

Health Ministry Announced on Sunday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 84,792 With 165 More Iranians Killed by the Deadly Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

An Official From Iran Airports and Air Navigation Company (IAC) Said Sunday That the European Airlines Have Resumed Crossing The Iranian Sky After Over a Year And a Half Halt

VOL. XXVII, No. 7263 TEHRAN Price 40,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

MONDAY JULY 5, 2021 - TIR 14, 1400

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IAEA Deputy Head Due in Iran

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Deputy Director General and Head of the United Nations nuclear watchdog's Department of Safeguards Massimo Aparo is to visit Iran for "routine safeguards activities" but there are no pre-planned talks, Iran's permanent representative to Vienna-based international organizations says.

Aparo's visit to Iran would take place next week, Kazem Gharibabadi said in a tweet on Saturday as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is yet to receive a reply from Tehran on an expired monitoring deal.

"The purpose of the visit is in line with routine safeguards activities in the context of the CSA (Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements)," he tweeted.

Highlighting "continuous contact" between Iran and the IAEA, the Iranian envoy, however, noted that there would be "no pre-planned talks in Tehran during the visit."

Back in February, Iran stopped the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Safeguards Treaty, which stipulates enhanced access to nuclear sites and snap inspections by the IAEA.

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America Responsible For Its Criminal Acts



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Deputy Head of Iranian Human Rights Headquarters said on Saturday that the US crimes against humanity at the international scene must not go unpunished, stressing that the American government must be held accountable for its criminal acts.

Addressing the 3rd International Conference on American Human Rights from the Viewpoint of the Supreme Leader, Majid Tafreshi condemned the instrumental use of the human rights issue by the Americans and the U.S. resorting to terrorist acts against other nations and stressed that the US terrorist violation of Human Rights is not limited to the Iranian borders, as Afghanistan, too, for instance, is a live example, has been suffering from U.S. criminal acts that have led to the International Court of Justice preliminary investigations.

Tafreshi said that in the winter of 2019 the International Court of Justice at Hague issued a decree according to which its prosecutor can investigate the claims made about the war crimes probably committed by American forces in Afghanistan.

The decree in question faced the negative reaction of the then U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo who called it "irresponsible and amazing", and said the U.S. feels no obligation for accepting the decree issued by the "so-called" International Court of Justice. But Judge Pieter Homovski, the head of the criminal branch of the International Court of Justice voted that the investigation decree issued at Hague is quite authentic and applicable.

The deputy head of Iranian Human Rights Headquarters said that Popeo's calling that decree amazing and warding off responsibility from the United States was followed by America's sponsoring of an Afghanistan peace conference to pretend that the situation is quite normal and no crimes had been committed.

He said that the U.S. efforts to go unpunished in that respect was contrary to the comments made by Amnesty International's Solomon Sako on the new decree by the International Court of Justice and the adopted decision to defend the rights of the victims of the war crimes who described it as a historical moment for the human society and safeguarding the human rights.

Today 13,000 U.S. soldiers are escaping from Afghanistan fearing the decree issued by the International Court of Justice become operational.

America is not a member of that court, the official added, because it fears that its soldiers would be brought to justice around the globe for their anti-human rights behaviors.

He said that during the past 18 years more than 32,000 civilians have been massacred in Afghanistan, which reveals the true picture of American-style human rights.

The deputy head of Iranian Human Rights Headquarters said that the illegal recognition of the Holy Quds (Jerusalem) as the capital city of the usurper Zionist regime by the former U.S. President Donald Trump was contrary to the entire international rules and regulations and will of the international community, and has thus far led to the martyrdom of over 60,000 Palestinians.

As a result, we can say that the opening of the US Embassy in Holy Quds was the bloodiest opening in the history of the diplomatic ties and at the international scene, he added.

China Blames U.S. for Conflicts From Afghanistan to Iran

BEIJING (Dispatches) - Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi accused the US of being "the source" of a series of conflicts in the world, seeking to present Beijing as a "defender" and "friendly neighbor" for countries in conflicts.

Addressing an international relations conference in the Chinese capital on Saturday, Wang listed a series of international conflicts - from Afghanistan

"The Indo-Pacific strategy ... was aimed at building an exclusive circle [of countries against China] in geopolitical conflicts. It is walking backwards in history and a repetition of a cold war mentality that should be swept into the rubbish," he said.

Wang made the comments at the World Peace Forum organized by Tsinghua University and the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs, a government-run policy group.

On the sidelines of the forum, Wang said China hoped to resume high-level dialogue with the United States, but that it "depends on whether the U.S. is sincere". The Indo-Pacific strategy was part of the Trump administration's plan to establish a "free and open Indo-Pacific", largely to contain China.

The Biden administration has continued the approach but with greater focus on bringing in regional allies.

At the forum, Wang warned that China was determined to and capable of defending its interests.

"Today's China is no longer the same country of 100 years ago," he said. "No individual or force should underestimate the determination and capacity of the Chinese people to uphold the country's sovereignty, security, and development interests."

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ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

"Crime" and "No-Punishment"

On Saturday, the Islamic Republic of Iran marked one of the most tragic events in its 44-year life and people and officials by pouring flowers in the sea marked one of the crimes of the U.S.

Iranians on Saturday marked the anniversary of a U.S. warship's downing of an Iranian Airbus passenger plane that killed all the 290 on the board which happened on July 3, 1988.

On July 3, 1988, the USS Vincennes warship fired two missiles at an Iran Air Airbus A300B2, which was flying over the Strait of Hormuz from the port city of Bandar Abbas to Dubai, carrying 274 passengers and 16 crew members.

Following the attack, the plane disintegrated and crashed into the Persian Gulf waters, killing all the 290 on board, among them 66 children.

During a memorial ceremony on Saturday, officials from Iran's southern Hormozgan province and the families of the tragedy's victims, who were aboard a vessel, tossed flowers into the waters near the Strait of Hormuz and Hengam Island.

Chanting slogans such as "Down with the U.S." and "Down with Israel," the participants condemned the inhumane US war crime.

After this horrible crime, U.S. officials claimed that the USS Vincennes had mistaken Iran Air Flight 655 for a warplane. This is while the warship was equipped with highly sophisticated radar systems and electronic battle gear at the time of the attack.

In 1990, the captain of the cruiser, William C. Rogers, was cleared of any wrongdoing, and was even awarded America's Legion of Merit medal by then U.S. president George Bush for his "outstanding service" during operations in the Persian Gulf.

In a post on its Twitter account, Iran's Foreign Ministry said Washington neither "apologized" nor felt "embarrassed" over the crime. It was natural to say no apology from the U.S. officials because killing, sanction, war and meddling in the internal affairs of the countries are common habits of the U.S. and one should not expect any apology or retreat by the Americans and for this reason countries need to be strong enough to respond such merciless crimes of the U.S.

On Saturday Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif recalled the U.S.'s downing of an Iranian passenger plane on the tragedy's anniversary, saying Washington continues to target the Iranian nation with violence to date.

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Commercializing New Biotechnological Products Save Iran \$400m

TEHRAN (IFP) - Iran's vice president for science and technology has hailed the unveiling of nine new knowledge-based Iranian-made products in the field of food security and vaccines, saying these products save the country significantly in terms of foreign currency spending.

Sorena Sattari, who was speaking at the unveiling ceremony, added that Iran is known for its brands in the field of human biotechnology.

"We have large pharmaceutical companies in Iran and we are a developed country in the field of human biotechnology. But in application of biotechnology to cattle, poultry, aquatic animals and plants, we still have a long way to go," he said, adding that Iran has witnessed good development in the latter fields over the past two years.

"The production of the 9 [new] products and their commercialization will ultimately save the country 400 million dollars in foreign currencies. This hinges on preparing the grounds for these products to enter the market."

Sattari also said the sanctions have made a clearer impact on industries, where less knowledge-based companies are active.

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UAE, Bahrain Knit Their Fates to Zionism

TEHRAN (IP) - UAE, Bahrain knit their fates to Zionism, says the special aide to the speaker of the Iranian Parliament on international affairs.

“Despite Tel Aviv’s defeat against the latest Palestinian resistance, the opening of child-killer Israeli embassies in UAE and Bahrain reveals a lack of proper understanding since their leaders confine their fates to Zionism,” Hossein Amir-Abdollahian tweeted.

“Israel will have no place in the region. The Zionists enslave Jews,” the tweet reads.

No Worries Over Supply of Basic, Strategic Goods

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Hassan Rouhani said on Sunday that enough basic and strategic goods have been produced and imported into the country and there are no worries over the supply of such commodities.

“Basic and essential goods have been sufficiently produced and imported, and by solving supply and clearance problems, such goods must be made available to consumers and the people more quickly,” Rouhani said at the 238th meeting of the government’s economic coordination headquarters.

At the mentioned meeting, a report was presented on the supply of basic and essential goods and the measures taken for the acceleration of the clearance of such goods from the country’s customs, and after reviewing the report, necessary decisions were made in this regard.

As reported, it was decided that a committee consisting of Finance and Economic Affairs, and Agriculture ministries as well as the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), should take necessary measures to purchase, supply, and expedite the clearance of basic goods under the supervision of the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry.

Iran imported 5.3 million tons of non-oil goods valued at \$6.5 billion in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-May 21) to register a 26.5-percent rise compared to the last year’s same two months.

Referring to the announcement of the policy package on how to fulfil foreign



exchange obligations from the beginning of the year, the President said, “This package can be an appropriate response to the concerns of exporters and importers in order to expedite and facilitate the fulfilment of foreign exchange obligations”.

