

An Official in the Iranian Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Said That Tabriz, Capital Of East Azarbaijan Province, Is Going to Host a Joint Tourism Committee Between Turkey and Iran

# IRAN NEWS

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif Urged the South Korean Government to Release Iran's Blocked Assets as Soon as Possible as the Koreans Still Wait For the U.S. Green Light for the Release of Assets

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Int'l Mechanisms Fail to Preserve Rights Of Iranian Nation



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## France Is Not in Position To Preach on Ethics

TEHRAN (PressTV) - An Iranian diplomat has hit back at France for its meddlesome stance, saying a country deeply involved in Yemen's carnage cannot preach about morality.

Yemen has turned into the worst humanitarian disaster in the world as a result of the sales of deadly weapons by France and its partners to the Saudi-led coalition, Mohammad Sadati-Nejad, who is in charge of human rights issues at the Iranian mission to the UN in Geneva, said on Thursday.

The remarks came a day after France's Foreign Ministry said a French national, who was under consular protection, was detained in Iran in May 2020, and that authorities are "attentively following the situation of our fellow national."

Also, in a speech to the UN Human Rights Council on Wednesday, French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian accused Iran of human rights violations and demanded the release of Fariba Adelkhah, a French-Iranian national.

Adelkhah, a 60-year-old anthropologist and researcher at Sciences Po's Center for International Studies (CERI) in Paris, was arrested in Iran in June 2019 on espionage charges.

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## No Talks Needed for U.S. Return to JCPOA



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Iranian envoy to the UN says there is no need for negotiations over America's potential return to the 2015 nuclear deal, and that Washington must secure a return to the accord by lifting its sanctions within the next three months, a timeframe agreed between Tehran and the UN nuclear watchdog over nuclear inspections beyond the February 21 deadline set by Iran.

No talks are needed to pave the way for the US's return to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), as the deal is formally named, said Majid Takht-Ravanchi in an interview with Al Jazeera Arabic, excerpts of which were released late on Wednesday.

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Tehran, Stockholm to Focus on Boosting Ties on Technical, Engineering Services



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## ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

## Cessation of Additional Protocol Had a Strategic Message

One day after the agreement between Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Grossi and Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Ali Akbar Salehi, majority of lawmakers in Iran's Majlis (parliament) strongly opposed the agreement due to its differences both in text and content with the law which had been approved by Majlis and accused the government of bypassing the law.

This message of Majlis is the indicator of two important points: First, Majlis is determined on gradual pullout of the JCPOA commitments and it moves step by step and the second is that this Majlis is totally different with the previous Majlises and wherever the government performs above the law or violates it either in the nuclear or even in non-clear issues and implements its own taste, it will not condone.

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Romak; Symbol of creative and strategic thinking of the private sector, the driver and accelerator of Mazandaran agricultural economy

## Iran's largest Export Terminal for Agricultural Products Opened in Joibar



The first phase of the largest export terminal for agricultural products in the country under the brand name Romakogstar Pars was put into operation in the 51st opening of the production leap by the order of President Hassan Rouhani in the city of Joybar in Mazandaran province. The inauguration ceremony of Romak Gostarpars agricultural products export terminal was inaugurated in the presence of Hosseinzadegan, Governor of Mazandaran, Director General of Mining Industry and Trade, provincial officials at the terminal and in the form of a video conference with the presence of the President. As one of the most successful countries in the field of horticultural and agricultural products, Iran is ranked seventh and fourth in the world, respectively, with an annual production of only 5.4 million tons of citrus and 371 thousand tons of kiwi. Existence of this significant potential and capacity in the country, has enabled the capable engineers of this border and environment by using new tools and technologies and constructing export terminals in accordance with the latest international standards, to have a more prominent presence for our country in global markets. In this regard, the construction of export terminals with the aim of accelerating and facilitating the process and increasing the possibility of export supervision in 2004 was approved by the government.

### Capabilities of the largest export terminal of Romak Gostar Pars agricultural products

From three approved export terminals in Mazandaran, construction of Romak Gostar Pars export terminal in Joybar city with the aim of marketing and export, creating employment for talented youth and introducing Iranian brand abroad, as well as reforming the distribution system and regulating the market in the field of agricultural products, Started in 1396 on a 31-hectare land with a private sector investment of 720 billion Tomans in Joibar. The project, the first phase of which was completed in December 1999, and with the establishment of customs offices, quarantine and financial institutions, can significantly contribute to the coherent export process in the country. This complex sorts and packs 3,000 tons of citrus and 1,500 tons of kiwi and other products daily and has three production lines of boxes, plastic packaging accessories and

cartoon boxes with a capacity of 6,000 boxes per hour. Romak Gostarpars, with 57 ammonia and tolen freezing cold storage halls, has turned it into a complement to the chain of horticultural, prototype and agricultural products of the country. Installation and commissioning of various production lines in Romak Gostar Pars, has enabled it to sort, pack and freeze 376 thousand tons of various agricultural products annually and 90 thousand tons of various products in above and below zero cold stores. And maintain. These production lines are designed and built in accordance with the latest international standards and have the ability to scan and take 3D photos to measure the quality of products. In these production lines, it is possible to identify and track packaged products and detect environmental damage to fruits with high accuracy, and cause fruit sizing and weighing accurately and quickly and in accordance with international standards. Measuring the dimensions of different products, the possibility of detecting the strength of fruit texture, fast and separate freezing and pre-cooling the product before storage, are other advantages of Romak Gostar Pars production lines. This export terminal, by creating a stock exchange center and pricing of agricultural products, initiates the different presence of our country's products in world markets as Iranian goods. Romak



Gostar Pars is fully committed to expanding the export range of Iranian horticultural and agricultural products in order to make a big leap towards national production with the aim of entering global markets. This is a golden opportunity to increase exports and boost domestic production, an opportunity that results in the development and prosperity of a great nation. Engineer Khalil Gholizadeh, one of the activists in the field of production and entrepreneurship, whose perseverance and great interest in production and use of modern technologies in the production sector has always been famous, with more than two decades of work activity that is always based on current knowledge and employing young professionals in prioritizing and targeting work. Is located, with the creation of one of the largest export terminals of agricultural products called Romak Gostarpars in the city of Joybar, has caused the pride and reputation of Mazandaran agriculture. This activist and investor, who in the past few years has always been selected among national models and has been honored by senior officials and the president, this time founding

one of the largest links in the chain from production to supply of agricultural products in the form of a large agricultural export terminal in the city. Covering one of the big gaps in the province in the way of branding and exporting agricultural products, which has an important contribution in bringing value to the country, he did his job well.

### Construction of the largest export terminal for agricultural products in Iran, the result of 3 years of round-the-clock efforts

Engineer Khalil Gholizadeh, investor and head of Romak Gostar Pars agricultural products export terminal, congratulated the opening of this large terminal and presented it to the man of Mazandaran. I hope that the esteemed officials will continue to help this sector by providing some export infrastructure. Explaining the construction and objectives of this end, he said, the executive operation of the first phase of Romak Gostar Pars agricultural products export terminal in 1996 began on a 31-hectare land with 31,000 square meters of infrastructure in the city of Joybar, with the main purpose of marketing, export and establishment. And introducing the Iranian brand in the world markets is reforming the distribution system and regulating the market of agricultural products. Engineer Gholizadeh added: "With the efforts of the day and night and the determination that we had to build and complete it as soon as possible, we tried to reach the stage of operation by reducing the construction time, which, thank God, went according to plan."

### Support banks to complete the supply chain and working capital

The head of Romak Gostar Pars agricultural products export terminal stated that regulating the market of agricultural products, especially citrus, kiwi, apple and other garden products, is one of the most important advantages of this terminal, and said that public and private banks are expected to provide working capital. Support these units in a serious and practical way. Engineer Gholizadeh stated that the supply of required chains, including the packaging industry, is one of the main needs of the export terminal for agricultural products and said: Supporting the supply chain required for the export terminal in this region and setting up export terminals for similar agricultural products in other provinces are our export needs today.



Referring to the accession of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Eurasian Union, he said: "In the current situation, 30% of the world's agricultural products are exported to these countries and the construction of an export terminal for Caspian products in Mazandaran can be part of this market if supported." Domestic took over.

### Connection of Romak Gostarpars export terminal with international export terminals

Mr. Gholizadeh also mentioned the other capabilities of Romak Gostarpars agricultural export terminal and said, "Fortunately, due to the connections that have been established in the past, most countries with the latest technologies in this field with the logistics center and Romak Gostar agricultural export terminal." Pars have established communication and this company continuously uses the consultants of the largest logistics centers and international export terminals. He added: Romak Gostar Pars export terminal according to the philosophy of existence and performance and high potential of the country in the production of agricultural products and considering the development and economic development of the world, organization of distribution, marketing and sales system of agricultural products, especially citrus, kiwi and apples abroad And domestically electronically and online or face to face among national and international buyers and sellers and provide the necessary support, support and advice to produce quality export products by introducing up-to-date trade varieties and varieties to the world to attend in international markets and moving towards the establishment of a legal and planned cultivation system for the production of agricultural products, as well as the introduction and use of advanced techniques for sorting, packaging and equipment to increase the quality of packaging and sorting products with scientific methods and It intends to provide the experiences gained for the development of this sector. Mr. Gholizadeh continued, as well as specialized training and creating sustainable employment for graduates of commercial and agricultural sectors to provide advice on the control and maintenance of orchards in all stages of planting, harvesting and international marketing, creating a suitable integrated transportation system. According to international standards, it is on the agenda of Romak Gostar Pars export terminal.

