery that benefits everyone, everywhere.

"The stakes are too high and the opportunity too great to leave the potential of science for a better COVID-19 recovery unfulfilled. The UN Research Roadmap for the COVID-19 Recovery is a commitment and guide to bring the full promise of research to bear on today's greatest challenges," said Professor Steven J. Hoffman, Scientific Director of the Institute of Population & Public Health at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, who led the development of the Research Roadmap.



## Resistance Film Festival to Display Selected Films in Nama Film

TEHRAN (MNA) – The selected films of the second round of the 16th Resistance International Film Festival will be displayed in the Nama Film platform.

Those people who are interested to watch the films online should refer to namafilm.ir and watch the festival's films online.

The second part of the festival is covering "Main Competition", "Resistance Prominent Martyr - Special Section", "Best Film Competition in Absolute Sense" and "Narrations of Pen - Scriptwriting Competition. Presided by Mahdi Azimi Mirabadi, the second section of the festival will be held from 21-27 November 2020.



## G20's Saudi Arms Sales Three Times as Much as Aid to Yemen

RIYADH (Dispatches) - The member states of the Group of 20 (G20) have sold more than \$17bn worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia since it intervened in neighboring Yemen's conflict in 2015, Oxfam said.

In a report released on Tuesday, the charity organisation said the figure was three times more than what the G20 members have given to Yemen as humanitarian aid.

The report was released as G20 leaders prepare to meet virtually this week for a summit hosted by Saudi Arabia.

While some European nations have halted arms sales to Riyadh after it launched a military campaign in Yemen – which the United Nations calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis – many G20 members have continued to supply it with arms.

In March 2015, a coalition led by the oil-rich kingdom launched a campaign of aerial bombardment aimed at countering the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels and reinstating the internationally recognised government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), a defence think-tank, Saudi Arabia was the world's top arms importer between 2014 and 2018, spending \$16.9bn on weapons, with at least \$4.9bn of that amount spent on European arms.

Oxfam's Awssan Kamal said it is "shocking to see that level of business happening" as Yemen enters its sixth year of conflict, with 80 percent of the impoverished country's 30 million people in need of help.

"As we work ... to respond to the coronavirus, we're seeing a dramatic drop in the humanitarian funding levels," Kamal told Al Jazeera.

"We need to call on world leaders today to take responsibility, use the momentum of the G20 this week to ensure that there are sufficient talks around the humanitarian funding."

Rights groups have criticised the Saudi-led coalition for air raids that have killed civilians at hospitals, schools and markets, and urged the Western governments to halt arms exports to Saudi Arabia and its allies in the stalemated conflict.

According to Oxfam, there has been "one air raid every ten days" on hospitals, clinics, wells and water tanks during the war.

"The arrival of coronavirus has only worsened these dire circumstances. And yet the United Nations' response plan to get clean water, food and medical care to the most vulnerable is only 44 percent funded this year," the charity group said.

More than 100,000 people have been killed in the war, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data, including 12,000 civilians.

The conflict in Yemen is widely seen in the region as a proxy war between rivals Saudi Arabia and Iran. Riyadh launched informal talks for a ceasefire with the



Houthis late last year as it seeks to exit a costly war.

However, a surge in fighting in recent weeks has killed dozens of people in the key port city of Hodeidah, despite a UN-sponsored ceasefire in place in the area. The port serves as the war-torn country's main entry point for commercial imports and much-needed aid.

According to Kamal, what Yemenis urgently need is an "inclusive peace process and an immediate ceasefire".

According to the UN's World Food Programme, 24 million Yemenis are in need of humanitarian assistance, while 20 million are food-insecure and face another famine.

"Having suffered years of death, displacement and disease, the people of Yemen need these powerful members of the international community to bring all parties to the conflict together to agree to an immediate countrywide ceasefire and return to negotiations committed to achieving a lasting peace," Oxfam's Yemen director Muhsin Siddiquey said.

"Making billions from arms exports which fuel the conflict while providing a small fraction of that in aid to Yemen is both immoral and incoherent. The world's wealthiest nations cannot continue to put profits above the Yemeni people."

## Euro Zone Inflation Confirmed Negative in October

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - Euro zone annual inflation was negative for a third consecutive month in October, matching a four-year low, as energy prices were around 8% lower than a year earlier.