Rouhani stated that the merchants and traders of the country, both in the conditions of economic war and in normal conditions, should not be involved in any administrative obstacles in the course of their economic activities, saying, “The government considers it its duty to provide incentives for the country’s committed exporters and importers”.

He stated that during the economic war and the oppressive sanctions against the Iranian nation, the United States made every effort to make the country face the problem of providing the required foreign currency, saying, “By supporting the exporters of non-oil products, who carried the burden of providing the currency needed by the country in these circumstances, the government has prevented the realisation of the enemy’s goals”.

164 Iranian Inventions Became Int’l

TEHRAN (IP) - The Patent Center of the Office of the Vice President for Science and Technology supported the international registration of 164 Iranian patents.

More than 2,200 applications have been sent to the Patent Registration Center of Iran for patent protection, of which 364 cases have been approved after content evaluation.

With more than 90% support for inventors, the Iranian Patent Registry Center supports them in the difficult path of international patenting in reputable offices, which is a smooth path for technological products to enter global markets.

The United States, the European Union, Canada, and China are the countries where the International Patent Office is located.

International registration is very important, a patent is a registered invention. Every person creates an invention with the effort and creativity of his mind and wants to have all its material and spiritual rights for himself/herself. Governments have developed a protection system in which a person can register it and turned it into a patent.

In fact, a patent is a law that prevents the theft of an idea, when an invention receives a patent, the inventor becomes the owner of the patent, and after a certain time limit, the right to make, use and sell the invention is given to the public.

Patent holders can sell their property to another person if needed. Registration of a patent as a patent is not mandatory.

Given the role of intellectual property of innovations, the Office of the Vice President for Science and Technology created a basic infrastructure to encourage the community of inventors, researchers, creative companies, and knowledge-based companies to conduct further research in this field.

The Patent Center of Iran was established with the support of this deputy to support inventors and their intellectual property. International patent registration is one of the signs of the overall progress of the country’s innovation ecosystem. Recently, the country’s international patent registration statistics have been published and 164 patents have been registered.

Iran’s New Envoy to London Appointed

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran’s new ambassador to the UK is going to take office on Tuesday.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for International and Legal Affairs Mohsen Baharvand has been appointed as the Islamic Republic’s new ambassador to London.

He is replacing Hamid Baeedinejad, who has served in the post since September 2016.

According to Iran’s charge d’affaires at the Embassy in the UK, Hosseini Matin, the new ambassador will arrive in London on Sunday, July 4.

Baharvand will reportedly assume his diplomatic duties on Tuesday after presenting his letter of credence to Queen of the UK, Elizabeth II.



Iran and Britain named their new ambassadors to London and Tehran in September 2016 after a long period of severed ties.

Iran-Britain ties soured in 2011. On November 27, 2011, a large majority of Iranian lawmakers voted to downgrade diplomatic ties with Britain, following Britain’s decision to impose

sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran.

Later, angry Iranian students stormed the British embassy in Tehran and pulled down the European country’s flag.

Following the incident, Britain withdrew its diplomatic staff from Tehran in late November 2011 and asked Iran’s diplomatic delegation in London to leave within 48 hours.

Iran No.1 in All Areas of Air Defense in Region

TEHRAN (MNA) – Saying that Iran Air Defense Force enjoys advanced equipment, Brigadier General Alireza Sabahifard stressed that Iran is number one in all areas of air defense among regional countries.

Compared to previous years, the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Defense Force has made significant progress in all areas of detection, interception, and cyber activities, Iran’s Commander of Army Air Defense Force said.

Saying that Iran Air Defense Force enjoys advanced equipment, Brigadier General Alireza Sabahifard stressed that in the region, Iran is the number one country in all areas of air defense, including detection, reconnaissance, interception.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Sabahifard spoke about the conspiracies of the enemies who sought to undermine the presence of Iranians in the presidential elections.

Under the wise guidelines of the leader of the Islamic Revolution, the Iranian nation created an epic in the country through the ballot boxes, he also added.

Envoy Urges Facilitating Iranian Students, Businessmen’s Return to Russia

MOSCOW (IRNA) - Iranian Ambassador in Moscow Kazem Jalali called for paving the way for the return of Iranian students and businessmen who had gone home due to COVID-19 pandemic to Russia.

Speaking to reporters after his meeting with Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation, Nikolai Shulginov, Jalali said that both side discussed bilateral issues in oil, energy, Sirik power plant, and joint projects.

He also referred to problems caused by the coronavirus pandemic for visa issuance for businessmen, saying that in spite of the Russian government efforts, no progress has been made in this regard.

He noted that based on both sides’ agreement, the 16th joint economic cooperation commission meeting will be held in person in Moscow.

During the meeting which was held on Friday, Shulginov referred to the joint projects in oil, gas, energy, railway, and peaceful energy fields, hoping for further development of relations during new Iranian president’s term of office.

He pointed to Sirik gas-fired power plant in Iran and stressed continuation of cooperation in energy field.

Meanwhile, Jalali assured that new Iranian government will put reinforcing convergence with Russian its agenda.

He also hailed Sputnik-V COVID-19 vaccine joint production in Iran.

Iran One of World Powers In Defense Field

TEHRAN (MNA) – Minister of Defense Brigadier General Amir Hatami said that Iran has become one of the world powers in the field of defense.

Stating that the progress of the Islamic Republic of Iran began with the glorious victory of the Islamic Revolution and has continued until now, Hatami said, “In each period, in accordance with the needs of the country, new models of change and development have been redesigned and implemented, and we have been looking for new models of progress in the country’s defense industry in the process of maintaining, protecting and upgrading the country’s defense power.”

“The experience of 8 years of imposed war against Iran and the continuation of heavy defense sanctions in the country, led us to design a model of progress that today, relying on the capacity of domestic scientists and methods based on the needs of the Islamic Republic, we have become one of the world powers,” he added.

U.S. Root of Crisis In Afghanistan

TEHRAN (MNA) – Alaeddin Boroujerdi, a former member of Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, named the U.S. as the main cause of the crisis in Afghanistan.

He suggested the Afghan officials reconsider their stance and not regard Americans as the security provider in Afghanistan.

“Unfortunately, 40 years after the beginning of the Afghan crisis, the situation is very worrying and the country is trapped in insecurity,” he said.

Blaming the U.S. for insecurity in Afghanistan, he added “The United States seeks to insinuate that there will be no security in Afghanistan without the presence of U.S. troops.”

He noted that since the announcement of the withdrawal of the Americans from Afghanistan, several explosions have taken place in Afghanistan.

“Even if we assume that ISIL is the cause of the unrest in Afghanistan, the whole world knows very well that the main supporter of ISIL is the U.S.”

“The Americans repeatedly transported ISIL leaders from Syrian prisons to Israeli regime hospitals by helicopter,” he added.

The Iranian MP referred to the recent trip of the Afghan President to the US, saying that “The Americans actually stated that they did not care about the situation in Afghanistan.”

“The fact is that the United States is a source of insecurity in Afghanistan,” he underscored.

“As in the past, Afghan officials must work to resolve this crisis with the help of their neighbors, especially Iran and Pakistan, and through numerous meetings with various factions of Afghanistan,” he suggested

“Afghanistan’s northern neighbors and Central Asian countries can also work for peace in Afghanistan,” he added.

Iran’s Principled Policy is to Support Afghan Peace Process



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN – Chairman of the Iranian Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Committee said that Iran’s principled policy is to support the Afghan peace process and intra-Afghan talks without foreign interference.

Vahid Jalalzadeh made the remarks in his meeting with Chairman of the Cultural Commission of the Afghan Parliament Amir Gul Shaheen.

Referring to the many commonalities between the two countries, including deep cultural ties and good relations between the two nations, Jalalzadeh said, “The Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan have cultural, religious, and historical similarities. We welcome the existing platforms for consensus and raising the level of cooperation between the two countries.”

He announced the readiness of the Iranian Parliament to increase the level of consultation between the commissions of the two countries’ parliaments, including the Cultural Commission, in order to exchange experiences in the fields of legislation, expansion of cultural and social relations.

Jalalzadeh also pointed to the presence of a significant number of Afghan citizens in Iran, saying, “Iran has provided equal conditions for Afghans to live within its means, and now Afghan students are studying in scientific and educational centers.”

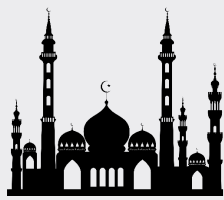
Elsewhere in his remarks, referring to the recent developments in Afghanistan, he said, “As the Leader said, Iran supports the interests of the Afghan people and will always stand by them on the path to lasting peace and stability.”

He further emphasized the principled policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran to support the peace process and intra-Afghan negotiations without foreign intervention, saying that the presence of foreign military forces in the region will lead to the spreading insecurity.

Referring to the history of cooperation between the two countries, Amir Gul Shaheen, for his part, considered the religious, historical, cultural and territorial commonalities of the two countries as a factor in strengthening the relations between Afghanistan and Iran. He appreciated the support of the Leader and Iran to the government and people of Afghanistan, saying, “We will never forget the aid of the Islamic Republic of Iran in difficult days.”

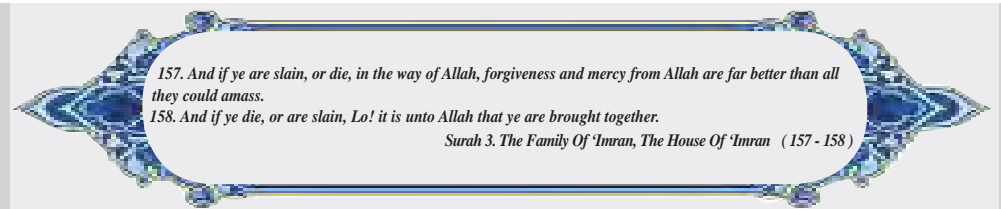
“Afghanistan belongs to all Afghan groups and parties, and the use of violence by any group is to the detriment of the Afghan people,” he added referring to the recent developments in Afghanistan.

