

**During Pompeo's office the world has become 'less secure' 3****Interpol seizes cache of ancient Iranian artifacts in Europe 8****Ali Karimi the best ever Iranian player: Podolski 11****Netflix pens deal with MK2 to screen Abbas Kiarostami films 12**

Private sector bidding to shield production from coronavirus



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The shape of things to come

By Chris Cook & Mahmood Khaghani

Like everyone else, Iranians observed the extraordinary U.S. oil market events of 20th & 21st April 2020 and wondered what on earth was going on, and what it means for Iran's future as a major oil producer. In Tehran in October 2008 I recall similar astonishment as the global dollar financial system experienced a meltdown from which Iran was safely insulated.

It has been said that history does not

repeat itself, but it does rhyme. Once again, Iran is insulated from market turmoil through US financial and physical oil market sanctions and is 'on the outside looking in'. Global lockdowns are believed to have cut oil product demand by up to 30m barrels per day and this demand shock is propagating up the supply chain of refineries and oil distribution systems to producers at the well. →5

124 historical monuments restored in northeast Iran

TEHRAN — Some 124 historical buildings and structures in Khorasan Razavi province, northeast Iran, were restored during the previous Iranian calendar year 1398 (ended March 20).

Ferdowsi mausoleum, Tus Tower, Ancient Windmills of Nashtifan, Ghyasieh School and Ribat-i Sharaf are among the restored sites, IRNA quoted Abolfazl Mokarramifard, the provincial tourism chief, as saying on Monday.

He also explained that some of these historical buildings have the potential to be placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

The restoration projects aimed at preserving, protecting and strengthening the historical sites, which were damaged over the years, he concluded.

The holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Shia Imam, in the province's capital city of Mashhad, attracts thousands of pilgrims each day. →8

Martyr Soleimani's memories of Iran-Iraq war up for release

TEHRAN — Sebte Akbar Publications announced on Monday that a book recounting commander Qassem Soleimani's memories of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war will be released after the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

The book named "Our Blessed Comrade" has been compiled by Asadollah Mohammadinia and Mohammad Mohammadinia, the director of the publisher,

Gholamhossein Qasemi, told the Persian service of MNA.

The book also contains a chapter covering comments by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei about Soleimani and some of his memories of the former commander of IRGC Quds Forces who was assassinated in a U.S. airstrike in Baghdad in January. →12



ARTICLE

Bill Van Auker
Political analyst

Merchants of death: Multibillion-dollar bailout for arms industry amid rising COVID-19 toll

"I have instructed the United States Navy to shoot down and destroy any and all Iranian gunboats if they harass our ships at sea," U.S. President Donald Trump tweeted Wednesday in a startling threat that could trigger a catastrophic war throughout the Middle East and beyond.

The threat to launch a war 7,000 miles from U.S. shores in the midst of coronavirus pandemic, whose death toll in the U.S. is rapidly approaching 50,000, comes on the heels of Trump's Monday night tweet announcing a suspension of all immigration into the United States, a transparent attempt to scapegoat immigrants for the ravages of the pandemic and the layoffs of tens of millions of workers.

There is in both of these actions an expression of desperation and a flailing about in the face of a national and global crisis for which the U.S. ruling class has no viable solution. It is a crude attempt to change the subject and divert public attention from the catastrophic consequences of the criminal indifference of the government and the ruling oligarchy it represents to the lives and well-being of the vast majority of the population.

Pentagon officials reported Wednesday that they had received no prior notification of Trump's tweet, much less any orders for a change in the rules of engagement in the Persian Gulf.

Nonetheless, the brutal and fascist rhetoric of Trump reflects a drive to war by U.S. imperialism that has not been tempered, but rather intensified, by the global pandemic.

Even as Trump issued his tweet, U.S. warships were sailing toward a confrontation with China in the South China Sea. At the same time, the Pentagon was announcing a shift in its deployment of long-range, nuclear capable B-52 bombers to make their presence less predictable to Beijing and Moscow and thereby ratchet up tensions. →7

Russia calls U.S. claims about Iran's launch of satellite 'hypocrisy'

TEHRAN — Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia's permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations, has said claims by the United States that the launch of a satellite by Iran is a violation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 are instances of "double standards" and "hypocrisy".

"US claims that recent launch of a military satellite by #Iran was a violation of 2231 UNSC res. Wrong interpretation. But there is also a different curious aspect- the US attempt to build on the resolution, which it undermines by all possible means. Double standards and hypocrisy," Ulyanov tweeted on Sunday.

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps successfully launched Iran's first military satellite into the orbit on Wednesday, April 22.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo claimed

the launch violated the Security Council resolution.

