

Health Ministry Spokeswoman
Sima Sadat Lari Said on Monday
That Some 284 More Iranians Have
Died From Coronavirus Disease
Over the Past 24 Hours Bringing
the Total Deaths to 50,594

IRAN NEWS

Iranian Farmers Produced 2.6m Tons
Of Rice During the Current Iranian
Calendar year (Started on March 20),
According to Director-General of the
Agriculture Ministry's Grains and
Essential Goods Department

VOL. XXVI, No. 7111 TEHRAN Price 40,000 Rials

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TUESDAY DECEMBER 8, 2020 - AZAR 18, 1399

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U.S. Blocking Iran COVID-19 Vaccine Purchase

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The United States is actively trying to prevent Iran's efforts to buy a COVID-19 vaccine through COVAX, a global initiative undertaken by the World Health Organization, according to the governor of Iran's central bank.

Abdolnasser Hemmati on Monday said it must be "recorded in historical memory" that Iranian efforts to buy a vaccine through COVAX have been hampered due to money transfer issues arising due to the sanctions imposed by the US against Iran.

"So far, any methods to make payment and transfer the required currency have faced obstacles due to the inhumane sanctions of the U.S. government and the need to obtain permits from OFAC," Hemmati wrote in an Instagram post, referring to the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the U.S. Treasury.

Iran, which is dealing with the largest and deadliest COVID-19 pandemic in the Middle East, announced months ago that it had become a member of COVAX in order to secure vaccines.

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Judiciary Chief Backs Majlis Strategic Action Bill

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Judiciary Chief Seyed Ebrahim Raisi hailed a parliamentary bill on strategic action for lifting of the sanctions and safeguarding national interests, saying more components of power would increase the enemy's cost of hostility.

In comments at a Judiciary meeting on Monday, the top judge lauded the Iranian lawmakers for ratifying the strategic action bill and "forcing the enemy to carry out commitments to the international agreements and treaties."

The outsiders must bear in mind that they ought to pay the cost of pressures on Iran, the Judiciary chief underlined, adding, "The more leverages and components of power we have, the higher the enemy's costs of hostility and pressure on the (Iranian) nation will be."

Raisi further called on Iranian officials to adopt unified and revolutionary stances based on the realities on the ground, not personal and political views.

The Islamic Republic's resistance should come with the generation of power in the economic, scientific, security and defense spheres, the top judge added.

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New Syrian FM in Tehran to Cement Ties



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Faysal Mikdad, the newly-appointed foreign minister of Syria, made his first foreign visit to Tehran yesterday to hold talks with senior Iranian officials, Iran's Foreign Ministry said on Sunday.

Mikdad yesterday met his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif and discussed a broad range of issues in a meeting in Tehran.

In the Monday talks, the two ministers discussed bilateral, regional and international issues as well as the joint battle against terrorism.

Hailing the broad and strategic relations between Iran and Syria, the two senior diplomats reaffirmed commitment to enhancing and strengthening bilateral ties and weighed plans for promotion of bilateral and multilateral economic relations.

At the beginning of the meeting, Foreign Minister Zarif paid tribute to the late foreign minister of Syria Walid al-Muallem, congratulated Foreign Minister Mikdad on his new post, and expressed readiness for cooperation with the new Syrian foreign minister.

Zarif also expressed satisfaction with the continuation of the political process in Syria, reaffirmed Iran's support for the Astana Process, and said he was positive about a recent conference on the return of Syrian refugees.

Expounding on the situation and the recent developments in the region, Foreign Minister Zarif stressed the need for vigilance and consultations among Iran, Syria and other countries.

For his part, Foreign Minister Mikdad conveyed condolences from Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian people to the Iranian government and nation for the martyrdom of Iranian scientist Mohsen Fakhri-zadeh and top commander Lt. General Qassem Soleimani, paying tribute to the two revered martyrs.

The visiting foreign minister also expressed gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran for the constant supports for Syria in the fight against terrorism and extremism.

Mikdad then denounced the U.S.' anomalous activities in the region that have escalated the tensions, saying they reveal that the Zionist regime's interests have priority over the U.S.' interests in the region.

He finally underlined the Syrian government's determination to keep fighting against terrorism, saying mutual cooperation between Damascus and Tehran is significant in this approach and is considered as a basic step in restoration of peace and calm to Syria.

Mikdad is to meet other Iranian officials.

He was appointed on November 22 as Syria's foreign minister after the death of the country's foreign minister Walid al-Muallem. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad issued presidential decrees appointing Mekdad as foreign minister, Bashar al-Jaafari as deputy foreign minister, and Bassam al-Sabbagh as Syria's permanent representative to the United Nations.

U.S. Navy Acting With More Respect In Persian Gulf

TEHRAN (IFP) - Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh says the US naval forces are acting with more respect towards Iran after receiving the Iranian military's message.

"Iran has always shown a totally professional behaviour in its territorial waters and in the Persian Gulf. Unfortunately, the U.S has in many cases made unprofessional calculations," Khatibzadeh said in a weekly press briefing on Monday.

"The Iranian Navy and its fleet in the Persian Gulf have always given the necessary warnings, and made note of all the cases," he added.

He said in Iran's view, the United States has basically nothing to do several thousand miles away from its territory."

"The U.S.' hawkish and military behaviors and its disrespectful presence are the main source of unrest in the region," the spokesman noted.

"We think our message has always been a clear one in all encounters. We are happy to see the other sides has received the message and made its behavior more respectful," he added.

U.S. Cruelty Goes Down in History

NEW YORK (IP) - Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Iran to the United Nations said that the United States has intensified its unilateral sanctions against some countries at the peak of the coronavirus, and this will go down in history

"The United States has intensified its unilateral sanctions against some countries at the peak of the coronavirus, and this will go down in history as the world needs empathy, and in the face of COVID-19, some have not spared human lives by imposing unilateral, immoral and inhumane sanctions," said the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations Majid Takht-Ravanchi.

Takht-Ravanchi added: "Pandemic diseases with high mortality rates have negative effects on the economic and social situation of the countries involved in the conflict, and by adding another layer to their existing problems, they complicate the situation."

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Pakistan Decided to Fence Its Border With Iran

MULTAN (Dispatches) - Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Sunday said that Pakistan has unveiled the real face of India at international level by presenting dossier on its involvement in terrorism to the United Nations.

He was talking to reporters before the oath taking ceremony of new body of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Women wing in Multan Sunday. Responding to a question, he said the border fencing at Pak-Afghan border is being completed which would not only control illegally crossing but also reduce terrorism.

Shah Mahmood Qureshi said Pakistan has also decided to fence its border with Iran. He said the border fencing would be completed before the end of current year.

The Foreign Minister said Indian government has gone on defensive on the Kashmir issue and it is being criticized even internally on the issue, which is victory of Pakistan's stance. He said Pakistan twice gave counsel access to India for its spy Kulbhushan Jadhav and is ready to offer this third time but India is ignoring its own citizen.

The Foreign Minister said Pakistan is in favor of peace in the region and its role is being acknowledged internationally for sustainable peace in Afghanistan.

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U.S. Confessed It Couldn't Face Iran

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN (IP) - The Deputy Chief Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) for Coordination stated that the U.S. confessed that it cannot resist against Iran.

Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi said that the U.S. and its allies have been fighting with the Islamic Republic of Iran for 41 years.

The high-ranking military official stressed that the U.S. has a deep animosity with Iran.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has developed significantly during these years," he added.

Fadavi noted that "If we act based on enemies' principles which are planned for the sake of their own interests, we will get nowhere."

Referring to the fact that Biden is coming to the White House, Fadavi stated that there is no difference between Democrats and Republicans and their hostility with Iran has been proven in the last four decades.

He also provided more details of the recent assassination of Iranian scientist Mohsen Fakhri-zadeh, pointing to a smart satellite-controlled weapon using artificial intelligence.

Addressing a cultural event in the University of Tehran on Sunday, IRGC Deputy Commander Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi said the distinguished figure was assassinated in an unmanned operation on November 27.

No hit man was present at the scene of the strike, he noted, saying a machine gun equipped with a "satellite-controlled smart system" and installed on a pickup had fired a total of 13 shots in the attack.

All other bullets have been fired by the security guards, Fadavi noted.

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Azerbaijani FM to Visit Tehran

TEHRAN (IP) - Iran's foreign ministry spokesman said the Republic of Azerbaijan's foreign minister is scheduled to arrive in Tehran on Wednesday at his Iranian counterpart's invitation.

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov would arrive in Tehran on Wednesday at the official invitation of Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

According to the spokesman, Bayramov is scheduled to hold meetings with Iran's top officials, including President Hassan Rouhani, the Speaker of the Parliament Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf and the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani.

Tehran Calls on Europe to Prove Sincere JCPOA Commitment

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran has called on the European parties to the 2015 deal (JCPOA), including Germany, to prove their sincere commitment to the pact, instead of toeing in the line of the United States.

"Neither will Iran renegotiate a done deal, nor will the UNSCR 2231 change by such stances [by some parties]," Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said during his weekly presser on Monday.

His comments came in reaction to Germany's call for a renegotiation of the 2015 nuclear agreement over Iran's national defense program.

Germany's top diplomat, Heiko Maas, toeing the line of America, has spoken of what he called a "nuclear deal plus" with Iran that would also cover the country's conventional missile program and regional role. Maas said "a return to the previous agreement will not be enough," and that "there will have to be a kind of 'nuclear deal plus', which is also in our interest."