“We expect the Islamic Republic of Iran, as an influential country in the region, to assist the legitimate government and people of Afghanistan in establishing peace and stability in the country,” he said.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:09
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:44
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:09
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	05:54



Iranians Rush to Armenia to Vaccinate

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Head of Iran-Armenia Joint Chamber of Commerce says the number of Iranians visiting Armenia is on the rise for COVID-19 jabs.

Reacting to the new wave of travels of Iranians to Armenia for COVID-19 jabs, Hervik Yarijanian told ILNA that the land travel has not been restored yet due to the pandemic but travels to Armenia by air are carried out. He added that Armenian government has no special plan for vaccination and since they have their own quota of COVID-19 vaccines, everybody who travels Armenia can have Covid vaccine jabs.

He added that Armenian government does not get any money for vaccination and tourists are vaccinated for free, adding that there are some doctors in the place to undergo the related tests like measuring blood oxygen and pressure.

On the number of Iranians who have been vaccinated so far, he said that so far there is no exact figure and if Iran's Embassy in Armenia takes action, the figure of the vaccinated Iranians will be revealed.

Yarijanian went on to say that but the number of Iranians visiting Armenia is on the rise and all flights to Armenia have been almost full.



Meanwhile the spokesman to Iran's Civil Aviation Organization Mr. Mohammad Zibakhsh said the number of flights between Iran and Armenia will increase from next week as the Armenia Airways is to increase its flights from 5 to 7 in week and on the whole there will be 11 flights in week between the two countries.

He said no Iranian airliner is active between Tehran and Armenia and the flights are carried out by the Arminian airliners.

Touching upon the rise in demand for tickets for Armenia and holding more vaccine tours to Armenia, he said the organization is not in charge of travel tours and it has no hand in it and the tourism ministry is responsible and supervisor of holding different types of tours in the country.

He reiterated there is no travel tour to the neighboring states under the name of vaccination tour.

Iran to Dispatch Trade Delegation to Kyrgyzstan

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The caretaker of Europe-America Office of Iran Trade Promotion Organization says a trade delegation is to be dispatched to Kyrgyzstan for a five-day visit.



Mr. Mohammad Reza Karimzadeh said that the delegation will depart for Bishkek on July 22 for a five-day visit. The delegation will be comprised of representatives from fields of agro and food, medical equipment, laboratory, medicine and health, construction industry, industry and mine and some knowledge-based companies.

He said that in this event some specialized business-to-business meetings of business will be held with participation of both parties.

Karimzadeh added that Kyrgyzstan is one of the EAEU member states in the Central Asia and this event is a good opportunity for reinforcing relations with Kyrgyzstan.

Iran Seeks to Maintain Food Security Amid Drought

TEHRAN (IP) - The Iranian Agriculture Minister says the ministry has proposed a comprehensive plan to the government to combat drought and maintain food security for the people.



On the sidelines of an event on the occasion of 'World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought' on Saturday, Kazem Khavazi said in response to Iran Press' question over the agriculture ministry's plans for food security amid an almost unprecedented drought in Iran: "We have proposed a comprehensive plan to the government that the government is reviewing".

According to the Iranian Agriculture Minister, the plan includes loans for producers, lending for inputs, and many other issues that can ensure food security in the country.

Food security, as defined by the United Nations' Committee on World Food Security, means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.

The Iranian minister of agriculture expressed hope that with the approval of the plan, farmers would be able to continue their work in a favorable condition.

Iran's Ministry of Agriculture has organized an event on Saturday to review the solutions to fight against desertification. The event was held on the occasion of the 'World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought' with the attendance of the Iranian Agriculture Minister Kazem Khavazi and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Representative to Iran, Gerold Bödeker.

The event is celebrated each year on 17 June. Its purpose is to raise awareness about desertification and drought, highlighting methods of preventing desertification and recovering from drought.

Land Restoration; Key Solution to Desertification

TEHRAN (IP)- The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to Iran says land restoration offers multiple pathways towards a green recovery which is the key to respond to desertification as a global challenge.



Speaking on Saturday at an event on the occasion of the 'World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought' in Tehran, Gerold Bödeker said: "Every year, on June 17, the global community celebrates World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought to promote public awareness on international efforts made in this regard."

"The theme for this year's commemoration is 'Restoration, Land, Recovery. We build back better with healthy land', which strongly calls for compensatory and remedial action to restore our invaluable lands," he added.

"The way we produce and consume food, fiber, water, energy and raw materials are rapidly depleting Earth's finite stock of natural capital," the FAO representative said.

"We are losing more value than we produce. Between 1997 and 2011, land-use changes caused losses averaging \$20 trillion of ecosystem services every year. Land degradation alone accounted for 30% of that, which is three times the global market value of agricultural products," he added.

"On the one hand, over a quarter of greenhouse gases arise from agriculture, forestry, and other land uses, and on the other hand, it is estimated that by 2050, global crop yields will have fallen 10%, with some regions suffering a reduction of up to 50%," Bödeker said.

"Land restoration offers multiple pathways towards a green recovery which is the key to respond to desertification as a global challenge and a proven and cost-effective strategy that can jumpstart a green economic recovery creating green jobs, uplifting rural communities, and delivering significant benefits for human health, biodiversity, and climate change," the FAO representative said.

"We have the required tools to achieve this - responsible land governance, investments that protect and restore nature, and coherent, long-term policies and incentives - and most importantly, the lessons from past experiences that must be the foundation of the actions we take in the future," he noted.

"Regenerative agriculture and restoring natural systems need a combination of traditional and modern practices. It requires old skills to be more widely learned and new skills to be widely introduced for emerging jobs and those being repurposed for greener outcomes," said Bödeker.

"FAO, as the lead UN agency in promoting resilient agricultural development, concentrates on solutions that we can find in nature to tackle complex challenges and supply our needs in a sustainable way," he concluded.

Iran's Ministry of Agriculture has organized an event on Saturday to review the solutions to fight against desertification.

The event was held on the occasion of the 'World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought' with the Iranian Agriculture Minister Kazem Khavazi and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Representative to Iran, Gerold Bödeker in attendance.

'The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought' is a United Nations' observance celebrated each year on June 17. The purpose of celebrating such an event is to raise individuals' awareness towards the presence of desertification and drought, highlighting methods of preventing desertification and recovering from drought.

FAO has had a long-lasting collaboration with the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran since the country became a member of FAO in 1953.

Iran Working to Attend Expo 2020 Dubai

SHIRAZ (IRNA) - Head of Iran-UAE joint chamber of commerce said the room is working to prepare the ground for Iranian companies' participation in the Expo 2020 Dubai, United Arab Emirates, which had been postponed due to the pandemic.

As Farshid Farzanehgan said the Expo 2020 Dubai, a grand exhibition that hosts many world states for about six months, is slated for October 1, 2021.

Expo 2020 Dubai is a trade event consisting of art, scientific, cultural and social activities, the official added.

Iran's pavilion is located at the heart of the Expo 2020 and is expected to attract over 35 million visitors, Farzanehgan underlined.

So, it is important to well present Iranian products and introduce trade opportunities in the country, he added.

According to provincial officials, Expo 2020 Dubai with the participation of 200 countries for six months is an ample opportunity for economic cooperation.

Iran Elecomp 2021 Postponed Amid Covid-19 Pandemic

TEHRAN (MNA) – International Electronics, Consumer Electronics, Computer & E-Commerce Exhibition in Iran known as Iran ELECOMP has been postponed amid Covid-19 pandemic.

Iran Elecomp 2021 (Tehran) was slated to be held later this month on July 9-12 has been postponed to a later time in the future as Tehran which was the planned-host of the event is classified by the Iranian health officials as a red-coded city with a high-risk of Covid-19.

According to a statement by the Iranian body that is in charge of the exhibition on Saturday, the host Tehran is classified by the Iranian health officials as a red-coded city and there will be restrictions on holding any public event amid the pandemic.

"In order to develop the business environment and based on the demand of companies active in the field of communications and information technology, as well as with the aim of supplying services and products for fighting Coronavirus by companies and start-ups, the ELECOMP 2021 exhibition was scheduled to be held between July 9-12 this year after observing the health guidelines," the statement of the exhibition authorities said.

It added, "However, according to the health procedures and due to Tehran being classified among red-coded cities amid pandemic, the holding of the ELECOMP 2021 exhibition was postponed to another time."

The date of the event has not yet been announced.

Exports From Gilan Province Hit 24% Growth in Q1

TEHRAN (MNA) – Export of products from northern province of Gilan in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (from March 21 to June 21) registered a 24 percent growth as compared to the same period of last year.

Accordingly, more than \$146 million worth of non-oil products was exported from Gilan province in the first three months of the current year, indicating a 24 percent hike as compared to the last year's corresponding period.

Speaking in an interview with IRNA on Sunday, Head of Gilan Province Industry, Mine and Trade Organization Farhad Dalghpoush said that totally 241,599 tons of non-oil products, valued at \$146,294,329, were exported from Gilan province to foreign countries from March 21 to June 21, showing a three percent decline in terms of volume as compared to the same period of last year.