Inflation in the 19 countries sharing the euro was plus 0.2% month-on-month in October for a 0.3% year-on-year fall, the same annual decline as in September and in line with the initial estimates released at the start of November.

Food, alcohol and tobacco added 0.38 percentage points to the final results, Eurostat said, and services another 0.19 points, but an 8.2% year-on-year plunge in energy prices subtracted 0.81 percentage points from the final number.

Non-energy industrial goods also reduced inflation by 0.03 points. Without volatile energy and unprocessed food prices, what the European Central Bank (ECB) calls core inflation, prices rose 0.1% month-on-month and 0.4% year-on-year.

An even narrower measure that also excludes alcohol and tobacco showed a 0.1% month-on-month and a 0.2% year-on-year increase. The ECB wants to keep inflation below, but close to 2% over the medium term.

Across the euro zone, the highest inflation was 1.6% in Slovakia, followed by 1.2% in the Netherlands and by 1.1% in Austria. Declines were sharpest in Greece at 2.0%, Estonia at 1.7% and 1.5% in Ireland. In the bloc's largest and third largest economies, Germany and Italy, inflation was negative. It was up by just 0.1% in France, the euro zone's second largest economy.

## China's Xi Outlines Plan to Cut Tariffs, Boost Imports of High-Quality Goods

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China will continue to cut its tariffs and expand imports of high-quality goods and services, Chinese President Xi Jinping said on Thursday, while vowing to push reforms and promote an innovation-driven growth model.

"We will further reduce tariffs and institutional costs..., and expand imports of high-quality products and services from all countries," Xi said in a keynote speech delivered via video at the APEC CEO dialogs, ahead of a leaders' virtual summit on the future of international cooperation on Friday.

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China will pursue higher quality growth through its "dual circulation" development model, driven by technological innovation, Xi said.

Xi also called for stronger policy coordination among international communities and said globalization is "irreversible" and that China will not engage in "de-coupling".

"Our new development pattern is not a closed domestic single circulation, but an open and mutually promoting domestic and international dual circulation," Xi said.

The "dual circulation" strategy envisages that China's



next phase of development will depend mainly on "domestic circulation" or an internal cycle of production, distribution and consumption, backed by domestic technological innovation.

Xi also said China will sign free trade pacts with more countries and will

promote a high-quality Belt and Road initiative.

At a key meeting last month, Xi and other leaders laid out a blueprint for China's five-year plan and key objectives for the next 15 years. They include a goal to turn China into a "high income" nation by 2025 and advance to a "moderately developed" nation by 2035.

## West Asia on Course...

FROM PAGE 1

So the U.S. has ended the operation for pulling out its troops from the Persian Gulf. I note here that after 1971 when the British pulled out their forces from the Suez Canal, the U.S. Navy forces replaced them, now this presence has also come to an end. And now no regional government but Iran has a strong and serious navy in the Persian Gulf and European countries' naval presence in the Persian Gulf is just symbolic.

We should know that the current world economic condition as well as era of cheap oil price has caused the U.S. to pack its bags from the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan and experts predict that the price of oil between 40 to 50 dollars is a cheap one and the Middle East economy is in the phase of decline in demand. Of course, election of Joe Biden as the U.S. President will ease the ground for materialization of the U.S. pullout from the region.

With the withdrawal of the U.S. forces from the region, it seems natural that the regional countries would experience the color of more independence and the ground for materialization of more rational democracy will be paved more. Hope for the day when no alien may rule over the fate of the West Asia.



## Pakistan Keen...

FROM PAGE 1

Explaining the features of Pakistan's comprehensive pilgrimage policy, he said pilgrimage groups will be formed on the pattern of Hajj and Umrah by tour operators.

He added temporary accommodation, medical and transport facilities for pilgrims will be improved in Quetta and Taftan border. Regarding pilgrimages to the holy shrines during Arbaeen, the Pakistani Minister said the government will deploy additional staff in Baghdad, Karbala and Najaf to facilitate pilgrims and pilgrim group operators.

He stressed the necessary infrastructure will be provided at the Taftan border and the renovation of roads leading to the border between Pakistan and Iran is also on the agenda. Pir Noor-ul-Haq Qadri went on to say Pakistan is keen to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Iranian and Iraqi governments to facilitate visitors.