## President Felicitates Kuwait on National Day

TEHRAN (MNA) – President Hassan Rouhani has sent a message to the Kuwaiti Emir to felicitate him and the people of the Arab country on their National Day.

In his message to Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Rouhani wrote: “I would like to offer my sincerest congratulations to Your Majesty and the people of your country on National Day of Kuwait.” “I hope that in the shadow of unity and empathy, and taking advantage of the religious, cultural, and historical commonalities, we will witness the increasing expansion of fraternal cooperation between the two countries.”

## President Receives Five New Ambassadors To Tehran

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

**TEHRAN – President Hassan Rouhani on Wednesday and in separate meetings received new ambassadors Romania, Slovakia, Senegal, Ghana and Bolivia wherein the new envoys to Tehran submitted their credentials to the President.**

In meeting with Romanian envoy Ms. Mirela-Carmen Greco, President Rouhani said Iran stands ready to share its experience in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic with other countries, including Romania.

He expressed hope relations between the two countries will further expand as a new chapter of mutual cooperation has opened.

“The two countries enjoy good potential to enhance their cooperation on economic and scientific fronts,” said Rouhani.

The top Romanian diplomat, in turn, said Tehran and Bucharest have always had cordial and friendly relations, which should be best utilized to tap into the existing potentialities to upgrade bilateral cooperation.

She said the implementation of some agreements between the two countries has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

She underlined efforts have been made to hold a meeting of the Iran-Romania Joint Cooperation Commission as soon as possible to make up for the delays and settle the problems which have emerged on the way of boosting bilateral ties.

Later in the meeting with the Slovak Ambassador Ladislav Ballek, the President said companies in Iran and Slovakia’s private sectors can be at the forefront of efforts to enhance mutual relations and cooperation.

He also welcomed closer partnership between Tehran and Bratislava. “Iran and Slovakia have great potential for expanding their relations in scientific, cultural and economic fields,” said the president.

He further pointed to the outbreak of the coronavirus in the world, and said universal cooperation among all countries is needed to effectively confront the pandemic.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran is currently developing and testing three types of coronavirus vaccines, and is ready to share its experiences with other countries, including Slovakia, in this regard,” he noted.

Ladislav Ballek, the new Slovakian ambassador to Tehran, said his country attaches special respect and importance to Iran, and is resolved to promote its ties with Tehran in different fields.

“The coronavirus pandemic has made it all the more necessary to expand collaborations and humanitarian ties between countries of the world,” he added.

In meeting with new Bolivian Ambassador to Tehran Ms. Romina Perez Ramos, the President noted that Iran is determined in scientific and industrial cooperation with Bolivia, Iran’s President stressed the expansion of the ties between the two countries.

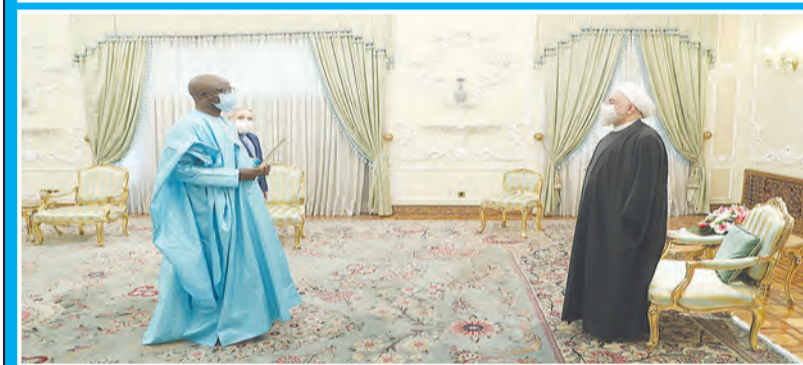
He also said the exchange of the goods needed by the two countries could expand their ties in different areas.

Romina Pérez Ramos, for his part, called Iran a strategic partner for Bolivia and expressed her country’s support of Iran’s axiomatic rights, including nuclear programs, in the international communities.

She pointed to her appointment as Bolivia’s ambassador to Tehran for the second time and mentioned deepening ties and strengthening friendship links between the two countries as her main goals.

The president later received Ambassador of Senegal to Tehran Salio Dieng and also new Ambassador of Ghana Mr. Eric Owusu-Boateng.

During both meetings, the President called for bolstering ties with African states.



## Iran Begins Free Trade Talks With EAEU Bloc

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has stated talks on free trade with an economic bloc of Eurasian countries known as the EAEU more than a year after Tehran clinched a preferential trade agreement with the grouping.

A senior official at Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) said on Wednesday that both Iran and the EAEU were eager to remove trade tariffs for nearly 80 percent of the goods they exchange.

“New talks for free trade started in February so that the two side can negotiate about all goods they trade but 20 percent that they have no interest in liberalizing,” said Behrouz Olfat, who serves as TPO’s head of Europe and America office. Olfat said reaching a free trade deal with the EAEU may take years although he insisted that Iran is determined to clinch the agreement because of the long-term impacts it could have on business and economic activity in the country.

The official added that the two sides have a potential to increase the value of their annual trade to \$30 billion from a current figure of \$3.5 billion. Iran reached a preferential trade agreement with the EAEU in October 2019 to reduce tariffs for 883 items of goods. Olfat said the two sides had implemented the new tariff regime on 780 goods.

The EAEU bloc consists of Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan. Reports have suggested that Armenia is seeking to significantly increase its imports from Iran after a recent war in neighboring Azerbaijan caused Yerevan to impose a six-month ban on products coming from Turkey.

Olfat said trade with Armenia is expected to increase by at least \$60 million per year, adding that Iran would invest more to increase its exports of textiles and garment products to Armenia.

## Int’l Mechanisms Fail to Preserve Rights of Iranian Nation

TEHRAN (IP) - The head of the High Council of Human Rights said that despite the fact that the policy of ‘maximum pressure’ against Iran was failed, the international legal mechanisms also could not fulfill the minimal rights of the Iranian nation.

At the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council, Ali Baqeri Kani said that the human society was ashamed of the crimes being committed against the Yemeni and Palestinian people and noted that as long as the human rights bodies depended on the will of the US and Israeli regime or the affiliate groups, the rights of the world’s nations were not fulfilled.

Baqeri Kani highlighted the costs the Iranian nation so far suffered as victims of the terrorism, including the assassination of 17,000 people by U.S.-Europe-backed MKO group, and pointed to the US and Israeli regimes assassination of Lt. Gen. Qasem Soleimani and Dr. Mohsen Fakhri-zadeh as only a part of the costs the Iranian nations paid in fighting against terrorism.

He referred to the outbreak of the coronavirus. He noted: “Today, the perpetrators and supporters of illegal and criminal sanctions against the Iranian people, who have blocked access to medical equipment even amid the coronavirus outbreak, pretend that they are concern about the human rights situation.”

Emphasizing Iran’s will to play an effective role in human rights mechanisms, called on the UN to facilitate practicing justice, investigating crimes, and fighting against criminals’ impunity away from any political bias.

## Iranian, Swedish Diplomats Discuss Yemen Crisis

TEHRAN (IFP) - Ali-Asghar Khaji, a senior advisor to the Iranian foreign minister, had a phone conversation with Sweden’s special envoy for Yemen Peter Semneby as part of Iran’s international consultations to settle the Yemen crisis.

During the Wednesday conversation, the two sides exchanged views on the new developments pertaining to Yemen, especially the issue of supporting the UN peace plan.

The Swedish representative expressed content with Iran’s constructive role in helping resolve the Yemen crisis politically, calling for such efforts to continue.

He also elaborated on Stockholm’s attempts in line with the peace process in Yemen and an upcoming meeting on offering assistance to Yemen, which is to be jointly hosted by Sweden and Switzerland on March 1, 2021.

Khaji, in turn, evaluated as positive the achievements of a trip to Tehran by UN Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths.

He expressed hope a change of approach by the Saudi-led coalition and its Western supporters vis-à-vis Yemeni people will lead to lasting peace in that country.

He also hoped the establishment of a ceasefire in Yemen and the lifting of a blockade on the country will improve people’s living conditions.

## UN Rapporteur Has No Authority to Comment About Ukrainian Plane Crash

TEHRAN (IFP) – Foreign ministry spokesman says UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial or arbitrary executions Agnes Callamard has no authority to comment about the Ukrainian plane crash in Iran.

In a statement on Wednesday, Saeed Khatibzadeh explained that the incident is outside the UN official’s remit based on her mission objectives stipulated in a UN Human Rights Council resolution.