Vegetable and mineral products, chemical and plastic materials and food products were of the main products exported from Gilan province to foreign countries in this period, he said, adding that these products were exported from Gilan province's customs offices to the countries including Russia, Azerbaijan Republic, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Turkmenistan and Belarus.

Ways to Boost Trade With Slovakia Explored

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Director General of Europe-America Office in the second meeting of the Iran-Slovakia Joint Commercial Committee pointed to the banking problems resulted from the sanctions and said the way to reduce effects of sanctions is to use all capacities of the joint chamber of commerce in developing bilateral trade and planning for developing cooperation in the field of technical and engineering services.

Referring to the meeting, Mehrdad Jalalipoor said according to the adopted decisions by the members of this committee, holding the next meeting in two weeks has been put on the agenda for drawing up a one-year plan of action.

He noted that in this meeting the participants pointed to exports of Slovakia worth of \$1.2m and to the existing capacities for cooperation between different regional sectors and also developing economic cooperation with Slovakia.

Meanwhile head of Iran-Slovakia Joint Commercial Committee Mr. Jabbar Kianipoor, for his part, in this meeting pointed to the joint committee's presence in the MatchMaking Fair in Slovakia which was held virtually this year and deplored for the absence of the Iranian companies.

It is noteworthy to mention that the second meeting between the joint commercial committee of Iran and Slovakia was held to review the trade problems between the two states.

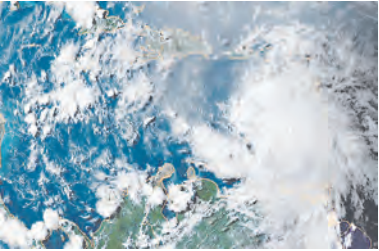


Hurricane Elsa Barrels Toward Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE (Dispatches) - Hurricane Elsa churned through the Caribbean early Saturday, bringing powerful winds and threatening to pile further misery on violence-wracked Haiti.

The Category 1 storm weakened slightly overnight and was packing maximum sustained winds of 75 miles (120 kilometers) per hour.

At 8:00 am (1200 GMT), it was just south of Hispaniola -- which is made up of Haiti and the Dominican Republic -- and moving northwest at 31 mph, the US National Hurricane Center (NHC) said.



Brazilians Demonstrate Against Bolsonaro

RIO DE JANEIRO (Dispatches) - Protesters took to the streets in Brazil demanding the impeachment of President Jair Bolsonaro and more vaccines to fight the coronavirus pandemic, as the country faces the world's second deadliest outbreak after the United States.

On Friday, Supreme Court Justice Rosa Weber authorized the opening of an investigation into Bolsonaro over alleged irregularities in procurement of vaccine developed in India.

The protests were originally scheduled for July 24, but were brought forward after evidence of irregularities related to that vaccine deal were presented before a Senate committee investigating the federal government's handling of the pandemic.



Afghan Fighting Rages as U.S. Forces See Exit by End August



KABUL (Dispatches) - Hundreds of Taliban fighters were killed in fierce battles with government forces across several provinces of Afghanistan, officials said Saturday, as Washington announced it would finish withdrawing its troops from the country by the end of August.

Washington's announcement came after all US and NATO troops vacated their main Bagram Air Base, from where the coalition forces led operations for two decades against the Taliban and their Al-Qaeda allies. Over the past 24 hours, more than 300 Taliban fighters were killed in fighting with government forces, the Ministry of Defence said Saturday.

Scores were killed in air strikes, including a pre-dawn assault on Saturday, in the southern province of Helmand, where the insurgents and government troops have regularly clashed. There have been fears that Afghan forces would struggle without the air support that the United States has provided.

"In recent days, the Afghan air force has intensified its air strikes against the Taliban hideouts and the insurgents have suffered casualties," Attaullah Afghan, a member of Helmand provincial council, told AFP. The Taliban rejected the government's claims.

Both sides often exaggerate each other's casualties and their claims are difficult to independently verify.

But since May 1 when the US military began its final withdrawal of about 2,500 troops, the two warring sides have clashed fiercely across the rugged countryside as peace talks between them have faltered.

As a result, the Taliban have seized dozens of districts in blistering assaults targeting government forces.

The insurgents have encircled almost all major cities across the country, and on Saturday claimed seizing seven more districts in the northeastern province of Badakhshan.

Top U.S. envoy to Kabul, Ross Wilson, lashed out at the insurgents.

"The Taliban is using violent propaganda and hate speech to intimidate, threaten & attack Afghans on social media," Wilson said on Twitter on Saturday. "Violence and terror cannot create peace."

The Pentagon pressed on with its withdrawal to end America's longest war.

Peru's Gov't Rejects Fujimori Call for Int'l Audit for June 6 Poll

LIMA (Reuters) - Peru's government rejected a request by presidential candidate Keiko Fujimori to seek an international audit of its June 6 election, leaving her with few recourses to overturn the apparent lead over her rival candidate Pedro Castillo.

The Minister of Justice, Eduardo Vega, explained in a letter sent to Fujimori, a conservative and the daughter of the imprisoned ex-president Alberto Fujimori, that legally the government cannot intervene while the country's electoral jury reviews her claims of alleged irregularities.

Palestinians Demand Abbas Quit at Ramallah Protest

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) - Hundreds of Palestinians demanded the resignation of president Mahmud Abbas at a West Bank protest Saturday sparked by last month's death of an activist in custody.

Relatives of Nizar Banat, who died after security forces stormed his home and violently arrested him, were at the forefront of the protest in Ramallah where Abbas's Palestinian Authority (PA) is based.

Banat's mourning mother held up a portrait of her son.

Demonstrators also carried pictures of Banat, a vocal critic of alleged corruption within the PA, while others held up a huge banner that carried the words "Abbas Leave", an AFP reporter said.

"This rally is a message of allegiance to Nizar Banat and to the authorities, who must bring to justice those responsible for his death," Hassan Khreishah, a former head of the Palestinian Legislative Council, told AFP.

Palestinian police and security forces blocked the road leading to Abbas's headquarters in Ramallah.



Thousands Protest in Burkina Faso Over Jihadist Attacks

OUAGADOUGOU (Reuters) - Thousands took to the streets of Burkina Faso's capital on Saturday to call for a tougher government response to a wave of jihadist attacks that has destabilised the West African country in recent years.

Some had travelled hundreds of kilometres to attend the opposition-led demonstration in Ouagadougou, where protesters waved the red and green Burkinabe flag and blew whistles.

"We had to show our dissatisfaction, show the distress of citizens who are crying out for security and peace," said opposition supporter Alpha Yago on the sidelines of the protest.

Groups linked to al Qaeda and Islamic State originally based in neighbouring Mali have embedded themselves across the north and east of the country, launching regular attacks on civilians, including one in June that killed more than 130 people, the worst in years.

One protester held a placard with a photo of flag-draped coffins and the slogan: "Mr President, have the courage to decide. We are fed up!"

Pressure has increased on President Roch Kabore to take control and end a humanitarian crisis in which more than a million people have been displaced by the violence.

Last Wednesday Kabore took the role of defence minister in a cabinet reshuffle aimed at appeasing opposition leaders, who have demanded the resignation of the government.

One group of protesters had travelled nearly 400 kilometres (250 miles) from the eastern town of Madjoari, which has seen thousands of residents flee the jihadist threat.

"We cannot understand how a population suffers day after day and for over a month with no reaction from the government. It is deplorable," said Madjoari's deputy mayor Djergou Kouare, as fellow residents waved cardboard placards saying "SOS Madjoari". Despite the presence of thousands of U.N. peacekeepers, attacks by jihadists in West Africa's Sahel region have risen sharply since the start of the year, particularly in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, with civilians bearing the brunt.

Egypt Opens Mediterranean Naval Base

CAIRO (Dispatches) - Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi has opened a strategic naval base on the Mediterranean Sea to "secure shipping lines", the presidency said.

"It is the latest Egyptian military base on the Mediterranean, and will be focused on securing the country's northern and western front," the Egyptian presidency said in a statement on Saturday.

The ceremony was attended by the crown prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (MBZ), and by the chairman of Libya's Presidential Council Mohamed al-Menfi. The base lies some 255 kilometres (160 miles) west of Alexandria, towards the border with Libya, a country where both Egypt and the United Arab Emirates have played a key military role.

Libya's new transitional executive emerged from a UN process that was launched in November in Tunis, then voted on in Geneva and confirmed by Libya's parliament on March 10.

Egypt and the UAE were key backers of Khalifa Haftar, the eastern-based Libyan military commander who had tried to seize the capital Tripoli from the previous government.

In April, Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly travelled to Libya, where he had talks with interim prime minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah, in a new sign of warming ties between Cairo and Tripoli.

Dbeibah visited Egypt in February on his first official trip abroad after his election.

In April, Dbeibah also paid a visit to Abu Dhabi, where he was warmly greeted by Sheikh Mohammed, who expressed support for the new Libyan administration.

El-Sisi and his guests witnessed military manoeuvres involving several vessels, attack helicopters and fighter jets.

State-run newspaper Akhbar Al-Youm reported that the new Egyptian base includes an airstrip and a 1,000-metre (3,280-foot) long pier.

The base was named "July 3" after the day eight years ago when Sisi led the military removal of president Mohamed Morsi.

Egypt has three other naval bases in the Mediterranean and one in the Red Sea.



Le Pen Under Fire for Going Mainstream

PARIS (Dispatches) - French far-right leader Marine Le Pen is facing stinging criticism for making her party too mainstream, dulling its extremist edge, and ignoring grassroots members, with voices from inside and outside warning this could cost her votes in next year's presidential race.