Khatibzadeh urged the Europeans to take the right decisions, saying, "Germany and other parties to the deal should know that what has not been achieved by the U.S.' so-called maximum pressure, will not be reached in other ways."

Europeans are the parties that have failed to fulfill their obligations after the U.S.' withdrawal from the deal, he added.

Khatibzadeh further said, "We expect them to pay attention to the facts and know that Iran is neither compromising nor negotiating its national security."

"Iran is well aware of its rights and responsibilities and has always reminded the other parties of their rights and responsibilities."

Khatibzadeh pointed to Riyadh and Manama rulers' wish to be partners to "future



talks on Iran's nuclear program" and said some regional countries have made every effort, in the cost of their people's livelihood, to ensure their own security with the help of the US' outgoing president.

"Tehran's voice is loud and clear; Iran is an anchor of stability in the region, and as an older brother, it has tried to ignore the mistakes of these countries," he said, adding that "These countries need to know their position, and they should speak within their capacities."

Khatibzadeh, in response to another question about the claims of the Saudi Foreign Minister who has asked US president-elect Joe Biden to stop Iran, said such hasty comments by the Riyadh regime are against their national interests and in favor of the non-regional powers that have always been meddling in the region's affairs.

He noted that when a country's foreign policy is not defined in a principled framework, such embarrassing messages can be heard every day.

Referring to the five-year bloodshed in Yemen by the Saudi-led coalition, Khatibzadeh said, "Our advice for Saudi Arabia's rulers is to pay attention to the problems they have created for the Arab and Islamic world, which can only be solved by correcting their path."

Portugal Urged to Play More Active Role in Iran-Europe Ties



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Abbas Araqchi on Monday expressed the hope that Portugal would play an active role in diplomatic relations between Iran and Europe.

Araqchi made the remarks in a meeting with the new Portuguese Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran Carlos Antonio Rico Da Costa Nos today.

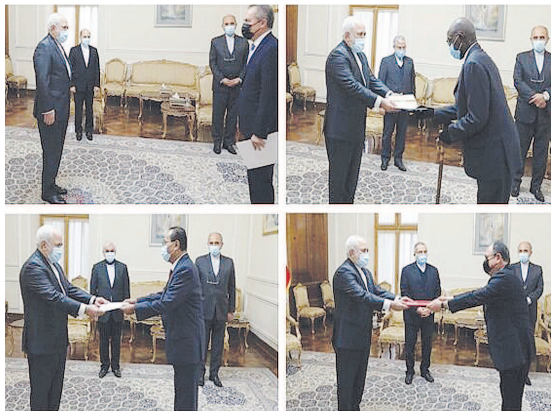
During the meeting, Araqchi described the mutual ties as friendly.

Portuguese envoy, for his part, voiced his country's readiness for further reinforcing bilateral relations.

Zarif Receives New Foreign Ambassadors

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The newly-appointed ambassadors of Indonesia, Tunisia, Uganda, and Mexico met with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to submit a copy of their credentials to him.

Guillermo Alejandro Puente Ordorica, the new Mexican ambassador to Iran, Muhammed Tsukuba Kisambira, the new Ambassador of the Republic of Uganda to Tehran, Ronny Prasetyo Yuliantoro, the



Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Iran, Samir Al-Manser, the Ambassador of the Republic of Tunisia to Tehran submitted copies of their credentials to Zarif on Sunday.

Moreover, Today, Rodrigo de Azeredo Santos, the Brazilian Ambassador to Iran, met and bid farewell to Zarif, at the end of his mission. Azeredo was the Brazilian ambassador to Tehran since February 2017.

Japanese, Indian, Brazilian Envoys Meet With Araqchi

TEHRAN (MNA) - Ambassadors of Japan, India and Brazil to the Islamic Republic of Iran met and held separate talks with Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Seyed Abbas Araqchi on Sunday.

In these meetings, Japanese Ambassador Aikawa Kazutoshi and Indian Envoy to the Islamic Republic of Iran Gaddam Dharmendra exchanged their views with Iran's deputy foreign minister on the expansion and development of joint relations.

Also, outgoing Brazilian Ambassador to Tehran Rodrigo de Azeredo Santos met and held talks with the Deputy Foreign Minister Araqchi at the end of his mission in Iran and bid farewell.

The outgoing Brazilian envoy had earlier met with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Sunday and bid farewell due to the end of his mission in Iran.

Azeredo Santos officially ended his mission as Brazil's envoy to the Islamic Republic after four years.

Students Are Real, Lasting Asset of Establishment

TEHRAN (MNA) - President Hassan Rouhani in a message on the occasion of Azar 16 (Dec. 6), which marks "Students' Day" said that students are clear example of awakening pulse of society as well as real and lasting asset of the country.

Rouhani considered students a symbol of rationalism, freedom-seeking and Azar 16 a day of celebration of decisive struggles of students against Global Arrogance.

Since the beginning of the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, students have taken giant steps in tandem with the noble nation of Islamic Iran in safeguarding sublime values of the Islamic Revolution and defending their religious and national identity.

The full text of his message is read as follows,

In the Iranian calendar, Azar 16 is a symbol of rationalism, freedom-seeking, and a day of honoring the decisive struggles of students against Global Arrogance. The intelligent and insightful students of the country have always proved that student is not only a seeker of knowledge but also a seeker of freedom and independence.

Students are clear examples of the awakening pulse of society as well as a real and lasting asset of the Establishment. By honoring the historical mission of students, the current government dubbed "Hope and Prudence" has always considered the critical view and constructive participation of students in decision-making as a valuable opportunity for the development and progress of the country.

In the tough and difficult period of economic war as well as the spread of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, the country faced many shortfalls and shortages in the field of medical and healthcare equipment. Under such circumstances, academicians and students rolled their sleeves up and played a key role in containing the disease nationwide.

At the end of his message, President Rouhani wished evermore success and prosperity for all students and academia throughout the country.

Majlis to Strengthen Defense Capabilities

TEHRAN (MNA) - Chairman of Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission said that Parliament is determined to strengthen the defense capabilities of the country.

Mojtaba Zonnour said that defense sector is the most important pillar of the country, so that Parliament has focused on improving and promoting defense capabilities of the country at its highest level.

While emphasizing the need for paying serious attention to the defense budget of the country, he added, "Since defense sector is the most important pillar in the country, we, legislators, should not allow the issue of defense be weakened in the country."

He went on to say that country's defense budget is of paramount importance and Parliament is seriously following up this issue firmly and decisively.

Given the threats of enemies against the country, "We believe that defense sector in the country should be strengthened optimally and this issue will be taken into serious consideration in next year's Budget Bill (2021 Budget Bill), Zonnour stressed.

Overhauling Passenger Planes Based on Highest Global Standards

TEHRAN (FNA)- Head of Iran Aviation Industries Organization (IAIO) Lieutenant Brigadier General Afshin Khajeh Fard said that despite the harshest-ever sanctions against the country, passenger planes are being overhauled by Iranian experts based on the highest standards in the world.

"The IAIO has enjoyed giant infrastructures to render technical and engineering services in the recent decades," General Khajeh Fard said

on Monday.

"The services to the passenger planes are based on the world's updated standards and we meet the airlines' technical and engineering needs in this regard," he added.

Head of Iran Civil Aviation Organization Touraj Dehqani Zanganeh had announced in August that the country's specialists have gained the know-how and capability to repair and overhaul heavy airplanes.

FM Activates Business Visa in E-visa System

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Ministry Director General of Passport and Visa Department, Hassan Nourian said on Monday that issuance of Business Visa has been activated in the electronic visa system.

Nourian said in his Twitter account that business activists can invite their partners to Iran using this visa, saying their visit and trip would be OK if they have a PCR travel certificate.

Iran deactivated tourist, pilgrimage e-Visa due to COVID-19 on August 4, 2020.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has called for refraining from unnecessary travels to stem the spread of the pandemic.

Growth Requires Increased Interaction With World

TEHRAN (MNA) -Government Spokesman Ali Rabiei says the growth of the country cannot be attained without interaction with other world states.

"No government can develop its country without having a powerful internal economic structure and boosting its domestic capacities.

On the other hand, there will be no growth in the absence of strong social potentials and interaction with the world," Ali Rabiei told ISNA on Monday.

He pointed to the government's efforts to preserve the JCPOA, noting that all parties underscore and support such a move.

"I think we will definitely take the path to negotiate. Fortunately, all factions emphasize the JCPOA and no one has denied it. Those who once opposed will themselves be at the forefront of the negotiations."

"In the current year, Iran could gain a victory at the UN and could beat Trumpism, which has set the ground proper for meeting our national interests, and if we seize the opportunity a brighter future will expect us."

He elsewhere highlighted the negative impact of the US sanctions on Iran's economy, noting that the sanctions have made major difficulties for Iran with having monetary transactions with the countries it has trade transactions including its neighbors.

EU Confesses to Betraying Iran on JCPOA

TEHRAN (IP) - Vice-chairman of National Security and Foreign Policy Commission of Iran's Parliament said that Josep Borrell admitted that violating the JCPOA agreement by Europe and the United States means betrayal to Iran.

In a phone conversation with Iran Press on Sunday, Shahriar Heidari said: "Iran protested against the betrayal and said JCPOA is a bilateral commitment. Both sides must adhere to it."

Heidari stated that Iran unilaterally complied with its obligations while other parties to the agreement did not adhere to their obligations.

Iran's air and oil banking sanctions should have been lifted, he said. "The sanctions were not lifted, but the United States has added to them."