"I think every nation has an obligation to go to the United Nations and evaluate whether this missile launch was consistent with that Security Council resolution," Pompeo told reporters, according to the Guardian.

In a statement on Thursday, France also claimed the launch was in contravention of Resolution 2231 and called on Tehran to immediately cease all activities related to the development of ballistic missiles designed to be capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

Britain also claimed on Friday that Iran's launch of the military satellite is inconsistent with a UN Security Council resolution.

Germany also said that Berlin's position on the Islamic Republic's missile program has not changed, and the program has a destabilizing impact on the region.

In response, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Friday that both the U.S. and Europe cannot lecture Iran based on misreading of the Resolution 2231 which endorsed the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

Zarif said the United States has violated Resolution 2231 and Europe has obeyed Washington instead of abiding by the resolution.

"US has been bullying all against UNSC Resolution 2231 since 2017. Europe obeyed US instead of 2231. Neither can lecture Iran based on flimsy misreadings of UNSCR 2231," Zarif tweeted.

Zarif said, "Iran neither has nukes nor missiles 'DESIGNED' to be capable of carrying such horrific arms."

Zarif also posted news headlines which say the U.S., France, Britain and the Zionist regime of Israel possess and develop nuclear weapons. →2

Syria air defenses down Israeli missiles over Damascus

Syrian air defenses have thwarted an Israeli aggression, and shot down a number of "hostile" missiles in the skies over the capital, Damascus, before reaching their targets.

The official Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) said the aggression took place in the early hours of Monday, which left three civilians dead.

According to the report, the Israeli missiles came from the Lebanese airspace.

Since the start of the foreign-backed war on Syria in 2011, Israel has carried out hundreds of strikes in the country, targeting government troops and their allies.

Last Monday, the Syrian air defenses intercepted a number of Israeli missiles over the ancient

city of Palmyra in the central province of Homs, and downed "a number of enemy's missiles".

Back then, Israeli media claimed that the target site was the T4 base in Homs, a base that Israel has attacked a number of times in the past.

The air defense units of the Syrian army responded to the Israeli aggression over the airspace of Palmyra, Syria's official news agency reported on Monday night.

"A number of enemy's missiles have been shot down" by the Syrian air defenses, SANA quoted its correspondent as saying.

Israeli media claim that the target site was the T4 base in Homs, a base that Israel had attacked a number of times in the past.



Iran's flag on Swiss iconic mountain shows sympathy in battling coronavirus

TEHRAN — In a symbolic gesture, Switzerland sympathized with the Iranian people in the face of the coronavirus pandemic by projecting the Iranian flag on mountain of the Matterhorn, one of the country's most famous peaks.

The Swiss Embassy in Tehran posted a picture on its official page on Instagram, last night, on the most iconic mountain in Switzerland, Matterhorn, the Iranian flag was projected to send a message of hope, strength and perseverance to the Iranian people in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis. The image went viral among Iranian users in social media who highly praised the move.

Since almost a month, every night the Matterhorn is illuminating different symbols, to give the people hope and show solidarity to the world, the projections are also 'to say thank you to all the people working hard during this crisis.



REPORT

Faranak Bakhtiari
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Building resilient cities, a post-coronavirus necessity

When a global disaster spreads out in the form of coronavirus pandemic, how communities will survive the aftermath crosses everyone's mind. However, how can one particular intervention succeed in strengthening a city against epidemics and disasters?

Some economists and social scientists believe that should not be returned to the current dense life because large cities are more vulnerable to viruses and accidents.

The analysis on various incidents and crises, such as the outbreak of coronavirus and biological warfare, shows that the most affected areas are densely populated, large and crowded cities, and what mostly remains will be villages and suburbs. Accordingly, experts believe that resilient cities should be developed and prepared for the future.

Urban resilience is the ability or capacity of a city to survive and thrive in the face of disaster, any kind of disaster. It turns out that the capacities that cities or states, or nations need to survive and thrive in the face of all these different threats are pretty broad. It includes a good infrastructure that promotes mobility and sustainable transportation. It's also cohesive communities where neighbors check in on neighbors. It's a diverse economy with a strong middle-class jobs base. It's good governance with multiple stakeholders at a decision-making table. All of those things help communities overcome whatever the next crisis might be.

The outbreak of diseases, which affects all countries today and has claimed millions of lives and killed hundreds of thousands, has doubled the importance of addressing resilient cities where new crises such as biological warfare are more likely to be countered.

Seyyed Abdul-Hossein Sasan, an economic and political analyst, explained that resilience is used for cities, villages, and industry; in all three cases, reliance is defined from the perspectives of natural disasters, accidents, health, economic, social, cultural, physical and ecological characteristics. →9