The rumblings grew louder after the National Rally's failure a week ago in regional elections, and come just ahead of this weekend's party congress.

Le Pen is the anti-immigration party's unquestioned boss, and her fortunes aren't expected to change at the two-day event in the southwestern town of Perpignan, hosted by local Mayor Louis Aliot — Le Pen's former companion and, above all, the party's top performer in last year's municipal elections. But there could be an uncomfortable reckoning, just as Le Pen is trying to inject new dynamism into the National Rally.

Critics say Le Pen has erased her party's anti-establishment signature by trying to make it more palatable to the mainstream right. As part of the strategy, she softened the edges and strove to remove the stigma of racism and antisemitism that clung to the party after decades under her now-ostracized father, Jean-Marie Le Pen. She even changed the name from National Front, as it was called under her father, who co-founded the party in 1972 and led it for four decades.

"The policy of adapting, of rapprochement with power, even with the ordinary right, was severely sanctioned," said Jean-Marie Le Pen. "(That) was a political error and translates into an electoral failure, and perhaps electoral failures," he added, referring to the regional election result and the 2022 presidential vote.

The defiant patriarch, now 93, was expelled in the effort to boost the party's respectability, but his criticism reflects that of more moderate members who say his daughter has muddled the message.

Her goal is to reach the runoff in the presidential race in 10 months with greater success than in 2017, when she reached the final round but lost to centrist Emmanuel Macron.



Gheitarieh Apt (\$3000)
220sq.m, 3bdrs
S/p, Sauna
J, balcony
pkg, & F.F

Shanon (adviser)

Tajrish Villa (\$5000)
1000sq.m
S/pool, S, J
green yard
Fully Furn

Parsian

(\$2400) Zaferanieh
250sq.m, 3bdrs
S/p, S, J, pkg
balcony, & F.F

Farmanieh Apts
(\$1800) 150sq.m, 2bdrs
(\$2200) 200sq.m, 3bdrs
Both with S/p, S, J, & F.F

Nice view

(\$12000) Niavaran bldg
5storey, 20bdrs
S/p, S, J, pkg lots
yard, Brand new

Darrous Apt (\$1500)
180sq.m, 3bdrs, & F.F

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Vanak (\$30 per sq.m)
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Bitcoin Set for Weekly Fall

LONDON (Dispatches) - Bitcoin (BTC-USD) looked set to register a weekly price decline, as the world's biggest cryptocurrency lost value yet again on Friday morning.

Bitcoin was down 1.4% against the dollar in early trade to reach \$33,067 (£24,042). The early weakness raised the prospect of a third straight day of price declines for bitcoin, which is now below the \$34,294 mark it started the week at.

Other major cryptocurrencies were also in retreat on Friday morning. By 8.15am in London, the market had lost more than 8% of its value over the last 24 hours according to data provider CoinMarketCap.com. Ethereum (ETH-USD), the world's second biggest cryptocurrency, was among the worst hit. The token was down 5.3% to \$2,037.



130 Countries Agree to 15% Minimum Corporate Tax Rate

PARIS (Dispatches) - A total of 130 countries have agreed a global tax reform ensuring that multinationals pay their fair share wherever they operate, the OECD said but some EU states refused to sign up.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development said in a statement that global companies, including US behemoths Google, Amazon, Facebook, and Apple would be taxed at a rate of at least 15 percent once the deal is implemented.

The new tax regime is to add some \$150 billion (£125bn) to government coffers globally.

"The framework updates key elements of the century-old international tax system, which is no longer fit for purpose in a globalised and digitalised 21st-century economy," the OECD said. The formal agreement follows an endorsement by the G7 group of wealthy nations last month at a meeting in Britain. The negotiations now move to a meeting of the G20 group of developed and emerging economies on July 9 and 10 in Venice, Italy.

U.S. President Joe Biden said the latest deal "puts us in striking distance of full global agreement to halt the race to the bottom for corporate taxes".

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen called it "historic".

Germany, another backer of the tax reform, hailed it as a "colossal step towards tax justice", and France said it was "the most important tax agreement in a century".

British finance minister Rishi Sunak, whose country currently holds the G7 presidency, said "the fact that 130 countries across the world, including all of the G20, are now on board, marks a further step in our mission to reform global tax".

French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire told a press conference, "I welcome this huge step. It's the most important international tax deal reached [in] a century".

But European Union low-tax countries Ireland and Hungary declined to sign up to the agreement reached in the OECD framework, the organization said, highlighting lingering divisions on global taxation.

Both countries are part of a group of EU nations also including Luxembourg and Poland that have relied on low tax rates to attract multinationals and build their economies.

Ireland, the EU home to tech giants Facebook, Google and Apple, has a corporate tax rate of just 12.5 percent.

Irish Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe has warned that the new rules, if achieved, could see Ireland lose 20 percent of its corporate revenue.

Nine of the 139 participants in the talks have so far not signed on to the agreement.

But China, whose position was being closely watched as it offers tax incentives to key sectors, endorsed the agreement.

"It is in everyone's interest that we reach a final agreement among all Inclusive Framework Members as scheduled later this year," said OECD Secretary General Mathias Cormann.

"This package does not eliminate tax competition, as it should not, but it does set multilaterally agreed limitations on it," Cormann said, adding that "it also accommodates the various interests across the negotiating table, including those of small economies and developing jurisdictions".

Finance chiefs have characterised a minimum tax as necessary to stem competition between countries over who can offer multinationals the lowest rate.

New Saudi Airline Plan Takes Aim at Emirates, Qatar Airways

DUBAI (Reuters) - Saudi Arabia plans to target international transit passenger traffic with its new national airline, going head-to-head with Emirates and Qatar Airways and revving up regional competition.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is pushing economic diversification to wean Saudi Arabia off oil revenues and create jobs, announced a transportation and logistics drive on Tuesday aimed at making the kingdom the fifth-biggest air transit hub.

Two people familiar with the matter said the new airline would boost international routes and echo existing Persian Gulf carriers by carrying people from one country to another via connections in the kingdom, known in the industry as sixth-freedom traffic.

The transport ministry, which has not released details of the plans, did not respond to a Reuters request for comment.

The strategy marks a shift for Saudi Arabia whose other airlines, like state-owned Saudia and its low cost subsidiary flyadeal, mostly operate domestic services and point-to-point flights to and from the oil-rich country of 35 million people. The Saudi expansion threatens to sharpen a battle for passengers at a time when travel has been hit by the coronavirus pandemic. Long-haul flights like those operated by Emirates and Qatar Airways are forecast to take the longest to recover.

"Commercial competition in the aviation industry has always been fierce, and regional competition is heating up. Some turbulence in regional relations is on the horizon," said Robert Mogielnicki, resident scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute.

Dubai, the world's largest international air travel hub, has announced a five-year plan to grow air and shipping routes by 50% and double tourism capacity over the next two decades.

Any airline requires substantial start-up capital and experts warn that if Saudi Arabia's ambition is to compete on transit flights it may have to contend with years of losses. Emirates reported a record \$5.5 billion annual loss last month with the pandemic forcing Dubai to step in with \$3.1 billion in state support.

Ethihad Airways has scaled back its ambitions after it spent billions of dollars to ultimately unsuccessfully compete in building a major hub in United Arab Emirates capital Abu Dhabi.

Global Equity Funds See Third Successive Weekly Inflows

LONDON (Reuters) - Global investors were net buyers of equity funds for a third successive week in the week to June 30. However, a resurgence of coronavirus cases in Asia and concerns over high inflation levels and their impact on monetary policy capped inflows.

According to Refinitiv Lipper data, global equity funds received inflows of \$14 billion

in the week, though the tally was down 35% from the previous week.

European equity funds and U.S. equity funds had inflows worth \$6.3 billion and \$4.8 billion respectively, while Asian equity funds received only \$1.9 billion.

In the Asia-Pacific, Australia is battling small but fast growing outbreaks, while Indonesia is also grappling with record high-cases. Malaysia is set to extend a lockdown and Thailand has announced new restrictions.

Among equity sector funds, tech funds lured inflows of \$1.7 billion, the biggest in 11 weeks, while financials saw outflows worth \$1.12 billion.

Fears over the spread of the highly infectious Delta virus variant prompted more inflows into more safer debt funds during the week.

The data showed global bond funds received a net \$14.8 billion, the biggest since the week ended May 5.

Inflows into government bond funds jumped to a four-week high of \$3.3 billion, data from 2,981 funds showed.

Meanwhile, money market funds saw outflows of \$38.1 billion, their third consecutive week of net sales.

In the commodities space, energy funds recorded a fifth straight week of outflows, while precious metal funds also had outflows for a second consecutive week, with gold prices dipping to a 2-1/2 month low this week.

An analysis of 23,713 emerging-market funds showed equity funds had net selling worth \$1.35 billion, the biggest outflow since mid-September, while bond funds had inflows of \$530 million, compared with \$1.4 billion worth of outflows in the previous week.

Rising Food Prices Deepen the Woes of World's Poorest

PARIS (AFP) - Global food prices are rising at their fastest rate in a decade, exacerbating the troubles of the world's most vulnerable nations as they struggle with the fallout from the coronavirus pandemic.

The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is worried that soaring prices could foment further social unrest in countries already mired in political turmoil.

Here is a look at the situation worldwide:

According to the FAO, food prices were nearly 40 percent higher in May than a year ago, the sharpest increase since September 2011.

On a 12-month basis, the price of corn has skyrocketed by 88 percent, soybean by 73 percent, grain and dairy products by 38 percent, sugar by 34 percent and meat by 10 percent.