Emphasizing that Iran should not give the violators more opportunities, Heidari noted that more opportunities are not in Iran's interest, and the contracting party should fulfill its commitments.

JCPOA is enforceable when other parties are sincere in fulfilling their obligations, and the first step is lifting sanctions in the banking and oil fields, he concluded.

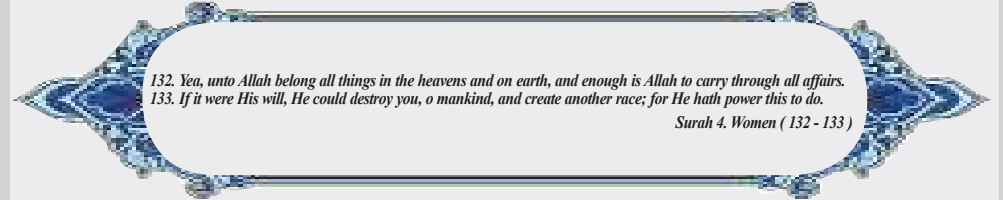
Josep Borrell earlier has said that JCPOA has gone into hibernation but has not died and Iranians have the right to feel betrayed.





PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:56
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:11
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:33
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	07:02



132. Yea, unto Allah belong all things in the heavens and on earth, and enough is Allah to carry through all affairs.
133. If it were His will, He could destroy you, O mankind, and create another race; for He hath power this to do.
Surah 4. Women (132 - 133)

Iran Exports to Afghanistan Six Times More Than to EU

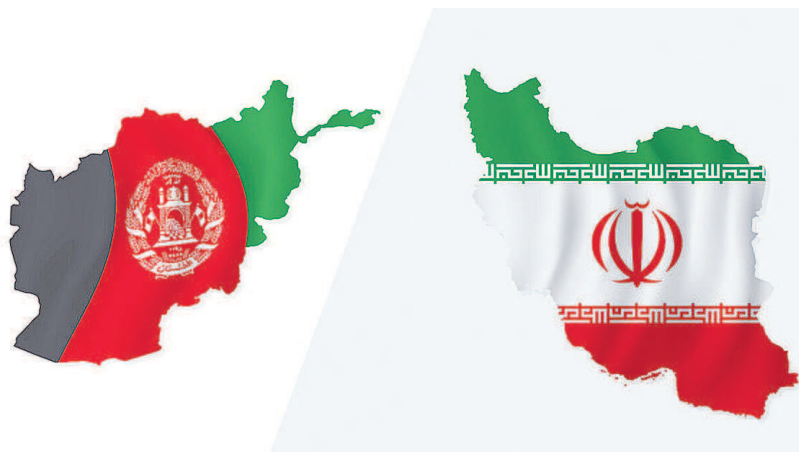
IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – A member of Majlis Commission on Economy says Iran in its international economic relations should not be negligent of potentials of neighboring states, claiming that Iran's exports to EU states last year were less than \$500m while at the same time exports to Afghanistan by itself were around \$3b.

Speaking to ILNA, Mohammad Safee Delui said that Iran should not be negligent of trade with neighboring states especially countries like Afghanistan, adding that Iran's exports to Afghanistan last year was six times more than its exports to European states. He said Iran's exports to EU countries stood at less than \$500m last year and its imports were around \$490m while the country's exports to Afghanistan were around \$3b.

He added that Iran's relation with neighboring states has been ignored by the officials of the foreign ministry while this economic and political relation in the current sanction era can reduce most of the exercised pressures on the people.

He pointed to the inauguration of Khaf-Harat railway which connects Iran and



Afghanistan by rail, saying that developing rail connection with countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and the Central Asia can get Iran closer to its target markets in those countries and it is necessary to have planning.

Safei Dalui, who is Gonabad and Bajestan constituency representative to Majlis, further said that expansion of railway and rail fleet is one of the major plans of Majlis deputies, noting that rail transportation is cheaper than other transportations especially in transporting goods.

He termed the inauguration of Khaf-Herat railway as one of the national achievements, noting that in implementing this project or the similar projects, Iran should use Chinese investing companies which have performed successfully in construction of roads and railways in recent years. He reiterated that domestic capacity and contractors are the priority in the projects and in case of need, the country can use foreign investors and contractors.

He noted that using foreign investors along with domestic investors would accelerate implementation of developmental projects in the country.

14th Iran Plast Exhibition Postponed

TEHRAN (Shana) -- The 14th Iran Plast International Exhibition was postponed due to the participation of the petrochemical industry in the fight against the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus.



According to the National Petrochemical Company, the 14th Iran Plast International Exhibition, which was scheduled to be held from December 25 to 28, 2020 at the Tehran International Fairgrounds, is postponed to a later date due to the cooperation of the petrochemical industry in the fight against Covid-19 pandemic.

The fair is held annually to bring about industrialists in the petrochemical and plastics industries from around the world.

Jafari Appointed as New IMIDRO Head

TEHRAN (MNA) - Vajihollah Jafari is appointed as the new head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), IRNA reported.



Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Alireza Razm Hosseini appointed Jafari to the post replacing Khodadad Qaribpour which headed the organization since December 2018.

Jafari previously served as the head of Iran Minerals Production and Supply Company (IMPASCO).

IMIDRO is a major state-owned holding company active in the mining sector in Iran. It has eight major companies and 55 operational subsidiaries active in steel, aluminum, copper, cement and mineral exploitation fields.

One of the important measures that IMIDRO has taken over the past few years has been the development of an exploration program under which so far 450,000 square kilometers of mining exploration has been carried out and great reserves have been identified.

Iran to Train Afghanistan Railway Staff

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Managing Director of Islamic Republic of Iran Railways said contemporaneous with inauguration of Khaf-Herat railways, 46 personnel of Afghanistan railway will be trained in Iran.

Mohammad Rasouli said exploitation of Khaf-Herat railway will start immediately after inauguration.

Islamic Republic of Iran Railways had earlier had cooperation with Afghanistan and had held training courses for them, he added. Rasouli noted that Afghan personnel will be trained in two phases for this giant project.

The 220-km Khaf-Herat railroad project includes four phases that are under construction.

About 77 km of the project, which includes two phases, is in Iran's soil and the rest in Afghanistan.

One of the phases that is in Afghanistan is to be inaugurated in next few days.

The railroad project ensures Afghanistan's access to free waters and European markets.

Pakistan to Reopen Six Official Borders With Sistan-Balouchestan



ZAHEDAN (IRNA) - Governor of Sistan-Balouchestan Province said Rimdan Border will be opened within weeks, adding that Pakistan is to reopen six other common official borders with Sistan-Balouchestan Province.

Ahmad Ali Mouhebati said Sistan-Balouchestan can develop upstream and downstream industries.

He added that transit in Milak border has been facilitated. Meanwhile, Head of Industry, Mine and Trade Organization Davoud Shahraki said there are 17 big and 50 medium-sized industrial units and over 1000 small units in the province.

Earlier on November 11 and during his visit to Pakistan, Iranian Foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif told IRNA reporter in Islamabad that he had very good discussion on border cooperation, including border markets as well as opening a new border crossing in Rimdan-Gabd which would happen hopefully within a week.

He welcomed the decision of the government of Pakistan to open new border markets to develop trade relations between the two countries and announced his country's readiness to agree on new models of trade.

Noting the importance of strengthening the security of the borders of the two countries, Zarif stressed the need for continuous consultations in this regard.

Iran Agro Exports Soar by 13% in 8 months

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN- The value of Iran's agricultural products export has risen 13 percent during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-November 20), compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to an official with the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Mehrdad Jamal Orounaqi, the IRICA deputy head for technical and customs affairs, put the value of exported products at \$3.842 billion in the eight-month period of the present year, IRNA reported.

The official said the weight of agricultural products exported in the mentioned period has risen 27 percent to stand at 5.450 million tons.

Orounaqi pointed out that pistachios, tomatoes, watermelons, tomato paste, pistachio kernels, and apples were the main export items in the mentioned period, noting that the total weight of these items was 1,518,000 tons worth \$1.312 billion.

According to the official, 1.417 million tons of the mentioned products worth one billion had been exported during the first eight months of the previous year,

that shows that this year's export has risen 30 percent in terms of value and seven percent in terms of weight.

Regarding the export of pistachio, the deputy minister said: "The export of this commodity this year was 109,000 tons worth \$675 million, which has increased by 82 percent in terms of value compared to last year."

Iran exported over \$5.8 billion worth of agricultural and foodstuff products in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), the Head of Agriculture Ministry's Planning and Economic Affairs Department Shahrokh Shajari has announced.

According to the official, about 7.104 million tons of such products worth \$5.821 billion were exported to foreign destinations last year.

In the mentioned period, over 6.941 million tons of agricultural and foodstuff products worth \$6.392 billion were also imported into the country, according to Shajari.

Watermelons, apples, tomatoes, potatoes, onions, and shallots were the top five exported products in the previous year in terms of weight, while in terms of value, pistachios, apples, tomatoes, pistachio kernels, and watermelons were the five major exported items.

Gov't to Boost Airport Capacity to 50m Passengers Per Year

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's transportation minister Mohammad Eslami says airport capacity in the country will expand to handle 50 million passengers per year by the summer of 2021 despite restrictions imposed on Iran's aviation sector because of the American sanctions.

"Various projects have been introduced for expansion of the aviation fleet which once implemented by the end of the current administrative government the country's airport capacity would reach up to 50 million passengers per year," Eslami was quoted by IRIB news on Sunday.