“In international law, there are specific as well as precise legal and technical frameworks to look into this issue, and the rapporteur’s sphere of activity has nothing to do with these regulations and frameworks; rather, the rapporteur’s unwarranted involvement might have an unconstructive impact on the legal procedures as well,” Khatibzadeh said.

“She has put forward numerous points indicating the information which she had received and was the base of her report was distorted, tainted with numerous mistakes, biased and irrelevant,” he noted.

“Accordingly, some charges have been levelled against the Islamic Republic of Iran without any valid evidence and documents,” he added.

“It specifically seems that she has got involved in this issue hastily, and the result of this hasty action was an unprofessional, invalid and undocumented text which has resulted in questions and ambiguities about the motive behind this move,” Khatibzadeh explained.

He underlined that even if Callamard considered reviewing the case within her purview, she could have waited until a technical report on the incident as well as an indictment for the accused were issued.

“A technical report on the incident was drawn up in accordance with international standards on December 29, 2020 and sent to relevant countries,” Khatibzadeh said.

“So far, three countries have sent to the relevant authority their technical viewpoints about this report. Most of those views confirmed the technical report,” the spokesman explained.

“Moreover, based on comments made by the relevant official, the final report will be made public by the end of the current Persian Year (ending March 20, 2021),” Khatibzadeh said.

“The report, which contains hundreds of pages, precisely, professionally and comprehensively deals with factors contributing to the accident and other relevant issues,” he explained.

Khatibzadeh said an indictment for those accused in the case is about to be issued by Iranian judicial authorities.

He said the court will soon begin looking into charges against the accused once the case is completed at the military prosecutor’s office.

## Iran, Belarus Confer On Economic Contacts



TEHRAN (MNA) – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Iran met with the head of Iranian Parliament’s working group on cooperation with the National Assembly of Belarus, where they discussed economic contacts.

According to the Belarusian Embassy in Tehran, Yuri Lazarchik and Aboulfazel Amui discussed the bilateral legal framework and ways to improve it, trade and economic cooperation, and preparations for the 15th session of the Belarus-Iran economic cooperation commission in Minsk.

Top on the agenda was also interregional cooperation as well as the promotion of twinning relations between regions and cities of Belarus and Iran, BelTA reported.



**SARV Oil & Gas**  
Industries Development Co.

**Amir Hooman Karimi Vasegh, CEO of Sarv Oil and Gas Company**

# The trust of Petrochemical and Refining Customers is The Main capital of Sarv oil and Gas



On the sidelines of the second specialized event to support domestic manufacturing in the petrochemical industry, a contract for the design and manufacture of consumer catalysts for ammonia units was signed between Sarv Oil and Gas Company and Hengam Petrochemical Company. In the production chain of urea and ammonia products, eight catalysts are used, of which seven catalysts have been localized by Sarv Oil and Gas Company and have brought high currency savings for the country. Abdolreza Javanmardi, CEO of Petrochemical Company, said in an exclusive interview with **IRAN NEWS** regarding the contract for the purchase of catalysts from Sarv Oil and Gas Company: «This contract worth one million Euros was concluded with Sarv Company.» Cypress oil and gas catalysts have very good references and the catalysts produced in this complex are used in the petrochemical and refining industry and have a very good performance. He continued: «Hengam Petrochemical, with its research, made sure that the quality of the catalysts produced by this company is not much different from its foreign samples, and even its price is much more appropriate than foreign brands.»

Amir Hooman Karimi Vasegh, CEO of Sarv Oil and Gas Company, while expressing satisfaction with the conclusion of the contract for the purchase of catalyst by Hengam Petrochemical Company, said: Hengam Petrochemical and its management have made a big and courageous decision by purchasing ammonia group catalyst from Sarv Company. Each petrochemical unit is subordinated to the plant designer at the time of commissioning, whose priority is to purchase foreign catalysts. But today, due to the conditions of sanctions, petrochemical units are trusting domestic companies and supporting localization. Karimi pointed out: Sarv Oil and Gas, with the support and trust of its customers in the country in the petrochemical, refining and steel industries, has a very good position in the production of catalysts and in this regard, has a significant resume. Therefore, Hengam Petrochemical Complex has made this decision with the trust that other customers had in our product and according to the contract, all catalysts of Hengam Ammonia and Urea Petrochemical Unit are to be supplied by Sarv Oil and Gas Company. This shows that in order to achieve sustainable development and guarantee the commitments of Sarv Company, it has made high arrangements in supplying raw materials and also increasing the production capacity of catalysts, so that a new factory with an annual production capacity of more than 5,000 tons of catalysts used in Petrochemical, refining and steel industries are under construction.

## **Apadana Petrochemical replaces Cervo catalysts with European licenses / Production of the full cycle of Apadana catalysts by Cedar Oil and Gas**

Apadana Persian Gulf Petrochemical Company has signed a memorandum of understanding with Sarv Oil and Gas Company to purchase methanol catalysts in order to trust domestic manufacturing in the petrochemical industry. Persian Gulf Apadana Petrochemical, which is one of the subsidiaries of the Persian Gulf Petrochemical Company, has been operating in Assaluyeh, Bushehr province, since 1993, with the aim of producing 1,650,000 tons of methanol per year. Mehrdad Masoudi, Project Manager of Apadana Petrochemical Company in the Persian Gulf, regarding Pidak Company's support for localization in the petrochemical industry, said: Pidak Company is a contractor for designing, engineering and purchasing equipment for petrochemical and refining plants in the country. He has stated about domestic and domestic companies and has supported many domestic companies in this regard. Regarding the memorandum signed with Sarv Oil and Gas Company, Apadana Petrochemical Methanol Project Manager said: «This contract is also in line with the mission of supporting domestic manufacturing and it can be said that the conditions of sanctions have also been effective in supporting domestic industry.» He added: «Catalyst is one of the equipments that senior managers of companies prefer to use foreign brands because it is very decisive and effective in the quality of petrochemical products.» For this reason, petrochemical executives did not take the risk of outsourcing the catalyst, which is a high-tech and strategic industry, to domestic companies. He pointed out that petrochemical units prefer to procure catalytic converters from companies that have a high reference, he emphasized: Apadana Petrochemical, with its research concluded that Sarv Oil and Gas Company with its studies, has been able to catalysts with It has produced high quality references, which are evidenced by the satisfaction of other customers of this company. Masoudi stated: Apadana Petrochemical also signed a memorandum of understanding with Sarv Oil and Gas Company in this regard and in support of domestic production, so that it can provide various catalysts for the methanol plant of this petrochemical project. Agreed catalysts include 6 hydrogenation catalysts, preforming catalysts, primary reforming catalysts, autothermal reforming catalysts, desulfurization and strategic methanol synthesis catalysts. We hope that this memorandum will be a source of good for Apadana Petrochemical and the entire petrochemical industry in the country.

## **The quality and completion of catalyst engineering services is the commitment of Sarv Oil and Gas Company to industrial complexes!**

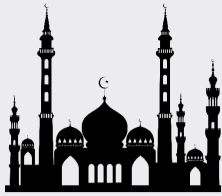
Amir Hooman Karimi Vasegh, CEO of Sarv Oil and Gas Company, regarding the memorandum signed with Apadana Petrochemical Company to buy a catalyst from this company, told Eqtesadonline: «The memorandum with Apadana Petrochemical Company is like the previous contracts of this company.» Methanol petrochemicals in the production chain need 7 catalysts, of which cedar oil and gas have produced the entire production chain, but urea and ammonia petrochemicals need 9 catalysts, of which Cypress has produced 8 catalysts. He stated: Memorandum of Understanding with Apadana Petrochemical Company of the Persian Gulf has been used with the credibility and trust of all catalysts in Shiraz Petrochemical, Masjed Soleiman Petrochemical, Arian Methanol Petrochemical, Tabarbaz Refinery, Isfahan Refinery, etc. and its performance is accepted. Taken, signed. Karimi stressed: «One of the great things that Apadana Petrochemical and Hengam Petrochemical companies have done is to buy the entire catalyst production cycle from cypress oil and gas.» The other difference between Hengam and Apadana petrochemicals is that they were licensed by the two Europeans and, despite using the best European brands, they trusted the catalysts produced in Sarv oil and gas, and this It is a great measure by the management of these companies and we hope that it will be a source of good for the country and the petrochemical industry, and that Zayn will have a stronger trust in the Iranian manufacturer and catalyst of Iranian instruments. By completing the production of process catalysts, Sarv Oil and Gas has been placed next to a few powerful European companies such as Johnson Matthey, Clarinet and Tapsoi, which has created a high capacity to participate in international markets and export Iranian technology.