"Obviously, it's very concerning," said Arif Husain, chief economist of the World Food Programme. In 2007-2008, brutal increases in the price of basic foodstuffs sparked riots in a number of cities around the world. Peaking in 2010-2011, the price rises acted as a harbinger for the Arab Spring uprisings. The global economy is rebounding but inflation is also rising as governments have spent huge sums on stimulus programmes after the pandemic brought economic activity to a standstill last year.

China, which the World Bank projects will notch up growth of 8.5 percent in 2021, is gobbling up basic foodstuffs such as oilseed, cereals and meat.

"It really is China which is currently fuelling the surge in food prices," said economist Philippe Chalmin. The U.S. economy is also expected to bounce back strongly, with the World Bank projecting growth there of 6.8 percent this year.

But the economic recovery is "very uneven" across the world, with developing nations facing higher import bills while their income is not growing, said Josef Schmidhuber, deputy director of the FAO's trade and markets division.

Other factors behind the surge in prices include a drought in Brazil, which is driving up corn prices, rebounding oil prices and an explosion in sea freight costs.

That is difficult to say.

For the moment, harvests are projected to be very good.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is forecasting record crop production for 2021-2022 and also record harvests of Brazilian soybean and American corn. If these materialise, that will help ease the price situation.

But climate conditions could be a wild card in such projections. The FAO's Schmidhuber believes that prices will remain relatively high this year, notably if oil prices go up as the agriculture sector consumes a lot of energy.

"If they rise, food prices will remain high for a long period of time".

OPEC + Seeks Consensus On Oil Output Policy



LONDON (Reuters) - OPEC+ resumes talks on raising oil output on Friday after the United Arab Emirates blocked a deal the previous day, creating a standoff that could lead to less crude in the market and further rise in prices that have already surged to 2-1/2 year highs.

Without a deal, the OPEC+ alliance could keep tighter restraints on output with oil prices now trading around \$75 a barrel, more than 40% up this year, while consumers want more crude to aid a global recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UAE put the brakes on a deal that had been pushed by top producers Saudi Arabia and Russia to increase output by 2 million barrels per day (bpd) by the end of 2021 and extend remaining cuts to the end of 2022, instead of ending in April.

Talks between the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Russia and other producers, the alliance known as OPEC+, resume at 1300 GMT.

Responding to oil demand destruction caused by the COVID crisis, OPEC+ agreed last year to cut output by almost 10 million bpd from May 2020, with plans to phase out the curbs by the end of April 2022. Cuts now stand at about 5.8 million bpd.

If UAE blocks any deal, those remaining cuts would likely stay in place. There is also a slim chance the deal could fall apart and all countries could pump as much as they want.

OPEC+ sources have said the UAE does not oppose the principle of hiking output by the group but it wants its own production to be higher. It says its baseline - the level from which any cuts are calculated - was originally set too low, something it was ready to tolerate if the deal ended in April.

OPEC+ sources said the UAE wants to have its baseline production set at 3.84 million bpd versus 3.168 million bpd now.

If its baseline is changed, it could mean adding more oil to the market than planned or other producers would have to accept a lower increase.

Venezuela's Oil Exports Rose in June

CARAVAS (Dispatches) - Venezuela's oil exports inched higher in June, boosted by cargoes to Asia and expanded sales of upgraded crude, data from state-run oil firm PDVSA and tanker monitoring showed, as the nation rushed to deliver crude to China ahead of an import tax.

Traders last month raced to discharge in China record imports of Venezuelan crude masked as Malaysian bitumen blends ahead of a June 12 tax that raised import costs by at least 40% for several types of fuel.

The tax coincided with the restart of a crude upgrader and an oil-blending plant that process extra-heavy crude from the Orinoco Belt for export. The upgrader is operated by the Petrocedeno joint venture between PDVSA, TotalEnergies and Equinor, and the Petrosinovensa blending plant belongs to PDVSA and China National Petroleum Corp.

The operations resumption, along with the restart of Petropiar's blending station in late May, allowed PDVSA to ramp up exports of two of its most demanded crude grades, Meroy and Hamaca, according to PDVSA's documents.

PDVSA and its joint ventures shipped an average of 631,900 barrels per day (bpd) of crude and refined products in 23 cargoes in June, a 6.5% rise from May and a 66% increase versus the same month of 2020, the data showed.

The lion's share of the cargoes set sail for Asia, with about 238,000 bpd - more than in any month of this year - going to Malaysia for trans-shipment and blending before reaching China.

Sales of high-sulphur fuel oil to China and the United Arab Emirates, hubs where Venezuela's residual fuel is traded, fell in June to 89,000 bpd, from between 106,000 bpd and 192,000 bpd earlier this year.

PDVSA also exported 35,300 bpd of crude and fuel to its political ally Cuba, below the May average of 67,000 bpd, according to the data.



“Death in Afternoon” Finds Way to American Film Festival

TEHRAN (MNA) – Directed by Asghar Besharati, Iranian short film ‘Death in Afternoon’ is to vie at the 13th American film festival of FilmOneFest 2020.

The 100-second short film narrates the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the environment and animals life in Iranian southern island of Qeshm.

FilmOneFest is a celebration of the super short film and a snapshot of the creative image-making happening online around the world.

Founded in 2008, the festival takes place on the third Saturday of July at the Atlantic Highlands Marina in Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey.



EBRD Hikes Turkey's Growth Forecast

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey's economy should grow at a higher-than-expected pace this year, Europe's development bank said, citing a strong rebound from the coronavirus pandemic and signs of tourism picking up.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) forecast a better-than-expected economic recovery this year across its geographical regions of investment following pandemic-induced slumps, it said in its latest report.

It said the recovery of 37 countries in its region was gathering steam though tourism and foreign direct investment were still bumpy.

Turkey, the EBRD's biggest country of operation, saw half a percentage point added to its forecast, expected to now grow at 5.5% this year. The bank said the economy should expand by 4% in 2022.

Turkey was one of only a few countries globally to avoid economic contraction last year when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, largely due to aggressive credit growth. It expanded 7% year-on-year in the first quarter and the government sees 20% in the second.

The strong growth in the second quarter will largely be thanks to the so-called base effect due to a nearly 10% contraction in the April-June period of 2020.

Roger Kelly, EBRD lead regional economist, said there should be a small quarter-on-quarter contraction in the second quarter.

“Things are picking up again and the picture is reasonably positive, with the macro-economic instabilities that are always there not quite as prominent now,” Kelly said.

“If the tourism season is prolonged with pent-up holiday demand then we could see some upside to the forecast. The Russian tourists are coming back and there are some positive signals coming from Germany and others.”

The 5.5% forecast would return Turkey to its trend over the last two decades. Yet it may fall short, Kelly said, if new COVID-19 variants lead to new lockdowns or if the central bank cuts its 19% policy rate before September.

The Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey (CBRT) kept the key policy rate unchanged for a third meeting this month and adopted a more hawkish tone as a weak Turkish lira and higher global commodity prices continue to cloud the inflation outlook.

The bank reiterated a pledge to keep the rate above inflation in order to cool prices. Inflation unexpectedly dipped below 17% in May, falling from a two-year high.

“Conditions would be in place for easing” in September, Kelly said.

The World Bank expects 5% economic growth this year driven by an export recovery in Turkey. Wall Street bank JP Morgan last week raised its forecast to 6.8%, citing Turkey's stepped-up COVID-19 vaccinations.

The EBRD, which covers economic trends across Europe, Asia and Africa, expects regionwide growth of 4.2% this year compared to its September forecast of 3.6%, it said in a report.

The bank revealed its revised estimates on the occasion of its 30th annual meeting, which is being held online this week due to the coronavirus pandemic.

“The recovery of the emerging economies in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and North Africa are gathering pace following the COVID-19 pandemic,” the bank said in a statement, which cited the beneficial impact of vaccination.

Southeastern Europe and the Western Balkans enjoyed the biggest upward revisions, with nearly two percentage points added.

High global demand for commodities and manufactured goods had provided a boost to some economies in the region, said Beata Javorcik, EBRD chief economist.

“Industrial production is above or has at least caught up with pre-pandemic levels, retail sales have recovered and exports have bounced back,” Javorcik told Reuters.



However, with tourism still in the doldrums and the outlook for leisure travel highly uncertain, countries heavily dependent on the sector – such as Croatia, Georgia, Egypt or Tunisia – still felt the pain, Javorcik added.

Foreign direct investment added to the drag, remaining at around 80% of pre-pandemic levels, the report found.

At a regional level, only the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean suffered a downward revision of growth predictions, with Jordan, Tunisia and Lebanon all seeing their prospects slashed.

Lebanon, which is engulfed in an economic and political crisis, is expected to see its economy contract by 5% in 2021 – the only country to suffer shrinking output out of the 37 covered by the lender.

While the recovery looked broadly on track, economies overall were struggling to return to pre-2020 levels.

“The recovery is taking us parallel to that pre-pandemic trend,” Javorcik said. “In other words: we are not catching up at the moment, and what we are seeing is ... a few points of GDP growth permanently lost.”

The bank, whose shareholders comprise almost 70 countries, was founded in 1991 to help former Soviet bloc countries switch to free-market economies but has since extended its reach. The institution, which invests alongside the private sector, expects a 3.9% expansion next year.

“The increasing rollout of vaccination programs and improvements in the public health situation have allowed for a gradual withdrawal of social distancing measures and other restrictions,” the bank said.

“As a result, economies have restarted.”

Average activity in the EBRD's countries of investment shrank by 2.3% last year on chronic fallout from the pandemic.

Yet this marked an improvement from prior guidance of a 3.9% contraction, thanks also to strong exports and fiscal support.