The minister said Iran had managed to increase the number of planes operating in the civil aviation sector despite U.S. sanctions that have hampered the supply of new airliners by global plane manufacturers.

He said Iranian airlines had increased their services on foreign routes to compensate for a decline in the number of flights to and from the country because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"Foreign flights are being carried out," said Eslami, adding. "The surge in the spread of the coronavirus has caused a 50-percent decline in aerial transport including in transit, domestic and international flights."

U.S. sanctions imposed in the middle of 2018 caused a major halt to Iran's plans to exponentially increase the capacity in its aviation sector. The country had ordered tens of modern planes from global manufacturers like Airbus and Boeing but only a handful of those planes were delivered to Iran just before the U.S. began to enforce its sanctions.

However, Iran has continued to build out its aviation infrastructure despite the halt to the supply of new planes. President Hassan Rouhani inaugurated a series of airport expansion projects last month, a sign the country would be ready to ramp up services once the pandemic slows to allow a boom in demand for air travel.

FAO Ready to Support Iran to Ensure Sustainable Healthy Biodiverse Soils

TEHRAN (FAO)- The Representation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad (MAJ), commemorates World Soil Day 2020, underscoring the prominence of Soil Biodiversity and its central role in sustaining the life on Earth and securing food and nutrition security.

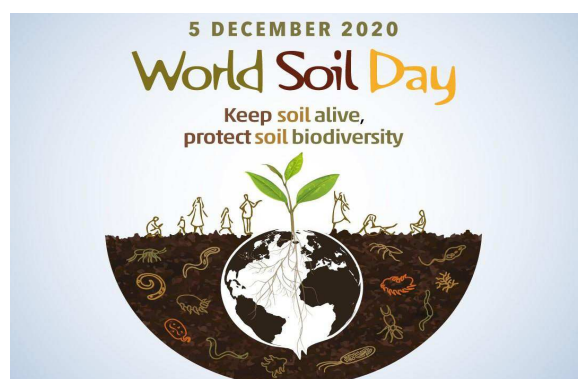
At the virtual event co-hosted today, Monday, by FAO and MAJ, the FAO Representative to the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr Gerold Bödeker, highlights how the quality and health of soils to a large extent determine agricultural production and sustainability, environmental quality and consequently affects plants, animals and human health.

"Improving soil biodiversity is vital to ensuring soil health and future food and nutrition security," emphasized FAO Representative, adding "Healthy biodiverse soils, as the largest store of terrestrial carbon, play an important role in climate change mitigation by carbon sequestration and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere."

Mentioning this year's theme of World Soil Day 2020 – Keep Soil Alive, Protect Soil Biodiversity – Mr Bödeker added that "soil organisms not only can break down or clean up certain types of pollution but also soil biodiversity is an essential source of the chemical and genetic resources that are required for the development of new medicines."

FAO Representative urges all national and international stakeholders to join the hands to facilitate the development and implementation of policies and programs that promote sustainable agricultural systems, dedicate great care to nurturing soil biodiversity, increase soil organic matter content, and combat loss of soil through wind and water erosion.

In his concluding remarks, Mr Bödeker reiterated that FAO, as the lead UN agency promoting sustainable agricultural systems, stands ready to support the country to further develop and implement agro-ecological practices to ensuring sustainable healthy biodiverse soils.



Trump Lawyer Giuliani Tests Positive for Covid-19

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - President Donald Trump's lawyer Rudy Giuliani has tested positive for COVID-19, Trump said on Sunday, after the former New York mayor's cross-country efforts to persuade Republican state lawmakers to help reverse the president's election defeat.

The 76-year-old Giuliani is the latest in a long string of people close to the White House, including Trump himself, sickened in a pandemic that has killed more than 280,000 Americans. "@RudyGiuliani, by far the greatest mayor in the history of NYC, and who has been working tirelessly exposing the most corrupt election (by far!) in the history of the USA, has tested positive for the China Virus," Trump said, using a term for Covid-19 that has drawn backlash.



Saudi Prince Strongly Criticizes Israel at Bahrain Summit

MANAMA (Dispatches) - A prominent Saudi prince harshly criticised Israel at a Bahrain security summit that was remotely attended by Israel's foreign minister, showing the challenges any further deals between Arab states and Israel face in the absence of an independent Palestinian state.

The fiery remarks by Prince Turki bin Faisal Al Saud at the Manama Dialogue appeared to catch Israel's foreign minister off guard, particularly as Israelis receive warm welcomes from officials in Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates following agreements to normalise ties. Left unresolved by those deals, however, is the decades-long conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. The Palestinians view those pacts as a stab in the back from their fellow Arabs and a betrayal of their cause.



Thousands of Protesters March In Belarus, Dozens Detained



MINSK (Dispatches) - Thousands of demonstrators marched in the Belarusian capital Minsk and elsewhere on Sunday as weekly protests demanding the resignation of veteran President Alexander Lukashenko continued, prompting police to arrest more than 100 people.

Belarus, a country of 9.5 million that Russia sees as a security buffer against NATO, has been rocked by mass demonstrations since an August 9 presidential election that Lukashenko said he won. His opponents claim the vote was rigged and want him to quit. Most protesters marched in remote residential areas of the capital, clapping hands, shouting "long live Belarus", and waving white flags with a red stripe in the middle, a symbol of the opposition.

"This [protest] does work as it is impossible to rule the country when the majority does not accept you. With protests we are showing that we are the majority," said one of the demonstrators Alisa, 21.

Military vehicles and water cannon were seen on the streets of Minsk, while uniformed men, many in helmets, grabbed people in civilian clothes, a witness said and videos posted on social media showed.

The Belarusian Viasna-96 (Spring-96) rights group said at least 100 people had been detained across the country as of Sunday afternoon.

Lukashenko, who has been in power for 26 years, has shrugged off the scale of protests, saying they are sponsored by the West, and shown little signs of willingness to start a dialogue with the opposition.

The opposition says the election was rigged and political novice Svetlana Tikhanovskaya - who ran against Lukashenko in the place of her jailed husband - was the true winner of the vote.

"Each march is a reminder that Belarusians will not surrender. We will not allow our rights to be taken away and turn a blind eye to crimes," Tikhanovskaya, 38, wrote on her Telegram channel from exile.

Authorities have imposed a heavy crackdown in recent weeks, arresting hundreds of protesters and preventing gatherings in the centre of Minsk.

Riot police block Belarusian pensioners during an opposition rally to protest the official presidential election results in Minsk [AP]

In response, Lukashenko's opponents have changed tactics, calling on supporters to gather in small groups in neighbourhoods across the capital rather than staging massive marches through the centre.

Local media reported several dozen meeting points were planned for Sunday across Minsk and in other cities.

In the first days of the demonstrations in August, Belarus police arrested thousands of protesters, with many reporting torture and abuse in custody.

The European Union has slapped sanctions on Lukashenko and a number of his allies over election rigging and the violent crackdown on demonstrators.

Kuwaiti Opposition Make Gains in Parliamentary Vote

KUWAIT (Reuters) - Opposition candidates made gains in a parliamentary vote in Kuwait in which two thirds of MPs lost their seats and no women were elected, a result which analysts said could hamper government reform efforts to address a severe liquidity crunch.

Emir Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Sabah, who took the reins in September following the death of his brother, had raised hopes of a detente between the ruling family and their critics in the perpetually deadlocked and fractious parliament.

The final count carried on state media on Sunday showed that 31 new lawmakers had been elected to the 50-seat assembly, which is unusually outspoken for the highly authoritarian Persian Gulf region. None of the 29 female candidates who stood in the election were successful.

There was no official figure for turnout but local media said it was higher than expected given concerns about COVID-19, which along with low oil prices have battered state finances in the wealthy OPEC member state.

The results have strengthened the hand of tribal and Islamist candidates. Kuwaiti opposition figures have proposed electoral reforms and a pardon for dissidents, many in self-exile, to the new emir.

"The results achieved by opposition were bigger than expected. There was a will to turn the table on those allied with the government," said political analyst Mohamad al-Dosayri.

Another Kuwaiti analyst, Nasser al-Abdali, said the new make-up of parliament would likely lead to squabbling over issues such as a debt law that has long-faced legislative gridlock and election laws.

Many may oppose any austerity measures in the cradle-to-grave welfare state, needed to slash heavy deficits, or raising the government's debt ceilings, the two analysts said.

Frequent rows and deadlocks between cabinet and parliament have led to successive government reshuffles and dissolutions of parliament, hampering investment and economic and fiscal reform.

Kuwait's economy, which is worth nearly \$140 billion, is facing a deficit of \$46 billion this year. A government priority is to pass a bill that would allow Kuwait to tap international debt markets.



Venezuelans Vote in Legislative Election

CARACAS (Dispatches) - Venezuelans voted on Sunday in legislative elections set to tighten President Nicolas Maduro's grip on power and weaken his US-backed rival, Juan Guaido, who is leading a boycott of the polls he calls a fraud.

Victory will give Maduro's governing Socialist Party control of an expanded 227-seat National Assembly - the only institution not in its hands.

The election, contested by about 14,000 candidates from more than 100 parties, comes with the country in a deep political and economic crisis - suffocated by runaway inflation, paralysed in endless queues for petrol, lacking water and gas supplies, and afflicted by sudden power cuts.

Since November 2019, inflation has reached 4,000 percent.

"The time has come to vote for peace, for the country, for the future," Maduro said in a message to supporters on the Telegram messaging application, shortly before voting began. Guaido, 37, called for a boycott on grounds that "free and fair" conditions for holding elections do not exist.