In mid-July this year, the Pakistani Ministry of Religious Affairs submitted its plans to cabinet to formulate a comprehensive policy for Shiite pilgrims intending to visit Iran.

A special subcommittee of the cabinet was formed and was tasked for finalizing the consultations.

Every year, 120,000 Pakistanis travel to Iran, Iraq and Syria for religious and cultural tourism.

Due to the difficulty of land travel for Pakistani pilgrims and the unfortunate events, Prime Minister Inran Khan issued special instruction two years ago to solve the problems of pilgrims at the Taftan border crossing.

## Tehran Condemns E3's...

FROM PAGE 1

"These steps were taken in full compliance with the JCPOA, and the country has always stressed that they will be reversible once the other parties to the JCPOA implement the deal in full," he added.

The remarks came after France, Germany, Britain in a joint statement on Thursday urged Iran to return to its commitments under the JCPOA. The Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was signed in 2015 between Iran and six world states — namely the U.S., Germany, France, Britain, Russia and China — and was ratified in the form of Resolution 2231. However, the U.S. under President Donald Trump unilaterally pulled out of the JCPOA in May 2018 and reinstated the sanctions that had been lifted by the deal. As the remaining European parties failed to fulfill their end of the bargain and compensate for Washington's absence, Iran moved in May 2019 to scale back its JCPOA commitments.

## Iran Dismisses Resolution...

FROM PAGE 1

The anti-Iran resolution was passed with 79 'yes' votes at the third committee of the UN General Assembly on Wednesday, even though 32 countries had voted against it and 64 others abstained from voting.

In his statement, Khatibzadeh said the majority of UN member states either voted 'no' or abstained from voting in a bid to show their discontent with the hypocritical approach adopted by the supporters of the resolution. The resolution was adopted with the votes of less than half the UN member states, including the Israeli regime, the United States, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Albania, Britain and Canada, he said. Khatibzadeh stressed it is a shame that Canada has brought together a bunch of governments with "notorious records in the domain of human rights", including the American, Israeli and Bahraini regimes, to teach human rights to Iranian people. He also urged Canada to stop hosting economic offenders and looters of Iranian people's wealth, "who have found Canada a safe haven for the transfer and investment of the assets they have looted."

## Envoy Rejects Nuclear...

FROM PAGE 1

He further stressed that the DG's reports should be seen in their proper contexts and stated that the JCPOA is a concrete, highly elaborated deal composed of balanced commitments made by its participants, and like any other deals, it is supposed to benefit its participants.

The ambassador noted that with the persistent United States irresponsible conduct, by adopting malign policies and imposing unlawful unilateral sanctions, the deal has lost its balance of commitments, leading to the loss of Iran's perceived benefits.

Therefore, while Iran is entitled to take remedial measures, the U.S. shall bear full responsibility for the consequences of its wrongful acts in apparent contradiction with the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of the Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015), he explained. Gharibabadi pointed out that in the past five years, the Board of Governors has witnessed many statements elaborating on

the values and advantages of the JCPOA for the non-proliferation regime. "Still, one shouldn't ignore the fact that the deal includes other essential categories of commitments, namely lifting the sanctions and its effects." He added that as it is envisaged in the Nuclear Deal, "the JCPOA addresses the E3/EU+3's concerns, including through comprehensive measures providing for transparency and verification. The JCPOA will produce the comprehensive lifting of all UN Security Council sanctions as well as multilateral and national sanctions related to Iran's nuclear program, including steps on access in areas of trade, technology, finance, and energy."

The ambassador further addressed the root of the problems surrounding JCPOA and stated that although the US Administration didn't abide by its obligations ultimately, the situation was aggravated when the US Administration announced its unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA on 8 May 2018.

## Court Gives France Three Months to Fulfil Climate Change Commitments

PARIS (Dispatches) - In a ruling hailed by campaigners as "historic", France's top administrative court on Thursday gave the government a three-month deadline to show it is taking action to meet its commitments on climate change.

The government of France, which brokered the landmark 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, was hauled before the Council of State by Grande-Synthe, a low-lying northern coastal town which is particularly exposed to the effects of climate change.