## **SARV Oil and Gas Company** the pioneer in catalyst production for Iranian industries

Catalyst is one of the most widely used chemicals in the industry. There are currently used about 100 types of catalysts in the petrochemicals, refineries and steel producing complexes. Regarding to the vast oil and gas resources, Iran started to develop the related industries and play an important role in methanol, ammonia and steel market in the world. Therefore, a significant amount of catalyst is consumed by Iranian industries every year. According to the IHS report, Iran produces 8 million tons of methanol in Zagros, Fanavaran, Kharg, Shiraz, Marjan, middle East KimiaPars Petrochemical companies. This production capacity will reach to 25 million tons in 5 years when Sabalan, Bushehr, Kaveh, Dena, Siraf, Apadana, Aryan dipolymer, Arman, ArgShimiParsa petrochemical companies, start to operate. Iran will have the highest growth rate in methanol production in the world within the next five years. Also the ammonia and urea production capacity will increase from 4.5 million tons to 8 million tons annually in this period of time. Besides, Iran produces 30 million tons sponge iron by direct reduction of iron (DRI) process in more than twenty huge companies which makes Iran to be a one tenth steel producer in the world. So, the catalyst demand outlook in Iran is very attractive. Until a decade ago, all catalysts demand in Iran were supplied by reputable European companies such as BASF, UOP, Clariant, Johnson Matthey, Topsoe and Axens, but everything changed when Sarv Oil and Gas Company entered into the field of catalyst production. After our company's entry into this field, the catalyst industry began to take shape in Iran and since 2004 more than 40 types of high-consumption catalysts have been produced by Iranian knowledge-based companies according to the public relations department of Sarv Oil and Gas Company.

Sarv Oil and Gas Company is expert in the field of synthesis gas catalyst which is already used in ammonia and methanol plant in petrochemical industry, Hydrogen production plant in refineries and DRI plant in steel producing complexes. The whole catalyst in ammonia and methanol production loop, including 12 different type of catalyst, are now producing in SARV and the Iranian well-known companies trust completely to these products. Beside these activities SARV start to produce some high-tech catalyst for olefin production complex in Iran. SARV experts are trying to produce the well quality catalyst for the mentioned industrial plant and always try to move forward to be a pioneer in the catalyst market. The catalysts manufactured by Sarv, have been utilized in 9 petrochemical industries, six refineries and 11 steel producing plant in Iran. Our catalyst performance was good enough to be acknowledged and certified by Iranian well known company such as Pardis PC, Razi PC, Shiraz PC, Shiraz ORC, Mobarakeh and Khouzestan steel complexes. It is worth to mentioned that SARV did some efforts the develop some new types of catalyst for each plant to maximize the activity and productivity and to minimize the pressure drop and energy consumption. Also, SARV develop some sales and after sales and engineering services that attract customers and help SARV to become pioneer in the field of catalyst in Iran market. In the 2021 some Iranian newly constructed plant, such as Masjed Soleiman PC, diPolymer arian and a hydrogen plant in Esfahan oil refining, will start to operate totally with the SARV catalysts. Also we have started to develop our market to overseas since 2 years ago and we will announce our successful experience in 2021.



## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:17
■ Evening (Maghreb)	18:15
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:11
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:35

17. Know ye (all) that Allah giveth life to the earth after its death! already have We shown the Signs plainly to you, that ye may learn wisdom.  
18. For those who give in Charity, men and women, and loan to Allah a Beautiful Loan, it shall be increased manifold (to their credit), and they shall have (besides) a liberal reward.  
Surah 57, Iron (17-18)

## Tehran, Stockholm to Focus on Boosting Ties on Technical, Engineering Services

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN – Trade and investment capacities of Sweden were reviewed in a virtual meeting with presence of Deputy Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) for International Affairs Mohammad-Reza Karbasi and Head of Iran Sweden Chamber of Commerce Mr. Abdolreza Rezaie as well as representatives of chambers and economic activists and it was decided Iran and Sweden to focus on boosting ties in the field of technical and engineering services.**

Addressing the meeting, Karbasi said that Iran and Sweden can have high level cooperation with each other in the field of engineering and technical services, adding that Sweden is a country which is in high position in the world in terms of progress in types of services and equipment, and by the way Iran has good experience and considerable capability in the field of technical and engineering services.

He went on to say that Sweden is one of the most developed countries in the world and it has always had sensitive and close economic relation with Iran, adding that in the past years, Swedish companies have opened offices in Iran although in the past two years and after reimposition of sanctions, those companies decided to leave Iran market but some of them have remained committed and continued their cooperation with fits and starts.

Karbasi added that the foreign trade volume of Sweden was over \$320b in 2019 while Sweden's trade volume with Iran has declined from \$500m in 2019 to \$70m in 2019. He expressed hope that the country would see increase in economic cooperation



with Sweden with the increase in economic cooperation and existing capacity, and with the efforts of the joint chamber of commerce as well as change in Sweden's approach regarding cooperation.

He hailed the efforts of Iran Sweden Chamber of Commerce for its efforts which topped it among the joint chambers in the country.

Then Rezaie briefed the participants of the economic properties of Sweden and the country's mentality regarding the economic activities. He said that despite having huge natural resources, Sweden has never resorted to sell raw material and avoided it, adding that production of goods is several times more than its imports and people try to use home-made products especially in the field of agro products.

He also said trade with EU accounts for 70 percent of Sweden's total foreign trade, and Norway, Germany, the U.S. and Finland are the major trade partners of Sweden and the Netherlands, France and UK are also among the other trade partners of this country, noting that among the Asian countries, China tops the list of Sweden's trade partners.

Rezaie went on to say that the most of Iran's exports to Sweden are types of raw materials of course dried-fruits and foodstuff are also among Iran's exports. He noted that some of Iranian goods are exported to Sweden via London and Iranian pistachio and carpet are provided via Hamburg market. He reiterated that Iran's imports from Sweden are capital commodities like packing, telecommunications, mining equipment as well as technical knowhow.

## South Korea to Pay \$1b of Its Arrears to Iran

**TEHRAN (IRNA) - Governor of the Central Bank of Iran Abdolnasser Hemmati said on Wednesday that South Korea is to start paying \$1 billion of its arrears to Iran from the total amount of \$7b.**

Speaking to reporters on Wednesday, Hemmati elaborated on the agreement between Iran and South Korea on transfer of Iran's assets, saying Korea has called for negotiations.

If South Korea does not pay Iran's debt, Iran will initiate proceedings with international justice, he said.

He hailed the current atmosphere, saying extensive talks have been held with Oman, Japan, Iraq and South Korea.

Earlier, in an interview with Bloomberg held in January, Hemmati said South Korean officials promise to release Iranian assets but take no practical steps to pay arrears to Iran because of US sanctions.

## ICCIMA to Host Forum On Trade With Syria

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN – In collaboration between Iran-Syria Joint Chamber of Commerce and with presence of the Head of Iran Trade Promotion Organization, the forum on opportunities and ways for trade with Syria will be held at Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mine and Agriculture (ICCIMA) on Monday, February 29.**

This forum will be held virtually and some topics like security in Syria, trade opportunities and the needs of Syria as well as way of presence in this country's market will be discussed by the participants.

Transfer of money, transportation and credit line between Iran and Syria are of the other topics are to be discussed in the forum.

Head of the Iran-Syria Joint Chamber of Commerce, head of Syrian Union of Chambers of Industry and head of Federation of Syrian Chambers of Commerce are also to participate in this virtual forum.

## 1st LPG Jetty of Tombak Export Port Operational

**TEHRAN (Shana) – The CEO of Pars Oil and Gas Company said the first jetty for loading and exporting liquefied petroleum gas from the service and export port of Tombak in South Pars was put into operation.**

According to Pars Oil and Gas Company, Mohammad Meshkinfam underlined the favorable conditions for the development and completion of this terminal in the current calendar year, which began on March 21 in accordance with the plans, saying: "Last week, with the mooring of the first vessel in Tombak Port, 6,700 tons of cold LPG was successfully loaded for export."

He said all necessary measures have been taken to export liquefied petroleum gas from the service and export port of Tombak and there are no obstacles in this regard, adding: "According to the plan, a 44,000-ton vessel will arrive next week to load and export liquefied petroleum gas from Pars 2 jetty."

According to the CEO of Pars Oil and Gas Company, in order to complete the remaining sections, the executive operation is being carried out simultaneously with the operation of the first liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) jetty of the terminal.



## Spanish Companies Keen to Invest in Iran



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN – Economic and Commercial Counselor of Embassy of Spain says there are a large number of investment opportunities in Iran and Spanish companies are interested in investing in Iran.**

Mr. Emilio Carmona Pertinez in a meeting with the head of technology and information commission of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mine and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Mr. Mohammad Reza Talaei said that Spanish companies are eager to invest in Iran because of huge number of investment opportunities in the country.

He also welcomed holding the first virtual exhibition in Iran, saying that this exhibition will be a valuable opportunity for boosting awareness and knowledge of the foreign economic activists about Iranian products and economy.

Meanwhile Mr. Talaei, for his part, said that the meeting was aimed at introducing the first virtual exhibition in Iran and invitation of Spanish companies to attend the exhibition for the next editions of the exhibition and explained the properties of the virtual exhibition.