Guaido and his allies plan a week-long plebiscite from Monday seeking public support to prolong the mandate of the current National Assembly until "free, verifiable and transparent" elections can be held.

"This is a very important election in Venezuela," Andreina Tarazon, a Venezuelan politician from the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) and president of the Centre for Higher Studies of Development and Emerging Economies, said.

"Until now the [assembly] which has been managed by the opposition has brought deep problems to the country, especially in the management of its economy, and its international relationships."

In opposition control since 2016, the legislature has prevented Maduro from securing more foreign investment for the country's oil industry.

The European Union, the U.S. and several other nations have already declared Sunday's vote, which Maduro invited only sympathetic international observers to monitor, a sham.

Thousands Protest in Call for Resignation of Moldovan Gov't

CHISINAU (Dispatches) - At least 20,000 people gathered in the capital of Moldova on Sunday, calling for the resignation of the government and the dissolution of parliament.

The protesters were responding to a demand from the newly elected pro-European president Maia Sandu, who is due to take office at the end of the year.

The demonstrators, whose estimated numbers were confirmed by AFP journalists on the ground, shouted "resign!", "early elections!" or "down with thieves, down with corruption!" while wearing masks to protect against spreading coronavirus.

Sandu was the surprise winner of the presidential election in the small ex-Soviet republic between Ukraine and Romania, beating pro-Russian Igor Dodon in November.

The opposition has already demonstrated this week against new laws reducing presidential powers brought in by the government.

One of these laws transfers control of the security

services (SIS) to deputies, which Sandu and her supporters believe is a way to reduce the role of the presidency at the expense of parliament, controlled by Dodon.

Speaking at the rally on Sunday, the president-elect said "Igor Dodon does not want to admit defeat. He wants to set fire to the country, cause chaos, isolate Moldova internationally. To do this, he uses thieves and corrupt officials in parliament."

"We want Moldova to develop, so that all the thieves go to prison and the citizens of the country can live in peace and harmony," she said.

Moldova is divided between supporters of a rapprochement with Moscow and those who support European integration, particularly through the country's links with neighbouring Romania.

Sandu's victory marked a setback for Russia, which is anxious to preserve its influence over the country and whose army is deployed in Transnistria, a pro-Russian territory that has seceded from Moldova.

Moscow openly supported outgoing President Igor Dodon.



U.S. Plans to Sanction More China Officials

WASHINGTON (Dispatches)

- The United States is preparing to impose sanctions on at least a dozen Chinese officials over their alleged role in Beijing's disqualification of elected opposition legislators in Hong Kong, the Reuters news agency reported on Monday, citing three sources, including a US official familiar with the matter.

The move, which could come as soon as Monday, will go after officials from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) as President Donald Trump's administration maintains pressure on Beijing in his final weeks in office. President-elect Joe Biden takes over on January 20.

The State Department and the White House did not immediately respond to requests for comment. As many as 14 people, including officials of China's parliament, or National People's Congress and members of the CCP, would probably be affected by measures such as asset freezes and financial sanctions, two sources said.

The U.S. official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said multiple individuals would be sanctioned. A person familiar with the matter said the group would probably include officials from Hong Kong as well as the mainland. The sources did not provide names or positions of those being singled out for sanctions. Two sources cautioned that an announcement could still be delayed until later in the week.

Hong Kong's government last month expelled four opposition members from its legislature after China's parliament gave city authorities new powers to curb dissent. The move triggered the mass resignation of pro-democracy opposition legislators in the Chinese-controlled territory.

The move also raised further alarm among western democracies.

The Five Eyes intelligence-sharing group - made up of Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand and the U.S. - said last month the move appeared to be part of a campaign to silence critics and called on Beijing to reverse course.

White House National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien said in November the expulsion showed the "One Country, Two Systems" framework, under which Hong Kong's autonomy had been promised since Britain handed the territory back to China in 1997, was now "merely a fig leaf" and promised further U.S. action.





Kamranieh (\$2800)
240sq.m, 3bdrs
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J, L.balcony
marble floor
Fully Furn

Shanon (adviser)

Jordan Villa (\$3000)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
S, J, & pkg
green yard
Fully Furn

Parsian

Farmanieh (\$3000) 300sq.m, 4bdrs, S/p, S, J, balcony, F.F
Zaferanieh (\$2000) 200sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, balcony, F.F
Gheitarieh (\$2300) 240sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, balcony, F.F

Elahieh (\$1700) 200sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, pkg, & F.F

Darrous Apt (\$1300)
170sq.m, 3bdrs, & F.F

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Fax : 88506474

Tajrish office (\$4000)
50sq.m, pkg, & balcony



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Dutch Economy to Shrink 2% This Quarter

THE HAGUE (Dispatches) - The Dutch economy will shrink by 2 percent this quarter compared to the third quarter as a result of the second coronavirus lockdown, economists at ING expect. That means that 2020 will end with the economy being about 95 percent the size it was before the crisis. Next year the economy will grow by 2.6 percent, bringing it back to 99 percent of what it was before the pandemic hit, ANP reports.

The economic dip due to the second wave of coronavirus infections will be less severe than in the first lockdown in March, the ING economists expect. This is due to less strict contact restrictions and the fact that schools remained open, resulting in the parents of young children being able to be more productive.



FDI Equity Inflows Into India Cross \$500b Milestone

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - Foreign direct investment (FDI) equity inflows into India crossed the \$ 500 billion milestone during April 2000 to September 2020 period, firmly establishing the country's credentials as a safe and key investment destination in the world.

According to the data of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), the inflows during the period stood at \$500.12 billion. About 29 % of the FDI came through the Mauritius route. It was followed by Singapore (21 %), the U.S., the Netherlands, Japan (each 7 %), and the UK (6 %).

India received \$144.71 billion from Mauritius and about \$106 billion from Singapore during the period under review.

The other big investors have been from Germany, Cyprus, France and Cayman Islands.

Since 2015-16, FDI inflows have been recording significant growth. In that fiscal, the country received \$40 billion FDI, an increase of 35 % over the previous year. In 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20, the investments stood at \$43.5 billion, \$44.85 billion, \$44.37 billion and \$50 billion, respectively. The key sectors which attracted the maximum of these inflows include services segment, computer software and hardware, telecommunications, trading, construction development, automobile, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals.

"Indian FDI journey began with enactment of FEMA (that replaced the draconian FERA) in 1999. Looking back, the half-trillion dollar FDI in India is an indication of foreign investor's firm belief in India's strong economic fundamentals, stable political outlook and sustained economic growth which generated returns for investors even during the global recession of 2007-08," Nischal Arora, Partner- Regulatory, Nangia Andersen India said.

He said as the country cautiously steps into the next decade under the shadow of the ongoing pandemic, it is imperative that the government continues its measures to attract FDI in the manufacturing and high-end technology sectors. Rajat Wahi, Partner, Deloitte India, said FDI equity inflows crossing \$ 500 billion "is indeed a great milestone, and continues to show the trust and faith that the global investors have in India's growing economy".

This growth is a strong reflection of the market potential of India coupled with the steady state of market reforms that India has undertaken since 2000, including opening up of various sectors of the economy to 100 % FDI over the last 5 years, he said.

When asked about what more steps the government can take to give a leg-up to increase FDI, Wahi said while the overall market potential of India will always be high, given the large population, many other factors like ease of doing business, land, labour laws, tax rates, availability of talent, logistics, and political stability also play important role in attracting FDI to any country.

"While we have improved significantly across many of these areas over the last decade, and especially over the last 5 years, there is still a long way to go for us to be able to compete with countries like China and other markets like Vietnam, Thailand, and Malaysia," he added.

S. Korea's Economy Forecast to Recover in H2 of Next Year

SEOUL (Dispatches) - South Korea's economy is predicted to recover from the downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the second half of next year unless the pandemic resurges, a report said Sunday.

But the report by the Hyundai Research Institute said the South Korean economy is expected to face another downturn in the first quarter of next year if the pandemic resurges.

A resurgence of the pandemic next year would cause the economic recovery of the country to be delayed till the first half of 2022, the report said.

The country's economic conditions show signs of a modest recovery, hitting the bottom in the second quarter of the year, but decreased private consumption has hampered its economic recovery, the report added. Exports rose 4 percent in November from a year ago due to a rise in the amount of exports, the report said, pointing to the fact that the recovery in exports remains unstable.

The prolonged economic slump has killed jobs in most local industries and may further deteriorate the local job market, the report said. The country's economic stability depends on domestic consumption and the global economy trend, as well as exports, the report said.



Oman Starts New Energy Company

MUSCAT (Dispatches) - The structure for Oman would probably be similar to the reserves-based lending facilities that are common among U.S. shale producers.

Oman established a new government-owned energy company as it seeks to use its largest oil block to raise debt.

The firm, to be called Energy Development

Oman, will own a shareholding in Petroleum Development Oman LLC as well as an interest in Block 6, according to a government gazette on Sunday.

The company will "undertake hydrocarbon exploration and production operations" and can borrow money "in any manner", according to the gazette.

Energy Development Oman will also be able to invest abroad and deal in renewable-energy products.

Bloomberg reported last month that Oman, which is struggling to finance a soaring budget deficit, planned to transfer its 60 percent stake in Block 6 from Petroleum Development Oman to a new company, which would try to issue around \$3 billion of bonds in the first half of 2021. JPMorgan Chase & Co. is advising the government on the plan, according to a person familiar with the matter.