The Council, which rules on disputes over public policies, noted that "while France has committed itself to reducing its emissions by 40% in 2030 compared to 1990 levels, it has, in recent years, regularly exceeded the 'carbon budgets' it had set itself." It also noted that President Emmanuel Macron's government had, in a decree in April, deferred much of the reduction efforts beyond 2020.

Despite Macron's headline 2017 promise to "make our planet great again" -- a swipe at climate denialist US President Donald Trump who vowed to "make America great again" -- France is far off track to meet its commitments under the 2015 treaty. Before issuing a final ruling on the matter, the Council of State gave the government three months to justify "how its refusal to take additional measures is compatible with the respect of the reduction path chosen in order to achieve the targets set for 2030."

Corinne Lepage, lawyer for the town of Grande-Synthe, hailed the decision as "historic".

The ruling means that "policies must be more than nice commitments on paper," she said.



## Guardiola Renews Contract With Man City

LONDON (Dispatches) - Pep Guardiola has ended speculation over his Manchester City future after signing a new two-year contract extension on Thursday.

Guardiola was due to be out of contract at the end of this season and it had been suggested the Spaniard might be ready to leave City. But the 49-year-old has now agreed to stay at the Etihad Stadium until at least 2023. "Manchester City are pleased to announce that Pep Guardiola has signed a new two-year deal with the club," a statement on City's website said.

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## Rooney Eyes Permanent Role as Derby Boss

LONDON (Dispatches) - Wayne Rooney says he is willing to take his first job in management with Championship strugglers Derby as the former Manchester United star prepares to be part of the interim coaching set-up against Bristol City on Saturday.

Derby have appointed a temporary coaching quartet of Rooney, Liam Rosenior, Justin Walker and Shay Given following the sacking of Phillip Cocu. After watching former England team-mates Steven Gerrard and Frank Lampard go into management, Rooney has been keen to follow in their footsteps since returning to English football with Derby.

# Belgium, Italy Into Nations League Finals

LONDON (Dispatches) - Romelu Lukaku helped fire Belgium into the UEFA Nations League finals by scoring twice in a 4-2 win over Denmark on Wednesday, while Italy also secured a place in the last four with victory away to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The world's number one-ranked side, Belgium only required a draw from their last League A, Group 2 game at home to Denmark behind closed doors in Leuven and took an early lead through Youri Tielemans.

Jonas Wind equalized for Denmark, but Lukaku got a second-half double and Kevin De Bruyne made sure of the victory for Roberto Martinez's side after Thibaut Courtois allowed a Nacer Chadli back-pass to squirm under his leg and in for an own goal.

Italy secured first place in Group 1 with a 2-0 triumph in Sarajevo thanks to a goal in each half from Torino's Andrea Belotti and Domenico Berardi of Sassuolo.

That ensured they finished a point ahead of the Netherlands, who came from behind to beat Poland 2-1 away with captain Georginio Wijnaldum scoring the winner after Memphis Depay's penalty cancelled out Kamil Jozwiak's opener. Italy and Belgium join Spain and World Cup holders France in a final tournament which is expected to be held in Italy in October next year.

Before the finals, European national teams will start their 2022 World Cup qualifying campaign in March and then the delayed Euro 2020 is set to go ahead next June and July.

England have more than one eye on that tournament, with the semi-finals and final scheduled for Wembley, and Gareth Southgate's team rounded out their Nations League campaign with a 4-0 win over Iceland. Declan Rice and Mason Mount scored in the first half and Manchester City's Phil Foden got his first international goals with a late brace as England had three players aged 21 or younger score in the same match for the first time since 1883.

"It was a very difficult game. All the players were hearing messages that this is meaningless and there was nothing to play for but they did play for it," Southgate told Sky Sports.

Birkir Mar Saevarsson was sent off for Iceland who, like Bosnia, are relegated and will compete in League B in the next edition.

Wales won promotion to League A with a 3-1 win over 10-man Finland in Cardiff that allowed them to top Group B4.



Despite manager Ryan Giggs being missing after his recent arrest on suspicion of assaulting his girlfriend, Wales came good with goals from Harry Wilson, Daniel James and Kieffer Moore.