Pakistan Needs to Attain 7% Economic Growth



ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Pakistan needs to achieve economic growth of up to 7 per cent and for realising this goal, there was a dire need for economic stability, a senior government official said.

Addressing virtually on “Pakistan's Economy – Fragility and Smart Action Strategy” National Workshop Balochistan-7, Federal Finance and Revenue Minister Shaukat Tarin said that the government was committed to ensure that the growth momentum remains intact.

The government's development plan was to enable the country stand on its feet. “It would put the economy on a higher growth trajectory; with growth being generated not by stoking consumption through borrowing, but through higher investment, efficiency and enhanced productivity,” he added.

The government is focusing on measures to establish and strengthen an economy, which was not only self-reliant but also capable of competing with its competitors globally, he said.

Although the incumbent government inherited an economy in crisis with significantly higher macroeconomic imbalances; however, with prudent policies the country has been moved from stabilisation to higher growth.

After considerable efforts, the government has succeeded in stabilising the economy and putting it on the optimal growth path, Tarin said, adding that the Covid-19 brought multifaceted challenges for Pakistan.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, the global economy was projected to grow 3.4 per cent in 2020 but due to the Covid-19, global growth contracted 3.3 per cent. The world's top most economies witnessed negative growth as the United States witnessed negative 3.5 per cent, Euro Area -6.6 per cent, the UK -9.9 per cent, Japan -4.8 per cent, while many others suffered badly.

China...

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His comments reflect greater assertiveness from Beijing, particularly in the rhetoric from its officials.

At centennial celebrations for the Communist Party last week, President Xi Jinping pledged that foreign powers would “get their heads bashed” if they tried to bully China. Xi has also pledged that China's role in the global stage will be based on cooperation, non-confrontation, openness, seeking mutual benefit and opposing a zero-sum game, hegemonism and power politics.

Wang underlined the approach by calling for “peaceful dialogue” to resolve world conflicts that he said were stirred up by the U.S.

“The U.S., as the origin of problems in Afghanistan, should be responsible for making sure the transition in the country will be stable. The US cannot evade responsibility, and cannot cause instability or war by withdrawing troops,” Wang said.

“As friendly neighbors that share the flow of mountain ranges and rivers, China is determined to support the peaceful transition in Afghanistan.”

On nuclear issues, Wang said: “The U.S. should reflect on its decades-old policies of making military threats and putting pressure on North Korea.”

He also urged the U.S. to take the first step to lift unilateral sanctions on Iran to show its commitment to the Iran nuclear deal, which the U.S. withdrew from under former US president Donald Trump.

Wang criticized the U.S. for encouraging “separatists” in Taiwan, and accused “foreign forces” of colluding with people in Hong Kong and Xinjiang

On the conflicts in Myanmar, Israel and Palestine, and the Persian Gulf region, Wang said China would continue to support communication with relevant parties on these issues.

Speaking at the same forum, retired senior diplomat Fu Ying challenged the U.S. and its allies on their call to uphold a “rules-based order”, arguing that those rules only served the interests of the U.S. and its “exclusive” circle.

“The Western world has always brought up [the need for a] ‘rules-based order’. But what are the rules? Did China take part in making those rules?”

Commercializing...

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“With the help of creative and knowledge-based companies, Iran can beat the sanctions. One of the industries now struggling against the sanctions is the agricultural industry and the food security sphere,” he said.

“These companies initiate fundamental and principal changes in this field. In fact, it is companies that guarantee countries’ power,” he added.

Sattari further noted that the vice presidency for science and technology began its steps in the field of food security three years ago. He said the potential of different sectors should be tapped to help develop technology in the country. The vice president touched on the vast research network of the ministry of agricultural jihad as a case in point. He said each one of these research centers should become a technological park to ensure they have effectual research outputs.

“The government should change [its role] as the research manager to the research consultant. As long as research is handed to the state sector, no result will come out.

Manufacturing a product is the result of investment by the private sector. Iran is most dependent in the area of food security and the only way out is getting knowledge and technology into the field,” he said.

The new knowledge-based products unveiled on Saturday include producing Camelina Oil for the first time ever in Iran, breeding 2,000 Saanen and Murciana goats through cloning, producing food supplements for cattle and poultry, mass-producing enzymes used in food industry, manufacturing vaccines for fish and cattle and indigenizing the technology for production of biological agents used in greenhouse pest control.

“Crime” and...

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“33 years ago today, U.S. shot down Iran Air 655,” he tweeted on Saturday.

“As a young diplomat, I witnessed U.S. refusal to apologize over the human tragedy it caused,” Zarif said.

“U.S. violence against Iranians began long before & continues today with Economic Terrorism against our people,” the top diplomat concluded.

The U.S. crimes against Iran has continued since the first day of the emergence of the Islamic Republic in Iran and the crimes have been in different forms like sanctions, meddling in the domestic affairs, taking military action or encouraging the puppet regimes to wage a war on Iran.

By economic terrorism, the foreign minister in his tweet was referring to the U.S.'s push through sanctions to prevent the Islamic Republic from conducting any trade activity with the outside world.

The sanctions have been coming in the way of the country's even buying foodstuffs and medicine among other vital items. The global coronavirus' pandemic has not triggered Washington to suspend the bans either.

The United States has been deploying sanctions against Iran since the 1979 victory of the country's Islamic Revolution. The U.S. sustains its inhumane campaign despite several calls on it by the United Nations to lift the measures, and an International Court of Justice ruling obliging it to do the same.

But one should not expect the callous U.S. to stop its inhuman actions against Iran as long as the Islamic Republic establishment exists in Iran and Iranians should themselves give proper responses to the American crimes. The U.S. tries to show itself as defender of human rights and peace-loving country but it can kill people and wage war on the nations easily to show the other side of the coin that reveals merciless nation of this big imperialist state.

Let's remember the memory of those who were on board of this passenger plane and make our country strong enough in order not to let any country dare to commit such crimes against us with and escape it unanswered because waiting for the international community to take measure action against this world arrogance is waste of time.

IAEA...

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The halt came under the Strategic Action Plan to Counter Sanctions, a law passed in December 2020 by the Iranian Parliament, and adds to Iran's previous steps away from the 2015 nuclear deal in response to the U.S.' unilateral withdrawal in 2018 and the other parties' failure to fulfill their commitments.

At that time, the IAEA and the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) reached a temporary bilateral technical understanding, under which the latter would continue to use cameras to record information at its nuclear sites for three months, but it would retain the information exclusively. If the US sanctions were lifted completely within that period in a verifiable manner, Tehran would provide the footage information to the UN nuclear watchdog, otherwise it would be deleted forever. The understanding expired in May amid diplomatic efforts in Vienna, Austria, to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

After the IAEA demanded “an immediate response” from Iran on whether it would extend a monitoring deal that expired on June 25, Gharibabadi reminded the UN nuclear agency that the country is only committed to honor its obligations under the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements. Iran's permanent representative to Vienna-based international organizations reminds the IAEA that the country is only committed to honor its obligations under the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements.

His remarks came after the Russian ambassador to international organizations in Vienna, Mikhail Ulyanov, said Iran's possible extension of a technical agreement with the IAEA on monitoring Iranian nuclear facilities will prevent “uncertainties” and “unjustifiable long-lasting negative effects.”



Spinazzola's Ruptured Achilles Tendon Confirmed

ROME (Dispatches) - Italy left-back Leonardo Spinazzola ruptured an Achilles tendon in his team's 2-1 Euro 2020 quarter-final win over Belgium, the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) confirmed on Saturday.

"Tests carried out at Rome's Sant' Andrea hospital confirmed the subcutaneous rupture of the left Achilles tendon," the FIGC said in a statement, adding "the player will return immediately" to his club side Roma.

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ISSN 1024-6053

P.O. Box: 15875-8551

Address: No 13, Pajouhesh St., Golestan II St, Golestan St.Marzdaran Blvd., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Printed by: Honar Sarzmin Sabz

Distributed by:

Cities of Iran Cultural and Artistic Institute

Managing Director: Fereydoon Taherpour Asl

NBA Issues Beverley One-Game Ban

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Los Angeles Clippers guard Patrick Beverley was suspended one game without pay by the NBA for knocking down Phoenix Suns guard Chris Paul in a playoff loss.

Beverley was banned for unsportsmanlike shoving Paul from behind onto the court during a stoppage in play with 5:49 remaining in th fourth quarter of Wednesday's 130-103 Suns' victory over the host Clippers.

Paul's Suns advanced to the NBA Finals with the triumph while Beverley was given a technical foul and ejected for the move.

Federer Glides Into Last 16 at Wimbledon

LONDON (Dispatches) - Roger Federer moved into the fourth round of a Grand Slam tournament for the 69th time, overcoming a raucous home crowd and the last British man in the draw Cameron Norrie in an entertaining 6-4, 6-4, 5-7, 6-4 win at Wimbledon.

Federer kept his dream alive of a record-extending ninth singles title.

On the women's side, Australia's world number one Ashleigh Barty will hope to follow suit as she bids to add the Wimbledon title to the 2019 French Open crown.

The 25-year-old needs to reassure her fans on Saturday she can win the title on the 50th anniversary of fellow indigenous Australian Evonne Goolagong Cawley's first Wimbledon crown.

Victory over 64th-ranked Katerina Siniakova, who is in the last 32 for the third time in her career, will pitch her into a fourth round clash with French Open champion Barbora Krejickova.

Krejickova has been under the radar but battled through to the Last 16 beating Anastasiya Sevastova of Latvia 7-6 (7-5), 3-6, 7-5.