He underscored the impacts and damages of the coronavirus pandemic on holding domestic and international exhibitions and one of the advantages of holding virtual exhibition is to fill the vacuum of foreign companies which are unable physically attend the exhibition due to the travel restrictions.

The first virtual exhibition of Iran began on Tuesday, February 23 and will wrap up on March 15.

## Tehran, Oslo Stress Cooperation on Using Clean Energy

**TEHRAN (IRNA) – Tehran mayor Pirouz Hanachi and ambassador of Norway to Iran Sigvald Hauge welcomed mutual cooperation to use clean energy.**

Hanachi said that Tehran favors mutual cooperation with Oslo in the field of clean energy through construction of solar cells and using electric vehicles.

The two sides stressed deep-rooted good cooperation between Iran and Norway in various fields.



Pointing to Tehran's role as one of the metropolises that can lead the fight against pollution and environmental challenges, Hauge said that Norway tends to work with Tehran municipality on air and soil pollution as environmental challenges.

Referring to Norway's good experiences in electrifying the urban transport fleet and manufacturing solar panels,

he went on to say that Oslo is eager to transfer these experiences to Tehran.

## Tehran, Caracas to Launch Tours Between Two Countries

**TEHRAN (IRNA) - Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Ali Asghar Mounesan said that Iran and Venezuela would launch tours between the two countries to improve ties.**

In a meeting to sign memorandum of understating on tourism cooperation with Venezuelan Tourism Minister Ali Padron, Mounesan said that they would try to improve tourism among the two countries in line with strategic plans.

Iranian Minister said that the agreement was reached with the former Venezuelan Tourism Minister and is not implemented.

Pointing to the historical attractions in Iran and natural sites in Venezuela, Mounesan said he hoped the two countries would be a good destination for their tourists.

He also said that expansion of tourism relations between Iran and Venezuela would serve to improve trading ties between the two countries, as a direct flight has been launched between the two capitals.

Venezuelan Tourism Minister, for his part, said that the country has the second and tenth biggest national parks in the world and the Angel Fall is the highest waterfall in the world.

Padron also pointed to other natural attractions in Venezuela and added that his country aims to work in unison with Iran to recover tourism industry hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

The official praised Iran's "brotherly assistance" to Venezuela to ease the pressure of sanctions from which Iran is also suffering.



## KSC Sales on IMF Doubled

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN – Caretaker of Sales and Marketing Department of Khorasan Steel Complex Company (KSC) says with new adopted strategies on the Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), the offer and sales of the company in the market has been doubled comparing to last year.**

Hossein Bakhtiari said that this year the national steel industry faced a large number of ups and downs, adding that on one hand, several new regulations and directives were issued by the ministry of industry, mine and trade, and on the other hand, the coronavirus pandemic and national infrastructural problems made not only Khorasan Steel Company but also most of steel-making companies in the country face serious challenges.

He added that the company began the year with 23 days of holiday because of the coronavirus outbreak and as the result there was no production in the first month of the year and during the year infrastructural problems in Khorasan Razavi Province like electricity and gas forced the company to stop production for 51 days and this caused the production of the

company to decline comparing to the preceding year.

Bakhtiari noted that because of decline in production, the sales of the company also declined comparing to the preceding year but due to adopting new policies by the management and board of directors the amount of sales of the company on the IME was doubled, admitting that almost most of the company's sales this year happened on IMF and there was almost no sales out of the IME.

On the strategies of the company for marketing and sales both domestically or internationally, he said the strategy of the company is to know the markets in the region for expanding its export markets and with constant connection with tradesmen and activists of the region as well as those involved in the exports, the company has tried to boost effectively its exports.

Bakhtiari added that due to shorter distance, the Central Asian market is the main exporting target of the company and it seeks to sell its products in this market.



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## India, Pakistan Militaries Agree To Stop Cross-Border Firing

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - The militaries of India and Pakistan said in a rare joint statement on Thursday that they had agreed to observe a ceasefire along the disputed border in Kashmir, having exchanged fire hundreds of times in recent months.

The nuclear-armed neighbors signed a ceasefire agreement along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region in 2003, but the truce has frayed in recent years, and there have been mounting casualties among villagers living close to the de facto border. "Both sides agreed for strict observance of all agreements, understandings and cease firing along the Line of Control and all other sectors with effect from midnight 24/25 Feb 2021," the joint statement said.



## Biden Overturns Ban on Many Green Card Applicants

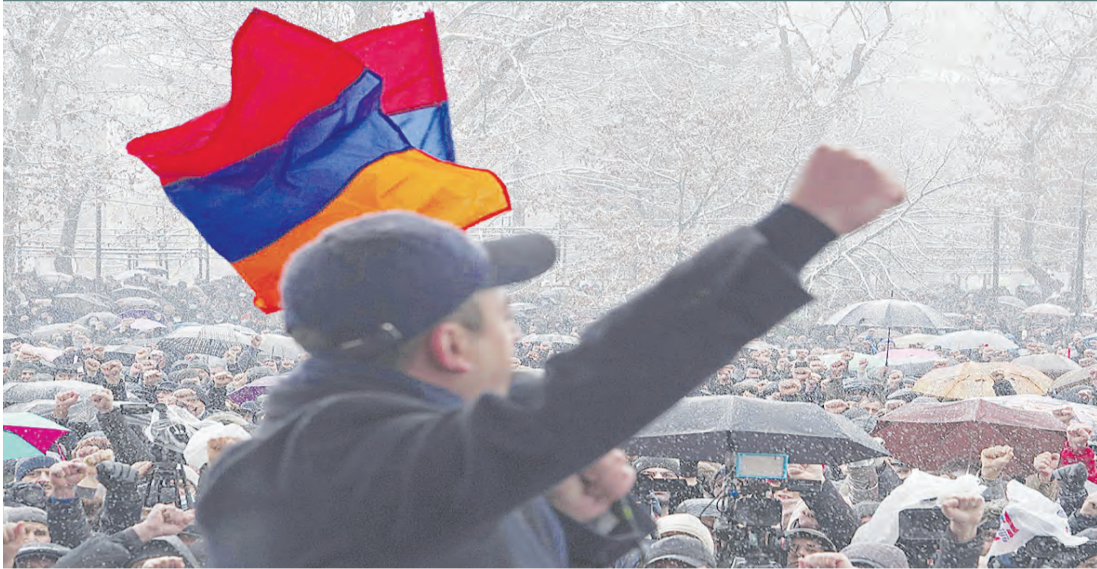
WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - U.S. President Joe Biden has revoked a proclamation issued under the Trump administration that blocked many green card applicants from entering the United States.

The order by former President Donald Trump, known as Presidential Proclamation 100014, cited a need to protect U.S. jobs amid high unemployment rates caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

In a statement, the White House announced that Biden overturned the measure through an executive order, saying Trump's ban separated families and "does not advance the interests of the United States".



## Thousands Rally in Armenia After PM Warns of Coup Attempt



YEREVAN (Reuters) - Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan warned of an attempted military coup against him on Thursday, and thousands took to the streets of the capital to support him after the army demanded he and his government resign.

Russia, an ally of Armenia which has a military base in Armenia, said it was alarmed by events in the former Soviet republic and called for the situation to be resolved peacefully and within the constitution.

Pashinyan, 45, has faced calls to quit since November after what critics said was his disastrous handling of a six-week conflict between Azerbaijan and ethnic Armenian forces over the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave and surrounding areas.

Ethnic Armenian forces ceded swathes of territory to Azerbaijan in the fighting and Russia, which worries about instability in the former Soviet Union, has deployed peacekeepers to the enclave, which is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but populated by ethnic Armenians. Pashinyan, a former journalist who swept to power in a peaceful revolution in May 2018, has rejected calls to step down despite opposition protests. He says he takes responsibility for what happened but now needs to ensure his country's security.

On Thursday, the army added its voice to those calling for him to resign.

"The ineffective management of the current authorities and the serious mistakes in foreign policy have put the country on the brink of collapse," the army said in a statement.

It denounced Pashinyan's sacking of the first deputy head of the army's general staff, a move it described as irresponsible, groundless and detrimental to the state.

Two former presidents - Robert Kocharyan and Serzh Sargsyan - released statements calling on Armenians to throw their support behind the military.

It was unclear whether the army was willing to use force to back its statement, in which it called for Pashinyan to resign.

Pashinyan responded by calling on his followers to rally in the centre of the capital, Yerevan, to support him and took to Facebook to address the nation in a livestream.

"The most important problem now is to keep the power in the hands of the people, because I consider what is happening to be a military coup," Pashinyan said.

He then appeared with his wife, son and daughter outside the main government building where several thousand of his supporters had gathered. He said it was vital to avoid confrontation despite the mounting tension.

"The danger of the coup is manageable," he said. "We don't have enemies inside Armenia. We have only brothers and sisters."

Several thousand opposition supporters staged a rival protest on a different square in the capital. Crowds there could be seen cheering and clapping as a fighter jet flew overhead in footage circulated by Russia's RIA news agency.