Block 6 is one of the biggest crude deposits in the Middle East, with production capacity of 650,000 barrels a day. Royal Dutch Shell Plc holds 34 percent of the block, while Total SE owns four percent and Partex Oil & Gas two percent.

Oman's proposal could set a precedent for other governments in the Middle East that want to raise cash without stretching their balance sheets. Iraq's Kurdish region sells some crude before it's pumped under so-called pre-payment finance deals, and the United Arab Emirates has raised billions of dollars this year by selling rights to lease pipelines and properties. But no Middle Eastern government is known to have used specific oil blocks effectively as collateral for funding.

The structure for Oman would probably be similar to the reserves-based lending facilities that are common among U.S. shale producers.

Iraq to Honor OPEC Oil-Cut Decisions as Monthly Exports Rise

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Iraq is seeking a \$2 billion upfront payment in exchange for a long-term crude contract.

Iraq will remain committed to OPEC's decisions on oil output as it nudges crude exports higher in December. The country will export 2.8 million barrels a day this month, Oil Minister Ihsan Abdul Jabbar said Sunday, up from 2.7m in November.

It will start shipping a new medium grade of its flagship Basrah crude in January and try to maximise its output of light oil, he told reporters in Baghdad.

Iraq is interested in increasing prices rather than sales volumes, and several companies are bidding to buy oil in its first pre-payment deal for long-term supply, he said. Baghdad is seeking a \$2 billion upfront payment in exchange for a long-term crude contract. The proposal is unusual among oil producing-nations, and it underscores the country's financial distress and need for cash.

Jabbar's comments were his first public remarks on oil since the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies such as Russia agreed last week to boost output in January by 500,000 barrels a day. Iraq, OPEC's second-biggest producer, is struggling to pay its bills with crude prices at current levels and has been chafing under its output cap.

The government expects crude to exceed \$50 per barrel next year and is basing its 2021 budget on an assumed price of \$42, Jabbar said.

Brent crude ended trading last week at \$49.25 per barrel, down 25 percent for this year.

Argentina's Senate Passes Millionaire's Tax for COVID-19 Relief



BUENOS AIRES (Dispatches) - Argentina's Senate has approved a wealth tax to help the government fund COVID-19 measures, including purchasing health supplies and offering economic relief to struggling businesses.

The one-time levy, passed late on Friday with 42 votes in favour and 26 against, will apply to about 12,000 of the country's richest citizens.

President Alberto Fernandez has said he hopes the measure – also dubbed a "millionaire's tax" – would help Argentina raise about \$3.7bn amid a years-long economic downturn worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This is a unique, one-time contribution," said Senator Carlos Caserio, a member of the committee responsible for the bill, according to a statement on the Senate's website, Bloomberg reported on Saturday.

"We're coming out of this pandemic like countries come out of world wars, with thousands of dead and devastated economies," Caserio said.

Argentina has reported more than 1.45 million cases of COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic, according to Johns Hopkins University's tally, as well as more than 39,500 deaths linked to the virus.

The law applies a tax of at least 2 percent on people with more than \$2.45m in assets, Reuters reported.

The funds will be allocated to buy medical equipment and supplies, aid small and medium-sized businesses, support students and social programs, and fund natural gas projects.

"The #AporteSolidario is extraordinary because the circumstances are extraordinary," governing party Senator Anabel Fernandez Sagasti wrote on Twitter.

"We must find points of connection between those who have the most to contribute and those who are in need."

The measure, which earlier passed in the country's lower Chamber of Deputies, drew criticism from Argentina's more conservative opposition legislators.

Daniel Pelegrina, president of the Argentine Rural Society, warned that proponents of the legislation want "to present it as a contribution of the richest, but we know what happens with all those unique taxes – they stay forever".

Japan to Extend Travel Subsidy Scheme

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Japan's Tourism Minister Kazuyoshi Akaba said Saturday the government is planning to extend its domestic travel subsidy program by five months through the end of June to support the economy hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, a move that comes despite the record number of severe cases and deaths currently being reported across the country, Kyodo reported.

Japan saw a record 45 deaths from the novel coronavirus, with severe cases also hitting a record 505 as it continues to grapple with a spike in infections.

The number of people with severe symptoms increased by eight from Thursday, according to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, setting a record for the second consecutive day and marking the first time the count has topped 500.

With the rise in the number of severely ill patients starting to put a strain on hospitals, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said Friday that the government is tackling the latest surge in coronavirus infections with a "strong sense of crisis."

Japan saw a total of over 2,200 new infections the same day, bringing its nationwide tally to around 158,800. The death toll stands at over 2,300. Tokyo, the hardest hit among Japan's 47 prefectures, reported 449 new cases, dropping below 500 for the first time in three days.

The "Go To Travel" campaign, which was launched in July and offers certain discounts on travel costs, will continue beyond its original end date in late January. The plan is expected to be included in an economic stimulus package to be approved by the government next week.



"We will review the system in stages and respond based on the situation of infections," Akaba told a press conference.

The government is considering gradually reducing the discount rate in order to make the decline in travel demand as slow as possible once the program ends, he said. It is also looking to increase the rate on weekdays so that fewer people travel using the program on weekends and holidays.

Under the 1.35 trillion yen (\$13 billion) scheme, a 35 percent discount is given for hotel and package tour expenses, while an additional 15 percent discount is offered in the form of coupons for shopping and dining at travel destinations.

As of Nov. 15, a total discount of 250.9 billion yen was provided for 52.6 million overnight stays under the campaign.

Int'l Short Film Festival of Turkey Awards Iranian Film

KERMANSHAH (IRNA) - Iranian short film "Night Shift" directed by Ashkan Hatami won the award of the best movie at the Hak-iş 9th International short film Festival in Turkey.

Hak-iş shortfilm International Festival was held on December 3 at the Hilton hotel lobby in Ankara. The "Night Shift" was awarded the best foreign film among 4,217 films from 120 countries.

The Iranian short film reveals the story of a mother who leaves her daughter alone in the Corona Pandemic and focuses on her job to contain Covid-19.



Time for Record Global Oil Demand May Have Already Passed

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Days of peak oil consumption might be over for the global economy and the trend may impact Russia's budget revenues, the country's Deputy Finance Minister Vladimir Kolychev has warned.

"The peak of consumption may have already passed," Kolychev told Bloomberg in a recent interview. The official added that there is a rising longer-term risk that hydrocarbon revenues could slide below the previous forecasts.

The Finance Ministry is currently looking into several scenarios implying different levels of demand, according to Kolychev.

In an earlier report, Russia's key financial regulator, the Central Bank of Russia, outlined four basic scenarios for Russia's economic development. While the forecast covered the state of the national economy in the next three years, it said that in the worst-case scenario (if Covid-19 continues to wreak havoc across the globe), the price for Russia's Urals oil brand could plunge to \$25 per barrel in 2021, around 50 percent lower than its current price, and would only reach \$35 a barrel in 2023.

Earlier this month, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that global demand for oil will grow by just one percent over the next five years, before it starts to weaken by 0.1 percent per year.

The Russian economy is slowly reducing its dependence on oil revenues, the president previously stressed. Oil prices no longer have "critical" influence on the national budget, Putin said in September, promising that the hydrocarbon revenues will account for around a third of the budget next year.

The pandemic hit the energy market hard in the first months of 2020, as border closures



and lockdowns brought global travel and production to almost a complete halt. The commodity hit historic lows earlier this year, when one American oil futures contract plunged into negative territory and Brent trading at around \$20 per barrel. Crude prices have rebounded since then thanks to a global effort to tap production, mainly due to the caps introduced by the members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allied oil exporters led by Russia.

Italy, Libya Sign Defense Deal Over Military Training, Hospitals



ROME (Dispatches) - Italy and Libya signed an agreement on Friday to collaborate in the defense areas of training, health care and demining activities.

Italian Defense Minister Lorenzo Guerini met his Libyan counterpart Salahuddin Al-Namroush in Rome, where they signed the "Joint Technical Military Cooperation Agreement," which renews a deal signed in 2013.

It calls for identifying new ways to collaborate in medical health care, starting with the training of Libyan medical staff by members of Italy's field hospital in the northwestern Libyan city of Misrata.

It also commits to "a significant training plan for Libyan cadets and officers," and underlines Italy's willingness to collaborate on a demining center, according to Guerini, who visited Tripoli in August.

"Our commitment is primarily directed to support the process of stabilization, pacification and institutional reorganization we all hope for," he said in a statement.

"We agreed with Italy to cooperate in the fields of military training, experience sharing, support, development, maintenance and consultancy," Al-Namroush said in a statement after the signing ceremony in Italy's capital Rome.

Italian colonization of Libya began in 1911 and lasted until 1943. Rome retains significant energy assets in the country and last year renewed a 2017 deal with the Libyan coastguard to block illegal migrants trying to leave from the country's coast to Italy.

Libya is in the midst of a protracted civil war since the ouster of Moammar Gadhafi in 2011, with Italy backing the U.N.-recognized government of Prime Minister Fayez Sarraj established in 2015. The Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA) is also supported by Turkey and Qatar, while the opposing forces of putschist Gen. Khalifa Haftar based in the eastern cities of Tobruk and Benghazi are mainly backed by Egypt, Russia, France and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

With major backing from Ankara, Tripoli has been battling Haftar's militias since April 2019 in a conflict that has claimed thousands of lives.

Earlier in the day, Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio visited Algeria, where he said Rome and Algiers agreed to diversify cooperation beyond the energy sector.