Teemu Pukki netted for Finland, who had left-back Jere Uronen sent off after just 12 minutes.

Winning their group also improves Wales' chances of securing a place in the 2022 World Cup qualifying play-offs, as the two best group winners in the Nations League are guaranteed play-off places if they don't make it via the usual route.

While Wales go up, Scotland missed out on promotion from League B, Group 2 after losing 1-0 in Israel, their second consecutive loss since clinching qualification for Euro 2020.

Manor Solomon's first-half goal sunk the Scots, and the Czech Republic won promotion at their expense after beating Slovakia 2-0.

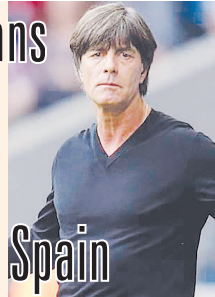
"We are all disappointed with the way the week's finished," Scotland manager Steve Clarke told Sky Sports. "It's been an historic week for Scottish football. There was no lack of endeavour. It was similar to the game on Sunday (1-0 loss in Slovakia), just a little lack of quality in the final third meant we couldn't get a goal."

Also securing promotion to the top tier were Austria, who drew 1-1 with a Norway side deprived of stars Erling Braut Haaland and Martin Odegaard after being ordered to quarantine because of a positive coronavirus test in their squad.

Hungary won promotion too thanks to a 2-0 victory over Turkey combined with a 5-0 hammering for Russia at the hands of Serbia.

The Republic of Ireland avoided relegation to League C after drawing 0-0 with Bulgaria, but Northern Ireland and Turkey were among the sides to go down, while Montenegro, Armenia, Slovenia and Albania go up to the second level.

## Germany Fans Want Loew Gone After Debacle in Spain



BERLIN (Dispatches) - Germany fans want to show national team coach Joachim Loew a red card with former players also suggesting the 60-year-old should step aside amid the fall-out of their historic thrashing in Spain.

Loew's Germany offered little resistance as they were trounced 6-0 in Tuesday's Nations League tie.

It was the Germans' heaviest competitive defeat, matching a 6-0 friendly defeat to Austria in 1931.

Loew held crisis talks with German FA president Fritz Keller in Munich on Wednesday, but with two years left on his contract, he is expected to coach Germany through to next June's European championships.

However, in a survey commissioned by AFP subsidiary SID, 84.0 percent of 1,100 German fans asked want Loew and team director Oliver Bierhoff to step aside. Just 13.3 percent want to stick with the pair, who masterminded Germany's 2014 World Cup triumph.

Either Liverpool coach Jurgen Klopp or Bayern Munich boss Hansi Flick - Loew's assistant coach at Brazil 2014 - are the candidates German fans most want to see take over. More than two years after the 2018 World Cup when Germany failed to get out of their group, the historic rout by Spain was the latest set-back for Loew's side.

Lothar Matthaeus, who captained West Germany to the 1990 World Cup title, says Loew should have stepped down in 2014.

## Italy's Serie A

### Accepts 1.7b Euro Bid For Media Unit Stake

MILAN (Reuters) - Italy's top-flight soccer league Serie A on Thursday agreed to sell a stake in its media business to a private equity consortium for 1.7 billion euros (\$2 billion) as it seeks to prop up revenues hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

At a meeting in Rome, the league's 20 clubs unanimously accepted the offer by CVC Capital Partners, Advent International and state-backed Italian fund FSI for a 10% stake in a new unit handling the league's broadcast rights.

Serie A Chairman Paolo Dal Pino told reporters the deal was expected to close in the coming weeks.

"We have found an agreement and unanimously voted in favour of the financial terms of the proposal, but we haven't closed the deal yet, we haven't committed yet," he said.

Two sources familiar with the matter told Reuters some tax and legal aspects needed further checks. The sources said that a further vote was required to give the final go-ahead to the deal.

The deal will bring outside investors into one of the game's biggest leagues, whose revenue has plummeted during the pandemic with matches being played in empty stadiums and broadcasters cutting spending on pay-TV deals.

Home to Cristiano Ronaldo's Juventus, Serie A has said the virus emergency will cost 600 million euros in reduced revenues this year, nearly a quarter of annual turnover.