In Pashinyan's earlier livestream, he said he had dismissed the head of the general staff of the armed forces, a move that still needs to be signed off by the president.

Pashinyan said a replacement would be announced later and that the crisis would be overcome constitutionally.

## Two Dead in Niger Election Unrest, Opposition Figure Sought

NIAMY (Dispatches) - Two people in Niger have died in post-election violence and hundreds have been arrested, the government said Thursday, accusing a prominent opposition figure of stoking the unrest.

"The toll is two dead," Interior Minister Alkache Alhada said, reporting on violence that began on Tuesday after the results of a presidential runoff were announced.

Alhada told the press that 468 arrests had been made, "including certain politicians" whom he did not identify. He accused a well-known opposition figure, Hama Amadou, of being "the main person responsible" for the unrest.

"(He) is being sought and as usual he is on the run, but we will find him," Alhada said.

Violence erupted after the electoral commission declared former interior minister Mohamed Bazoum the winner of Sunday's runoff vote with 55.75 percent, while opposition candidate Mahamane Ousmane garnered 44.25 percent.

Ousmane angrily disputed the result as fraudulent and claimed he narrowly won with 50.3 percent of the vote.

The elections have been trumpeted as a democratic watershed for the Sahel state -- the world's poorest nation according to the UN's benchmark of human development, and a country wrestling with two jihadist insurgencies.

President Mahamadou Issoufou is voluntarily stepping down after two five-year terms, paving the way for the first elected transition since independence from France in 1960.

Police fired teargas in clashes with demonstrators in the capital Niamey on Tuesday and Wednesday, while in Dosso, 100 kilometres (60 miles) south of the city, the offices of a pro-government party were damaged by fire.

One of the two fatalities died of an epileptic fit during a protest, Alhada said. The other, who was shot dead, was the bodyguard of politician Seini Oumarou, an unsuccessful candidate in the first round of voting on December 27 who had urged supporters to vote for Bazoum in the runoff, he said.

There was also "destruction of infrastructure, of public and private property," Alhada said. Unknown assailants also attacked the home of a reporter in Niamey for Radio France Internationale (RFI), which is widely followed in Niger.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki told reporters on Wednesday the Biden administration remains committed to releasing the DNI report. She did not give a specific timeframe for its release, saying only it would be "soon".

Biden told reporters he has read the report and expected to speak by phone soon with Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud. The US president he did not say when the call would take place, the White House press pool reported.

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## On the Occasion of Auspicious Birth Anniversary of Hazrat Ali (AS)

# Ehsan Alavi Maneuver



According to Ms. Fatemeh Choopani, the official of poverty eradication headquarters of Abshar Atefeha International Charity NGO, concurrent with the auspicious birth anniversary of Amir al-Momineen Ali ibn Abitalib (AS) and in an empathetic action during the Ehsan Alavi Maneuver, some 5,000 baskets of goods and sanitary packs were sent to the underprivileged and quake-hit provinces. In the maneuver which was conducted on Wednesday February 24 at Hosseynieh Seyed al-Shohada (AS) of District 18, the donated items like rice, oil, tomato paste, macaroni, soya, etc. were sent to the deprived areas to the underprivileged provinces of the country like Hormuzgan, Sistan and Baluchistan, Kerman as well as the quake-hit provinces of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad. Abshar Atefeha International Charity NGO, which has started its activities since 2001, in almost 20 years of its life has been active in charity affairs and been serving the orphans and ill-parented people, providing dowry, supporting the prisoners and providing medical services and it has more than 700 branches nationwide and 150 representatives in Tehran Province which has sent on average annually over 10,000 assistance for providing dowry to the deprived areas in order that it can open another door for the pious donations for our needy fellow-citizens.



## Supporters of Myanmar Military Coup Rampage in Yangon

YANGON (Dispatches)

-Supporters of Myanmar's military, some armed with knives and clubs, others firing catapults and throwing stones, attacked opponents of the Feb. 1 coup on Thursday, as protests against the new junta continued in the country's largest city.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the army seized power and detained civilian government leader Aung San Suu Kyi and much of her party leadership after the military complained of fraud in a November election.

Protests and strikes have taken place daily for about three weeks, and students had planned to come out again in the commercial hub Yangon on Thursday.

But before many coup opponents congregated, about 1,000 supporters of the military turned up for a rally in the city centre.

Some threatened news photographers, media workers and witnesses said, and scuffles soon escalated into more serious violence in several parts of the city.

Several people were set upon and beaten by groups of men, some armed with knives, others firing catapults and hurling stones, witnesses said. At least two people were stabbed, video footage showed.

In one incident, several men, one wielding a large knife, attacked a man outside a city-centre hotel. Emergency workers helped the bloodied man after his attackers moved off but his condition was not known.

"Today's events show who the terrorists are. They're afraid of the people's action for democracy," activist Thin Zar Shun Lei Yi told Reuters.

"We'll continue our peaceful protests against dictatorship."

As dusk fell, dozens of riot police fired tear gas into a neighborhood in the city to disperse a crowd that had gathered at an administrative office to protest the appointment of a local official by the junta, according to a witness and live-streamed video.

The violence will compound worries about a country largely paralysed by the protests and a civil disobedience campaign of strikes against the military.

Earlier, police blocked the gates of Yangon's main university campus, stopping hundreds of students inside from coming out to demonstrate.

Facebook said that due to the risks evident from the "deadly violence" seen since the coup it had banned the Myanmar military from using its Facebook and Instagram platforms. The spokesman for the ruling military council did not respond to a telephone call seeking comment.



## UAE Resumes Issuing Travel Visa for Iranians

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's Chargé d'Affaires in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Mohammad Hosseini said in a Twitter message on Thursday that Abu Dhabi has started to issue travel visas for the Iranian nationals, which had been stopped due to the coronavirus pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic had made the UAE to decide not to issue travel visas for the Iranian nationals, but with efforts made by the Iranian embassy and consul in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the problem was solved.



## Gov't Opens Key Motorway to Ease Traffic in Five Provinces

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Hassan Rouhani has opened a key motorway that encircles the capital Tehran to ease traffic moving from west to the south and from east to the west of the country.

Rouhani attended a virtual inauguration ceremony on Thursday to open the Ghadir Highway, a 158-kilometer ring road that has cost some 70 trillion rials (\$280 million) and five years to build.

The highway links the city of Abyek in the northern province of Qazvin to Chaharmahal located to the southeast of the capital Tehran.

Authorities say the road will ease traffic passing through five Iranian provinces, especially in the province of Alborz where roads accommodate a bulk of traffic entering the capital Tehran.

It also reduces the length of travel from the west to the south of Iran by an average of 100 minutes while it significantly slashes fuel consumption and helps boost air quality in major cities like Tehran.

The six-lane highway has been jointly funded and executed by the government and the Khatam headquarters, a construction company affiliated with the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC).

Khatam contracted 34 companies and 2,000 civil engineers to finish the road. The IRGC firm will get back its 70-percent share of investment in the project from toll fees in a period of 20 years.

Reports said thousands of workers have been recruited during the various construction phases of the motorway while it will create 250 permanent jobs.



Rouhani hailed the project as a sign of the failure of the U.S. sanctions on Iran. He said his administration would continue to expand the road network in the country until his second term expires next summer.

He said that the construction of the Ghadir Freeway was a sign of the defeat of the enemy's maximum pressure.

At the inauguration of 'Ghadir Freeway', Rouhani stated: "The implementation of this project shows that despite the economic war, sanctions, and maximum pressures, these pressures, as the enemy says, have failed."

He also said that Iran's East-West and West-South transit was provided by the Ghadir Freeway and noted that the freeway was part of the Silk Road and was very important.

## Salehi, German Ambassador Discuss Issues of Mutual Interest

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Head of Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Ali-Akbar Salehi and German Ambassador to Tehran Hans-Udo Muzel reviewed various issues concerning the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and Tehran-Berlin ties.

The meeting was held on Tuesday but IRNA reported on Wednesday.

The meeting was held on a day Iran stopped voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol.

The halt happened in line with implementation of the Majlis (Parliament) Law passed last December. The law passed, as the lawmakers said, set deadline to lift the US sanctions.

## Leadership, Islam, People, Elements of Pride for Islamic Iran

TEHRAN (MNA) - Chief Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said that Leadership, Islam and people are the elements of pride and dignity for the Islamic Iran.

Speaking in the unveiling ceremony of 5,531 development projects in the field of resistance economy in the city of Mashhad and disadvantaged areas of Khorasan Razavi province on Wed., Major General Hossein Salami stated that by bonding these three great elements, Islamic Republic of Iran has been turned into a dominant power in the international arena.

Islamic Republic of Iran has gained salient achievements and is moving towards development and progress, he said, adding, "For this purpose, enemies of the country are trying to stop Iran from progress and development."

He went on to say that enemies of the country are armed to teeth and have waged all-out political, military, security, cultural, economic, psychological and media war against the country.