The two countries have developed a "solid partnership" in the economic and commercial sectors, Di Maio said, according to the official Algerian news agency APS.

He expressed hope that Italy could "diversify its areas of cooperation with Algeria, beyond the hydrocarbons sector," citing fields including infrastructure and technological innovation.

The two countries also signed a memorandum of understanding to develop bilateral cooperation, Di Maio said, after meeting with his Algerian counterpart, Sabri Boukadoum. Di Maio also met with Algerian Prime Minister Abdelaziz Djerad.

Energy plays an important role in economic relations

Turkey Steps Closer to Becoming Engine Design, Manufacturing Center

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey is well on its way to becoming design and manufacturing center for all kinds of engines, especially in aviation, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said as the country moved closer to mass producing local turboshaft helicopter engines.

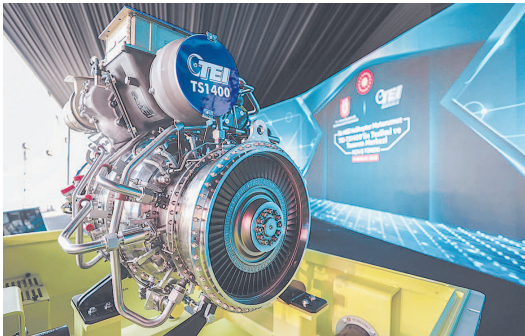
"With these projects, we're entering a new era in the defense industry," Recep Tayyip Erdoğan told the handover ceremony for Turkey's first indigenous helicopter engine and opening of new design center via a live video link from the Vahdettin Mansion in Istanbul.

Designed and developed by the engineers at the Turkish Aerospace Industries' (TAI) engine manufacturing subsidiary, TUSAŞ Engine Industries (TEI), the turboshaft TEI-TS1400 engine was designed for the country's first indigenous T625 multirole helicopter named Gökbeý.

The TEI will become a role model in Turkey with its planned investments in an engine development project, Erdoğan said.

A twin-engine, 6-ton-class helicopter designed for high mission flexibility even in the toughest of geographical environments and adverse weather conditions has been developed in response to growing market demand for higher mission flexibility in this class.

The T625 is being developed as part of the Original Helicopter



Program, coordinated by the Presidency of Defense Industries (SSB).

The T625 prototype earlier used a pair of LHTECs, CTS800 4-AT turboshaft engines that have 1,373 shaft horsepower each, created jointly by Rolls-Royce and Honeywell.

Several tests of the TEI engine, which produces 1,660 horsepower, were done during the ceremony.

The project was launched in 2017.

"With every step we take, we see once again that in the geography where we live, we can't look to our future confidently without having a strong defense industry," Erdoğan said.

"We plan to establish a stronger coordination system through our Presidency of Defense Industries and our executive committee," the president added. "In the economic policies we carry out, we're focused on medium and long-term goals in the industry, as in every field."

The TS1400 is also expected to be used on HÜRKUŞ training aircraft and T129 Tactical Reconnaissance and Attack Helicopter (ATAK), as well as its derivatives developed by TAI.

TEI's Turboshaft Engine Development Project (TEDP) looks to decrease dependence on foreign sources while enabling domestic production of engine systems, which constitute one of the most important components of these projects and increasing the percentage of indigenous production in these projects.

Aviation to Play Critical Role in Lifting World to Recovery From COVID-19

TEHRAN (UNIC) – United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in his message on International Civil Aviation Day, 7 December 2020, called aviation as an important engine of the world that will play a critical role in lifting the world to recovery from COVID-19.

The full text of his message reads:

International aviation plays a key role in human affairs. It lets us discover our world's wondrous geographic and cultural diversity. It enables us to learn about and benefit from each other. And it connects societies through global travel and trade, advancing access to food, education and healthcare. These benefits are critical to every country's attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. This year's observance of International Civil Aviation Day falls as COVID-19 has severed international connections by air, cutting off businesses from clients, keeping tourists from destinations, and disproportionately affecting the vulnerable. It has also disrupted the operations and finances of airlines and airports worldwide, threatening their capability to assure the global supply of medicines, vaccines, humanitarian aid and other vital goods.

Countries must act urgently to sustain their air transport sectors in the face of these challenges. Yet, they must do so with climate in mind. Emissions from aviation account for more than 2 per cent of the global total, ranking it in the top ten emitters. Recovery from the pandemic is simultaneously an opportunity for climate action, including to make global aviation more resilient and sustainable as a key part of efforts to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

I welcome recent commitments to net-zero emissions made by members of the aviation community. I urge the entire sector to commit to net zero by 2050 and develop a strategy in alignment with the Paris Agreement well ahead of next year's climate conference. Cooperation between governments and industry will be essential to achieve a timely transition. Aviation is an important engine of our world, and will play a critical role in lifting the world to recovery from COVID-19. Let us ensure it receives the support it needs to keep the world's nations connected and united.



U.S. Confessed...

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The smart system controlling the machine gun had zeroed in on Fakhrizadeh and utilized artificial intelligence, the general stated. He said the purpose of exploding the gun-laden pickup after the shootout was to kill the 11 IRGC servicemen accompanying the late scientist. The head of the security team has been shot after shielding Fakhrizadeh from bullets, Fadavi added, saying the nuclear scientist was ultimately martyred due to a gunshot wound in his back and spinal cord amputation. Asked about Iran's response to the American assassination of top commander Lt. General Qassem Soleimani in early January, the IRGC deputy chief said, "We will choose how to take revenge." The IRGC has gained such great power that the enemy is seeking deterrence in the face of Iran, he added.

U.S. Blocking Iran...

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The WHO touts COVAX as "the world's best hope" for tackling the pandemic in a coordinated and timely manner, and says the international initiative's aim is to "guarantee rapid, fair and equitable access to vaccines for people in all countries".

Iran's official COVID-19 death toll surpassed 50,000 on Saturday as the country battles the third wave of the virus with more than a million reported cases.

Iranian health authorities say the real numbers are likely to be more than twice the official figures.

Hemmati also described how Iran's efforts to buy a vaccine are being blocked by the U.S. through other corridors.

According to the central bank chief, Iran's efforts to spend its funds blocked in South Korea to pay for the vaccine have also been rejected by the U.S.

Iranian officials say about \$7b of the country's reserves in South Korea, a major buyer of Iranian oil before the sanctions were imposed, remain frozen.

South Korea has failed to move them for fear of US reprisal, despite repeated Iranian calls.

Hemmati said "pressure and threats by the U.S." have also led the International Monetary Fund to stymie Iran's request for a loan.

"Despite acceding to Iran's right and existence of no economic or legal barriers, the IMF didn't even dare raise Iran's request for a humanitarian loan at the fund's board of directors," Hemmati wrote.

Hemmati said Iran is pursuing "other paths" to pay for the vaccine and is in negotiations with other countries. He added that efforts to produce a vaccine locally are "promising".

Judiciary...

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Following disagreements between the administration and the Parliament on the strategic action bill, the Supreme National Security Council said on Saturday that the newly-ratified law would not cause any harm to the country's national interests.

Earlier on Sunday, the Judiciary Chief said that the only way to disappoint the U.S. from its arrogant policy is "to strengthen the country" as the Islamic Revolution Leader's main concern.

On the occasion of the 16th of Azar (December 7, 1953) and in a meeting with representatives of student organizations, he said that the U.S. of 1953 has become much weaker today. The scandal that the Americans caused in the West today is a scandal that is not covered by anything, and this scandal is growing day by day.

The high-ranking official stated on Sunday, "In these circumstances, showing a desire to negotiate with the United States is a serious mistake and it is wrong to decorate the United States as a good and bad America."

The head of the judiciary noted: "There is no difference between Republicans and Democrats with regard to the tyranny and the arrogance, and the Islamic Republic has more power in the region than ever before."

Raisi stressed: "Today, considering our components, we are in a position of honor and authority, and this honor must be preserved."

U.S. Cruelty...

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Iran's representative in the UN General Assembly said: "Iran, as a country that has been affected by the coronavirus and at the same time has been the target of U.S. sanctions, is well aware of how and to what extent these sanctions, by stonewalling against the import of medical equipment and medicine as well as undermining the capacity of target countries to counter the disease."

"U.S. unilateral sanctions are actually targeting patients," the Iranian ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations concluded.

Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 1

He also said that Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) was putting lives of the people at risk for personal gains as coronavirus becoming more lethal by each passing day across the world. He said that opposition should review their decisions of holding public gatherings and rallies keeping in view the rising number of coronavirus patients.

The foreign minister said that coronavirus would be more aggressive in the month of January. He said that there was health emergency in the country and political leadership should think about the public lives first instead of their personal gains.

Qureshi said that alliance of these parties could hardly last longer as they had ideological differences.

He said that the second wave of coronavirus was more dangerous as compared to the first adding that it would affect everyone if SOPs were not followed. He emphasised importance of delaying all unnecessary activities.

Men's World Cup Giant Slalom Falls to Bad weather

ROME (Dispatches) - The second run of the men's World Cup giant slalom in the Italian Alps was postponed Sunday because of bad weather with organisers hoping it could be held a day later.

"The safety of the skiers cannot be guaranteed in today's race," given the continuous snowfall since Saturday, organisers said Sunday morning.

The weather at Santa Caterina di Valfurva was expected to improve, allowing the slopes to be prepared to hold the race today.