Weighed down by a combined debt burden of 4.3 billion euros, many clubs' finances are under strain with wage expenditure having topped a critical threshold of 70% of revenue in recent years.

Serie A lags other major European leagues with revenues of 2.5 billion euros a year, according to consulting firm Deloitte, of which 1.35 billion comes from broadcasting rights.

England's Premier League receives 3.5 billion euros a year from media rights alone.

Serie A has said the arrival of private equity investors would improve governance at its media business and help expansion abroad.



# Salah Tests Positive for Virus Again

LONDON (Dispatches) - Liverpool and Egypt forward Mohamed Salah has returned a second positive test for coronavirus while on international duty, the Egyptian Football Association said.

Salah had "a new swab to detect the Covid-19 virus, its result was positive".

Arsenal player Mohamed Elneny was also re-tested and his result was also

positive, the FA said.

Without Salah, Egypt beat Togo 3-1 in their 2021 Africa Cup of Nations qualifier on Tuesday and top their group.

Salah wrote on Twitter on Tuesday: "I'd like to thank everyone for the supportive messages and well wishes. I'm confident I'll be back on the field soon."

The forward, who has scored eight league goals for Liverpool this season, could miss the Premier League champions' next two matches.

They host Leicester in the league on Sunday before playing Italian side Atalanta in a Champions League tie at Anfield on November 25.

## Thiem Slumps At ATP Finals

LONDON (Dispatches) - Dominic Thiem slumped to defeat against Andrey Rublev in a dead rubber at the ATP Finals on Thursday as reigning champion Stefanos Tsitsipas and Rafael Nadal prepared for a shootout to reach the semi-finals.

Austria's Thiem, who beat Tsitsipas and Nadal earlier in the week to win Group London 2020, was well below his best at London's empty O2 Arena in a 6-2, 7-5 defeat. Rublev, 23, broke the third seed twice to race into a 3-0 lead at the start of the round-robin match.

Thiem stopped the rot and started holding his serve but could not make inroads into the Russian's serve and the set was over in just 25 minutes.

U.S. Open champion Thiem, playing significantly below par, tried to dig deep against Rublev, who has had a breakthrough season, winning five titles.

But the Russian, who was in the groove, passed Thiem in the third game to break for the third time in the match and establish an iron grip.

Just when it seemed likely he would canter to victory his level dipped and he dumped a forehand into the net to hand Thiem a break, smashing the ball away in frustration.

At 4-4 the Austrian appeared to be back in the contest but was broken again in the 11th game, sending an angled backhand wide.

Rublev missed an easy overhead as he served for the match but sealed the win with an ace.

"I started really well since the first point, the first return and I think Dominic didn't start that well," said Rublev. "I took advantage from the beginning and that helped me to have more confidence and helped me to play better and better."



## Messi Tired of Being Blamed for Everything At Barcelona

MADRID (Reuters) - A frustrated Lionel Messi said he is tired of being blamed for problems at Barcelona after he was accused by Antoine Griezmann's former agent of making life difficult for the French striker at the La Liga club.

Eric Olhats had accused Messi of having too much control at the club, saying his "reign of terror" had made life difficult for Griezmann to adapt since his arrival last year.

Messi returned to Barcelona from international duty with Argentina on Wednesday when he was accosted by reporters at the airport.

"The truth is that I'm a little tired of always being the problem for everything at the club," Messi was quoted as saying by Spanish media.

"On top of that, after a 15-hour flight, I had the tax authorities waiting for me. It's madness."

With one year left on his contract, Messi tried to activate a disputed clause to leave Barcelona for free in the off-season, but eventually decided to stay as he did not want to face a legal battle with the club. Barcelona have been in turmoil since Bayern Munich humiliated the Spanish side 8-2 in the Champions League quarter-finals last season. Club president Josep Maria Bartomeu resigned last month ahead of a vote of no confidence.

Messi has also had his run-ins with the Spanish tax authorities in recent years.

He was handed a 21-month prison sentence in 2016 and ordered to pay a fine of two million euros (\$2.37 million) for defrauding the Spanish government of 4.2 million euros over income earned from image rights. However, the 33-year-old did not serve any jail time after exchanging his sentence for a 250,000 euros fine, as in Spain defendants without a previous conviction are permitted to serve any sentence of under two years on probation.