Federer said this Wimbledon held special significance for him.

"I hope there is a little bit more left in me as this one is special for it is the last slam before I hit the big 40," said Federer, the third oldest man to reach the Last 16 in the Open era.

Norrie follows two-time champion Andy Murray and British number one Dan Evans in exiting in the third round.

Federer's half of the draw looks more treacherous than defending champion Novak Djokovic's with two of the younger generation Daniil Medvedev and Germany's Alexander Zverev potentially lurking further down the line.

Second seed Medvedev faces 2017 Wimbledon finalist Marin Cilic seeking to join Zverev in the fourth round.

Zverev ended big-serving Taylor Fritz's impressive campaign -- 6-7 (3/7), 6-4, 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) -- given he exited the French Open in a wheelchair due to a knee injury.

The match of the day on the men's side was a damp squib as fiery Aussie entertainer Nick Kyrgios retired with an abdominal injury tied at one set all with stylish Canadian 16th seed Felix Auger-Aliassime.

The maverick that is Kyrgios did not have the best of starts as he had left his shoes in the locker room.



Despite the disappointing end to his singles campaign -- his mixed doubles campaign with Venus Williams must be in doubt -- the 26-year-old said he had rediscovered his love of the sport.

Barty is quite the opposite to her compatriot rarely showing her emotions on court however she is playing.

She takes the positives from her ability to scrap it out and win against Anna Blinkova in the second round.

Were Barty to stay in three foot mode then either Coco Gauff or 2018 champion Angelique Kerber could benefit.

Gauff and Kerber will meet in the last 16 after the American teenager breezed past Slovenian Kaja Juvan while the German had a tough three-setter against Aliaksandra Sasnovich of Belarus.

Gauff is not the only teenager making her mark at Wimbledon this year.

Britain's Canada-born 18-year-old Emma Raducanu, who moved with her Romanian father and Chinese mother to England aged two, produced a brilliant display to beat the experienced Sorana Cirstea of Romania 6-3, 7-5.

Raducanu -- the world number 338 at the start of the Championships -- only sat her school leaving exams in April.

She next faces Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic who accused her opponent Jelena Ostapenko of "lying" when she took a medical time-out at 0-4 down in the final set of their third round clash on Saturday.

Hamilton Extends Mercedes Contract Until 2023



PARIS (Dispatches) - Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton has extended his contract with Mercedes until 2023, the team announced on Saturday.

Hamilton, 36, has won six of his seven F1 titles with the outfit since joining them in 2013. The Briton is a prominent advocate against racism and took the knee wearing a Black Lives Matter t-shirt before each race last season.

"It is hard to believe it's been nearly nine years working with this incredible team and I'm excited we're going to continue our partnership for two more years," Hamilton said in a statement.

"We've accomplished so much together but we still have a lot to achieve, both on and off the track. I'm incredibly proud and grateful of how Mercedes has supported me in my drive to improve diversity and equality in our sport.

"They have held themselves accountable and made important strides in creating a more diverse team and inclusive environment." Hamilton has won three of this season's eight races so far but trails championship leader Max Verstappen by 18 points.

On Friday he outpaced Red Bull's Verstappen in practice for this weekend's Austrian Grand Prix.

Marseille Make Balerdi Move Permanent

PARIS (Dispatches) - Marseille have signed Argentina defender Leonardo Balerdi on a permanent basis, the French club said on Saturday.

Balerdi, who joined on loan from Borussia Dortmund last summer, has signed a five-year deal the Velodrome said.

The 22-year-old has two Argentina caps but is not part of the squad that has reached the quarter-finals of the Copa America .

The purchase option at the end of the loan was originally set at 14 million euros (\$16.61 million) but, according to local media, Marseille paid about 8 million euros.

Balerdi made 25 appearances for Marseille, including 21 in Ligue 1, scoring two goals. He became a regular starter after fellow Argentine Jorge Sampaoli took over in February. The signing continues a busy summer in Marseille.

The club had already extended the contract of Spanish centre-back Alvaro Gonzalez and signed young U.S. winger Konrad de la Fuente from Barcelona as well as Brazilian midfielder Gerson from Flamengo.

France attacker Florian Thauvin has moved to Tigres in Mexico where he will join former Marseille striker Andre-Pierre Gignac.

Goalkeeper Yohann Pele, Japanese defenders Hiroki Sakai and Yuto Nagatomo, midfielder Saif-Eddine Khaoui and striker Valere Germain have also left.

Pogacar Seizes Tour Lead On Alpine Opener

PARIS (Dispatches) - Defending champion Tadej Pogacar soared into the Tour de France overall lead on Saturday on an Alpine stage won by Belgian Dylan Teuns as British outfit Ineos's hopes were again battered.

UAE's Slovenian leader Pogacar finished fourth, around a minute behind Teuns, but took another three minutes out of his most credible rival Ineos' Ecuadorian Richard Carapaz.

Overnight leader Mathieu van der Poel went into a trademark 'all or nothing at all' meltdown and looks set drop out of the Tour as promised and jet off to Tokyo to contest the mountain bike gold.

Ronaldo Tops Instagram's Rich List



TURIN (Dispatches) - Juventus superstar Cristiano Ronaldo topped Instagram's rich list, meaning that the Juventus star can charge the highest amount of money for a sponsored post.

Social media marketing firm Hopper HQ released its 2021 Instagram Rich List on Friday, saying Ronaldo topped the list with \$1.6 million per post on his Instagram account. It means advertisers have to pay about 1.8 billion won for a sponsored post if they want to advertise their products through Ronaldo's Instagram account.

Ronaldo was followed by movie star Dwayne Johnson (\$1.52 million), pop star Ariana Grande (\$1.51 million), model Kylie Jenner (\$1.49 million), and pop star Selena Gomez (\$1.46 million). This is the first time that Ronaldo ranked No.1 on Instagram's rich list, which was first released in 2017. Other sports stars also made the list. Lionel Messi, Ronaldo's arch rival, ranked 7th with \$1.16 million while Paris St. Germain forward Neymar came in 16th.

Ronaldo became the first person to reach the 300-million followers mark on Instagram on July 19. The Portugal striker, who became the first sports star to cross the 100 million follower threshold on Instagram in 2017, hit 20 million Instagram followers in January. 2020, becoming the world's most-followed person on Instagram.

Denmark Keep Euro 2020 Dream Alive

BAKU (Dispatches) - Denmark's fairytale run at Euro 2020 will continue into the semi-finals after they beat the Czech Republic 2-1 in Baku on Saturday to move into a last-four meeting with England or Ukraine at Wembley.

First-half goals from Thomas Delaney and Kasper Dolberg were enough to see Kasper Hjulmand's men through despite a second-half rally from the Czechs inspired by Patrik Schick's fifth goal of the tournament.

The Danes have now scored 10 goals in winning their last three matches after starting the tournament with two defeats, the first amid shocking circumstances when Christian Eriksen suffered a cardiac arrest on the pitch.

Three weeks on, they are dreaming of a repeat of 1992 when Denmark won the European Championship despite not even qualifying.

Then Yugoslavia's expulsion due to an outbreak of war gave them a second chance and they are playing like a side inspired by the emotion of Eriksen's collapse and recovery.

The Inter Milan midfielder was able to leave hospital after less than a week with a defibrillator fitted in his chest, but on the field Denmark have survived the loss of their star man for the past decade.

After playing all three group games in Copenhagen and in front of thousands of travelling Danish fans in Amsterdam in a 4-0 thrashing of Wales last weekend, only a small pocket of supporters could make the 4,000 kilometre trip to Azerbaijan.

Those that did make it were celebrating within five minutes as Delaney was left completely unmarked to head home Jens Stryger Larsen's corner.

Tomas Vaclik then had to deny Mikkel Damsgaard to prevent the Danes doubling their lead in a blistering start.

But the Czechs then came into the game and twice Kasper Schmeichel was forced into saves by Tomas Holes.



Kane Leads England Past Ukraine

BAKU (Dispatches) - Harry Kane scored twice as a buoyant England cruised through to the semi-finals of Euro 2020 with a one-sided 4-0 win over Ukraine in Rome on Saturday.

Kane ended a worrying international scoring drought by netting in the 2-0 last-16 defeat of Germany in midweek and he put England ahead inside four minutes on a sweaty evening in the Italian capital.

Gareth Southgate's side then put this quarter-final tie out of sight with two more goals early in the second half, one from Harry Maguire before Kane netted again.

Substitute Jordan Henderson got the fourth, and as Denmark lie in wait in the Wembley semi-final on Tuesday England will be confident of going on to reach a first ever European Championship final and even now claiming a first major international title since 1966.

The draw here was kind for them, with Ukraine surely as weak an opponent as they could hope to face in a quarter-final, a stage at which they have lost to the likes of Italy and Portugal in recent European Championships.

However the statistics are impressive, with England having come through five games at this tournament all without conceding a goal.

Some of their play in wide areas was outstanding, with Raheem Sterling and Jadon Sancho -- making his first start at the Euro -- too hot for Ukraine to handle.

Kane, their captain, had gone close to eight hours without finding the net for his country but his opener here was his second in just eight minutes following the late strike that secured victory over Germany.

Regardless of the opposition, their display at the Stadio Olimpico was a step-up in class in the final third to previous games at the Euro and they will be favorites at home against a Danish side who played their own quarter-final against the Czech Republic on Saturday in distant Baku.

This will be the only match England play away from home in the competition and it marked quite a difference to their defeat of the Germans, which was watched by more than 40,000 supporters at Wembley, where coronavirus restrictions were eased.