Elsewhere in his remarks, IRGC chief commander pointed to the oppressive and cruel sanctions imposed against the Islamic Republic of Iran and added, "Enemies imagined that if they impose tough sanctions against Iran, they can defeat the country and Islamic Revolution, but their malicious objectives were thwarted by the wise leadership of the Islamic Revolution and resistance of noble nation of the country."

Benefited from committed manpower and forces, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is safeguarding ideals and causes of the Islamic Revolution with its utmost power and will thwart malicious objectives orchestrated by enemies against the country.

## No Talks Needed...

FROM PAGE 1

Takht-Ravanchi said Washington must remove the sanctions it re-imposed on Iran after unilaterally withdrawing from the JCPOA in May 2018, adding, "If sanctions are lifted within the next three months, Iran will act in line with its commitments."

Elsewhere in the interview, the senior Iranian diplomat explained that the counter-measures that Iran began to take a year after Washington's exit do not amount to an escalation of tensions.

The comments come days after Iran stopped the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Safeguards Agreement — which allows snap inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of nuclear facilities — under a law passed by the Iranian Parliament requiring the administration to tighten its retaliatory measures.

The law had set February 21 as the deadline for the removal of US sanctions against Iran before Tehran goes ahead with the halt in the IAEA's additional inspections two days later.

On the day of the deadline, however, Tehran and the IAEA reached "a temporary bilateral technical understanding," as part of which the UN nuclear watchdog would continue its "necessary verification and monitoring activities for a period of up to three months."

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran said the Islamic Republic had agreed to keep recording information on its inspection equipment for three months without granting the IAEA access.

"If the sanctions are completely lifted within three months, Iran will give this information to the agency. If not, the information will be deleted forever," it added.

Meanwhile, the IAEA chief on Wednesday said the international community will face a "completely new situation" over Iran's nuclear program if Tehran and world powers, including the United States, fail to reach an agreement to end the row.

Grossi spoke in an exclusive interview with NHK, the first one since Iran announced that it had stopped the voluntary implementation of the NPT.

The suspension of the Additional Protocol was "a very important loss" for the international community, the UN nuclear agency's chief added.

Meanwhile on Tuesday, Takht-Ravanchi said unilateral economic sanctions are one of the main obstacles to effectively counter the negative effects of climate change and must be lifted.

Majid Takht-Ravanchi made the remarks during a meeting of the UN Security Council that discussed the effects of climate change on global peace and security.

Takht-Ravanchi described dealing with the negative dimensions of climate change as a "collective" responsibility and said all governments must fully implement their obligations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris climate accord.

"Sanctions severely undermine the ability of a number of developing countries, such as Iran, to meet the challenges of climate change," the top Iranian diplomat said.

"Unilateral U.S. sanctions against Iran have not only prevented the country's access to the necessary financial resources and technologies, but have also adversely affected the effective use of national capabilities to meet its obligations, and therefore these illegal and inhumane sanctions should be lifted," he added.

## France...

FROM PAGE 1

The Iranian diplomat rejected France's claims of human rights violations, saying Paris was not in a position to comment on the issue.

"Canada and the U.S., besides France, Germany and Britain, are accomplices to the war crimes being committed against the innocent people of Yemen and Palestine in the hands of their clients," Sadati Nejad said.

He said given their horrific human rights records which include systematic racism against minorities, the U.S., Canada, France and Germany are not entitled to preach about ethics.

The Iranian diplomat also said the United States, as the frontrunner in the spread of terrorism and unilateral and bullying policies against a large part of the world's population, must be held accountable for the crimes caused by its economic terrorism against civilians.

France is the third largest exporter of arms to Riyadh, with Paris accounting for 4 percent of the kingdom's arms imports between 2015 and 2019, behind the US (73 percent) and UK (13 percent), according to the most recent figures released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Over the same period, France was the second largest exporter of arms to the UAE, according to the Middle East Eye.

## Cessation of...

FROM PAGE 1

Majority of lawmakers believe that the government has ignored the Strategic Action Plan law regarding the removal of sanctions which was approved in Majlis and forced the government to implement it as of February 23 as the law forbids the voluntary implementation of additional



protocol of the IAEA. Some 200 lawmakers on Wednesday February 22 in a letter to the Judiciary Chief lodged a complaint against President Hassan Rouhani, Head of AEOI Mr. Salehi and Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and called for annulment of the agreement between Iran and the IAEA.

Lawmakers interpreted this agreement as violation of the law that they had approved and reported the offenders of the agreement, namely President and other government officials, to the Judiciary. After the Sunday, February 21 agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Grossi on the IAEA's inspection of Iran's nuclear program and the day after it, Majlis convened a closed session and the outcome of the meeting was to report the above-mentioned people and offenders to the Judiciary but in reaction to these measures and Majlis's strong stand, on Tuesday evening and by issuing a statement regarding to Majlis opposition and dispute over the agreement with the IAEA, the government stipulated that this agreement was fully in compliance with the Supreme National Security Council of Iran (SNSC) approval and it is for reducing the cost of the law and is a strategic action. The government statement has called Majlis efforts for annulment of agreement with the IAEA an irrational decision and against the national security and also a "regrettable" one.

The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has emphasized that if Majlis insists on annulling the agreement with the IAEA, it should also accept all consequent responsibilities against the public and it should be accountable for all the consequent costs. The government's emphasis on the SNSC has important significance that it follows the following intentions of the two sides: one is Majlis which pursues the strong demand of the public and is eager to confront strongly with the offenders of the JCPOA either the U.S. or Europe which have not taken any effective measures in implementing the JCPOA, and the other side is the government which still looks optimistically to the Western diplomacy system and insists that it has provided appropriate and required time for the Western side to get past the smear campaign of the Zionists in order that U.S. President Joe Biden and European sides can swallow Iran's conditions and scale back from the Western norms and welcome their return to the JCPOA with offering a logical proposal.

That Majlis from the view of the law considers the issue and that the SNSC with paying some attention to the government's demand for using its diplomatic capacity can be considered both in the same line and can pave both the U.S. and Europe's path.

But this remark is very crystal clear and rightly that the Western side has not been committed to its JCPOA obligations and this lack of commitment has caused irreparable damages like waste of seven years of people's time with having a hopeful look at the JCPOA, and ultimately with empty hands and no result. By the way, this has happened while the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has closed down the whole nuclear industry with pouring cement under the JCPOA commitment and has fully disarmed Iran in this regards.

On Monday February 22, Chairman of Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Mojtaba Zonnouri during the open session of Majlis and during reviewing the joint statement of IAEA and AEOI criticized it from this view that he questioned, "Is it expected Majlis only to approve laws that are not to be implemented?"

Regardless of difference in the way and timing of implementation of Iran's gradual voluntary stopping implementation of the Additional Protocol, Spokesman for the United States Department of State Ned Price on Monday evening has said that if Iran returns to full compliance with the deal, the United States would be prepared to do the same. The spokesman in his press briefing has claimed that Iran's action is to move further away from its JCPOA commitments and expressed his concerns.

It is very clear that since January when Joe Biden has taken the helm of the foreign policy in the White House, this delusion has been shaped in his mind that the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran may be influenced by the media pressure and Western smear campaigns, and it is forced to sit at the negotiation table for adding more obligations to its former JCPOA commitments. And unfortunately they try to show this demand as a legitimate one and they think that the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution who has always held the helm of the national foreign policy in his hands would this time retreat his words and show flexibility in a condition that the Islamic Republic has put behind at least 65 to 75 percent of hardships of the effective pressures of sanctions and with little more resistance it will be able fully and innovatively to overcome sanctions.

In fact, the ball is on the other side's court. Iran today has passed the level of uranium enrichment to 20 percent purity and will continue its path for self-sufficiency for its needs in this field. Therefore, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be, for a short time, obliged to obey Majlis demand which is the Leader and the public's demand, too, in facing the stubbornness of the West. So Iran's path will have an articulated definition and the West will have no way but to backtrack from its irrationality and pertinacity.

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT



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## Holloway Breaks 60m Hurdles World Record

PARIS (Dispatches) - America's Grant Holloway broke Colin Jackson's long-standing 60m indoor hurdles world record at Wednesday's athletics meeting in Madrid.

The 110m hurdles world champion ran 7.29sec to shave one hundredth of a second off the record Briton Jackson set in 1994. Holloway had already run 7.32sec in the heats and blitzed the competition in customary style on the way to claiming the new record, with Britain's Andrew Pozzi finishing second in 7.51sec. The 23-year-old had been in great form all winter, running under 7.40sec 10 times.

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## Giro d'Italia 2021 Will Favor the Climbers

PARIS (Dispatches) - This year's Giro d'Italia, which begins in Turin on May 8, will take in some signature highlights including Monte Zoncolan in the Alps, the Dolomites and the 'Strade Bianche', organisers revealed.

The 104th edition, which will honor the 160th anniversary of the Italy's unification, ends in Milan on May 30. The course is light on time trials - two individual TTs on the first and last days at a total of 40 kilometres - but will please the elite climbers such as the Colombian Egan Bernal and Frenchmen Thibaut Pinot and Romain Bardet with the mountains featuring large in the second half of the event.