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Kandie Licks Half-Marathon World Record

VALENCIA (Dispatches) - Kenya's Kibiwott Kandie smashed the men's half-marathon world record in Valencia on Sunday in a time of 57 minutes 32 seconds.

His blistering performance was almost half a minute quicker than the previous record of 58min 01sec set by his compatriot Geoffrey Kamworor in September, 2019.

In perfect running conditions the 24-year-old Kandie was chased across the line just five seconds adrift by Ugandan Jacob Kiplimo in a reverse of the world championship result in October.

Spurs Back on Top, Liverpool Rout Wolves

LONDON (Reuters) - The Premier League's deadliest current double-act struck again as Son Heung-min and Harry Kane were both on target as Tottenham Hotspur beat Arsenal 2-0 to return to the top of the table on Sunday.

Kane played in Son after 13 minutes for the South Korean to curl home a majestic opener for his 10th league goal of the season, much to the delight of the 2,000 fans in attendance.

Son then repaid the favor on the stroke of halftime as Kane lashed in his side's second to become the top scorer in the history of the north London derby with 11 in all competitions.

Victory means Jose Mourinho's side move two points clear of Chelsea who had claimed top spot on Saturday. They have 24 points from 11 games and are unbeaten in the league since losing on the opening day of the season.

Arsenal were ineffective in attack despite having almost 70% possession, although they did threaten in the second half with Spurs keeper Hugo Lloris making a couple of saves.

But Mikel Arteta's side remain in 15th place with 13 points after their worst start to a season since 1981.

"It is not just about scoring goals and being world class players. It is about being great guys and doing your best for the team," Tottenham manager Jose Mourinho said of his scorers.

"(Arsenal) gave us problems, problems we were able to resolve."

Arsenal dominated the ball but do not possess the cutting edge that Tottenham boast in the form of Son and Kane.

Not pretty, but Tottenham's title bid gathers momentum under Mourinho

The hosts had barely been in the game as Arsenal started brightly but in a flash they were behind.

Kane controlled the ball and instinctively switched the play to Son on the left. Rob Holding made the mistake of allowing Son to cut in on his right foot and, almost inevitably, Son curled a sweet right-foot effort beyond Bernd Leno.



It was Son's 10th goal of the season -- as many as Arsenal have managed in the league. Eight of those have been assisted by Kane.

The dynamic duo have now combined for 11 goals already this season and 31 in total for Tottenham, second only in the Premier League era to Didier Drogba and Frank Lampard who managed 36 while in tandem for Chelsea.

Meanwhile Mohamed Salah scored one and made another as Liverpool thrashed a hapless Wolverhampton Wanderers 4-0 in front of 2000 fans in the Premier League on Sunday on a night to forget for Wolves captain and former Reds player Conor Coady.

The occasion marked a triumphant return to Anfield for Liverpool's supporters, who had to watch on TV due to the COVID-19 pandemic as their club secured a first league title since 1990.

The win over a lacklustre Wolves lifted Liverpool back up to second in the table on 24 points, behind leaders Tottenham Hotspur, who beat Arsenal 2-0 in the North London derby earlier on Sunday, on goal difference. Wolves are 10th on 17 points.

The Kop roared its approval as the game got underway and the home fans did not have to wait long to cheer a goal following a moment of indecision by Coady.

The centre back, who came through Liverpool's academy, attempted to chest the ball down in front of his own goal but instead allowed Salah to steal in and score in the 24th minute.

Coady's evening went from bad to worse just before halftime when a penalty Wolves had been awarded for what looked like a foul on him by Sadio Mane was overturned by referee Craig Pawson following a video review.

That led to whistles and boos for Coady from the vocal fans in attendance, but that was soon forgotten as the Wolves defender failed to get a shot away when in on goal and moments later Georginio Wijnaldum made it 2-0 in the 59th minute.

Spence Returns From Horrific Crash to Dominate Garcia

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Errol Spence overpowered challenger Danny Garcia in his first fight since surviving a near-fatal rollover car accident to retain his World Boxing Council and International Boxing Federation welterweight titles on Saturday.

The 30-year-old Spence put on a virtuoso performance winning almost every round in a 147-pound homecoming fight at AT&T Stadium in Dallas, Texas.

The undefeated Spence, who suffered serious injuries after being thrown from his car in the drunk-driving smash, won by a unanimous decision proving he is still the same boxer as before the accident in October 2019.

"The moment is surreal especially coming back from my accident year ago," Spence said. "Be patient with me. This was a comeback fight for me and I had to shake off some cobwebs."

After the fighters felt each other out during the first few rounds, Spence seized control in the middle rounds to win on all three scorecards by scores of 116-112, 116-112 and 117-111.

Spence improved to 27-0 with 21 knockouts while Garcia fell to 36-3, with 21 KOs.

Spence, a southpaw, monopolized Garcia with his jab and relentless pressure, not allowing the challenger to make use of his pre-fight game plan.

"He was breaking him down and taking the fight out of him. His jab is the key to everything," said Spence's trainer Derrick James.

Stuttgart Beat Bremen 2-1

BERLIN (Reuters) - Silas Wamangituka scored both goals as VfB Stuttgart edged a 2-1 away win to Werder Bremen in what was a quiet Bundesliga game until it burst into life in second-half stoppage time on Sunday.

Wamangituka put Stuttgart ahead on the half-hour mark, drilling the ball home from the penalty spot after a foul on Wataru Endo by Dutch winger Tahith Chong, and there was little action until near the end of the match.



The Toyota driver went into the final rally destined to be denied by his teammate and standings leader Elfyn Evans.

But the Welsh driver's title hopes ended when he crashed on Saturday, leaving the path clear for Ogier and co-driver Julian Ingrassia to add to their previous rally crowns with Volkswagen and Ford.

"I'm very happy but I'm not jumping in the air as there are so many people who have

Ogier Wins Seventh World Rally Title

MONZA (Dispatches) - France's Sebastien Ogier secured his seventh world rally championship on Sunday after winning the closing chapter of the coronavirus-disrupted season in Monza.

suffered this year," Ogier said after a season severely disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Ogier's seventh title in eight seasons put him on a par with Lewis Hamilton, who equalled Michael Schumacher's record seven Formula One titles last month.

But he is still two shy of the nine rally titles captured by his compatriot and former mentor Sebastien Loeb.

Ogier was lagging 14 points behind Evans before Monza, announcing before Thursday's first stage that "I've got nothing to lose, I'm going to throw everything at it".

This seventh leg of a season that went into lockdown for five months combined stages at the iconic Formula One circuit with treacherous specials in the snowy hills of Bergamo.

It was on one of these stages on Saturday that Evans's title challenge ended prematurely when his car slithered off the road.

Hyundai retained their constructors title thanks to deposed champion Ott Tanak and Dani Sordo making the podium.

Grosjean to Miss Abu Dhabi Grand Prix

DUBAI (Dispatches) - Romain Grosjean is returning home to Switzerland for treatment on the burns he suffered from his fireball crash in Bahrain and will miss the season-closing Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, his Haas team announced on Sunday.

Next week's race at Yas Marina was to have been the Frenchman's last for the team. "I'm naturally very sorry that Romain will miss what was going to be his final race with Haas F1 Team," said team principal Guenther Steiner.

"Romain has shown exceptional bravery and amazing spirit over the last few days -- we know how badly he wanted to be able to return to the cockpit in Abu Dhabi."

Grosjean said the decision not to race in Abu Dhabi was one of the hardest "of my life". "We've tried as much as we could with the doctor to recover and to repair my hand, but the risk of racing is too big for my recovery and my health."

"I will miss the team, but I will be supporting them as ever."

On Saturday Grosjean sat in a Haas car for the first time since extricating himself from the blaze that engulfed him on the opening lap of last Sunday's race.

Grosjean's car split in half in a 245 kph impact with the barriers in one of the most dramatic incidents in the recent history of Formula One.

He has said he "saw death too closely" in the crash, telling AFP in an interview on Wednesday: "I thought: 'It can't end like this, not now'. I tried to get out again, but I couldn't, so I sat down and I saw death, not close up, but from too close... It's a feeling that I wish on no one."



Beijing Into Asian Champions League Quarters

HONG KONG (Reuters) - Beijing Guoan progressed to the quarter-finals of the Asian Champions League for the first time after Alan Carvalho scored the only goal as the Chinese Super League side knocked FC Tokyo out of the continental championship in their last-16 game on Sunday.

Bruno Genesio's side will be joined in the next round by Ulsan Hyundai as the South Koreans defeated Melbourne Victory 3-0 thanks to two second-half Bjorn Johnsen goals either side of Won Du-jae's header, maintaining their hopes of a first title since 2012.

Melbourne goalkeeper Max Crocombe had kept his side in the game in the first half with a pair of fine saves, first denying Kim In-sung before keeping out Yoon Bit-garam's effort from well outside the box.

But after Jo Su-huk had made a top class stop at the other end to deny Brandon Lauton, substitute Johnsen struck in the 65th minute when a rebounded shot fell invitingly at the Norwegian striker's feet.

Won added a second 12 minutes later when he rose highest to meet Yoon's free kick from the right, and Johnsen sealed the win four minutes from time.

Earlier in the day, Carvalho scored the only goal of Beijing's meeting with FC Tokyo as the Brazil-born striker, who took Chinese citizenship last year, netted just before the hour mark from close range. Former Brazil international Renato Augusto cut the ball back from the byline to Carvalho and the 31-year-old, on loan with Beijing from Guangzhou Evergrande, put his side in front with a deflected right foot shot.