## Real Madrid, Man City In Sight of Champions League Quarters

LONDON (Dispatches) - Ferland Mendy put Real Madrid within touching distance of the Champions League quarter-finals with the late strike that sank 10-man Atalanta 1-0 in Bergamo.

The French left-back's curling effort came four minutes from time in a last 16, first leg clash in which the hosts had to play a man down for over 70 minutes, giving Zinedine Zidane's side the advantage heading into the second leg in Madrid on March 16.

"We didn't have a great game tonight, but the most important thing was the result, scoring away was important for us," said Zidane.

"It's a very good result against an Atalanta team even at ten, because they defended very well.

"The tie is open. We are going to have a great return match."

Atalanta had attacked early but the game was transformed when Swiss midfielder Remo Freuler was harshly sent off in the 17th minutes for tripping Mendy at the edge of the penalty area.

Gian Piero Gasperini's woes continued with forward Duvan Zapata limping off after half an hour with a muscular problem with midfielder Mario Pasalic coming off the bench.

"The game was ruined," said Gasperini.

"I don't know what would have happened 11 against 11.

"I just got banned for saying something in Serie A, if I say something now then UEFA will ban me. But this is football suicide.

"Enough of these referees who've never played a game and don't know the difference between a challenge and a foul."

Spanish midfielder Isco got a rare start up front for injury-hit Real Madrid playing alongside Marco Asensio and Vinicius.

The 13-time European champions were without striker Karim Benzema due to an ankle problem with an injury list also



including Sergio Ramos, Eden Hazard and Dani Carvajal.

"It's true that there are many casualties, but the players who are here are doing well, committed, every time there is a change we adapt," added Zidane.

Meanwhile Manchester City moved to the verge of the Champions League quarter-finals with a 2-0 win over Borussia Moenchengladbach on Wednesday but coach Pep Guardiola insisted his team still need to "be more clinical up front".

A first half header from Bernardo Silva and a Gabriel Jesus strike in the second period of the last 16 first leg tie extended a winning streak by Guardiola's high-flying side to 19 games in all competitions.

Premier League leaders City camped inside the Gladbach half for most of the game, which was moved to Hungary due to Germany's Covid-19 travel restrictions.

Although dominant, City took time to break down a stubborn German defence, often foiled by the interceptions of Algeria left-back Ramy Bensebaini.

While Guardiola said afterwards he was "pleased" with the result, he added City "have to improve" to challenge for Champions League honours.

"We controlled the game. Unfortunately we were not clinical up front, it is something we have to improve in this competition, we were not good enough in the box, we didn't dribble and shoot enough," said Guardiola.

"In this competition you have to be perfect to be sure you can go through," he said.

Debutants in the Champions League knockout stages, Gladbach had been urged by a coach Marco Rose to be brave against Guardiola's side.

## Another Great Tiger Woods Comeback Is Possible



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Tiger Woods could return to competitive golf within a year, top orthopedic surgeons said on Wednesday, but the road back from serious leg injuries sustained in a car crash will be a long and grueling one.

Already credited with one of sport's great comebacks when he returned from back surgery to win a fifth Masters in 2019, ending an 11-year majors drought, Woods will have to be even more resilient if he is to overcome the damage done in Tuesday's accident.

The 45-year-old golf great was hospitalized in Los Angeles and underwent emergency surgery on Tuesday for injuries suffered when his sport utility vehicle careened off a road and rolled down a hillside.

Woods sustained compound fractures of his tibia and fibula to his right leg in the early morning crash along with additional injuries to his foot and ankle, according to a statement posted on the former world No. 1's official Twitter account.

He also suffered trauma to the muscle and other soft tissue of the leg.

The devastating injuries have raised concerns over whether Woods will return to competitive golf, with any comeback further complicated by his long history of knee and back problems.

## Barty Withdraws From Qatar Open

LONDON (Dispatches) - World number one Ash Barty has withdrawn from next week's Qatar Open in Doha due to a left leg injury, organisers of the WTA 500 tournament said.

Barty's decision comes after being knocked out of the Adelaide International on Wednesday, losing 6-3 6-4 to American Danielle Collins in the second round.

The 24-year-old Australian was struggling with a left thigh strain throughout the Australian Open, where she bowed out in the quarter-finals last week.

"Unfortunately I have withdrawn from the Qatar Total Open with a left leg injury," Barty said.

"I wish the tournament a safe and successful event and hope to play there next year.

"Thank you to the event organisers and the WTA for all the work you are doing, I look forward to competing again in Miami in a few weeks time."

Barty follows world number three Simona Halep a



## Nadal Pulls Out of Rotterdam Open With Back Issue

LONDON (Dispatches)- World number two Rafa Nadal has withdrawn from next week's Rotterdam Open due to a back injury, organisers of the ATP 500 event said on Thursday.

The 20-time Grand Slam winner has been struggling with a back issue since the build-up to the Australian Open and was forced to

skip Spain's ATP Cup ties earlier this month.

"Unfortunately, Rafael Nadal is forced to pull out of the 48th ABN AMRO World Tennis Tournament," the tournament organisers said in a statement. "The back problems that started in Australia prevent him from playing next week."

Despite the injury, Nadal did not drop a single set at the Australian Open until the quarter-final stage, where he was knocked out by Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas last week.

World number three Daniil Medvedev will replace Nadal as the top seed in the Rotterdam event, which will run from March 1-7.

## Australia, Qatar Pull Out of 2021 Copa America

BRASILIA (Dispatches) - Australia and Qatar have pulled out of the 2021 Copa America starting in June, South American football's governing body CONMEBOL said.

CONMEBOL's deputy general secretary Gonzalo Belloso said that the two members of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) would not be able to participate due to a clash with World Cup qualifying dates.

"The Copa America is absolutely going ahead. But Qatar and Australia, who had asked to take part, will not be able to come," Belloso told Argentine radio La Red. "The Asian confederation has programmed World Cup qualification on the same dates as the Copa."

The news was confirmed by both the Australian and Qatari football federations.

"It is with great disappointment that Australia cannot feature at the Copa America in 2021," said Football Australia CEO James Johnson. "To have participated in such a prestigious competition and to experience the unique South American football culture would have been a thrill for Australian players, staff and fans alike."

Johnson said the Socceroos were still hoping to be invited again in the future.

"The Socceroos' players and staff were greatly looking forward to the unique opportunity of playing in the Copa America," head coach Graham Arnold said.

"On behalf of the team I thank CONMEBOL for the invitation, which would have presented our team with a fantastic opportunity to test itself against some of the world's best."

Although Qatar are hosting the 2022 World Cup, they're taking part in the preliminary campaign because it is doubling up as qualification for the 2023 Asian Cup in China.

The AFC has scheduled qualification matches for June 11 and 15.



## Messi Scores Twice as Barcelona Dispatch Elche

BARCELONA (Dispatches) - Lionel Messi soared past Luis Suarez to become La Liga's top scorer by adding his 17th and 18th goals of the season in a much-needed 3-0 victory for Barcelona over Elche.

Barca had followed up last week's crushing Champions League loss to Paris Saint-Germain by drawing at home to Cadix on Sunday but eased the strain with a comfortable win at the Camp Nou.

Messi's double owed much to a pair of superb assists, with a supreme dribble by Frenkie de Jong coming after a sublime flick from Martin Braithwaite, who also set up Jordi Alba to score a third.

After failing to take full advantage of league leaders Atletico Madrid's defeat by Levante on Saturday, this victory puts Barcelona back in third, five points off the top, having played a game more than Atletico.

"We cannot lose any more," said Ronald Koeman. "The problem was we were not good enough at the start and we have to win all the games now if we want to do something in the league."

Even if Atletico prove too far ahead to catch, a positive performance was important, especially with a semi-final second leg to come next week against Sevilla in the Copa del Rey, which may be their only chance of winning a trophy this term.

Messi's return to top form comes as a huge boost too. The 33-year-old came off unfavourably in comparisons made with Kylian Mbappe last week but these kinds of performances show he is far from finished yet.

This was Messi's fifth and sixth goal in his last four games while no player from the top five European leagues has scored more than his 13 this year in all competitions. Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski is closest on 12.



## Gauff Advances to Semifinals At Adelaide International

ADELAIDE (AP) - Coco Gauff and Jil Teichmann have advanced to the Adelaide International semifinals after three-set wins on the Memorial Drive hard courts.

Teichmann beat Anastasija Sevastova 6-4, 6-7 (8), 7-5 and was later joined by 16-year-old Gauff, who beat fellow American Shelby Rogers 2-6, 6-4, 6-4.

Teichmann had five match points in the second-set tiebreaker but was unable to close it out. The 23-year-old Swiss player was then forced to save two match points while trailing 5-4 in the third.

"It was a rollercoaster and what I felt was nerves," Teichmann said. "It was a very tense match, very long rallies every time. Anastasija is a tough player and you have to play every point and every game, doesn't matter if you're serving or returning."