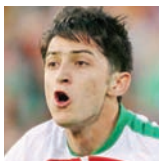




Larijani felicitates Lebanon on Liberation Day **3**



Imam Reza holy shrine reopens as virus restrictions eased **9**



Skocic better coach than Wilmots: Azmoun **11**



Iran reopens movies theaters in “white areas” after virus shutdown **12**

On coasts of Venezuela

See page 3



Tehran condemns interference in China’s affairs, says backs ‘One-China’ policy

TEHRAN — Iran has condemned any interference by other countries in the internal affairs of the People’s Republic of China, saying Tehran supports the One-China policy.

In a statement on Sunday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi stressed that “non-interference in the affairs of other countries, protection

of the territorial integrity of the world countries and respect for their national sovereignty” are among the clear and immutable principles in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

“Based upon such principles, the Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes the importance of respecting the ‘One-China’ policy.” **➔3**

Beyhaqi mausoleum to undergo urgent restoration

TEHRAN — The mausoleum of Beyhaqi, Iranian polymath, in the northeastern province of Khorasan Razavi will undergo urgent rehabilitation works, provincial tourism chief has said.

The eastern parts of the mausoleum, which have been damaged by heavy rains over the past two years, need urgent restoration, which will be done in the near future, CHTN quoted Mohsen Barabadi as saying on Monday.

The restoration project, which aims at repairing and strengthening the monument, needs 2 billion rials (some \$50,000) budget, he added. The mausoleum, which is located in the city of Sheshtamad, in Sabzevar county, was built in 1974.

Abu al-Hassan Beyhaqi, also known as Ibn Fondoq was a 12th century Iranian scientist and literatus. He authored over 70 works ranging from Arabic grammar to astrology to philology. **➔8**

New runway inaugurated in northern Ramsar Airport

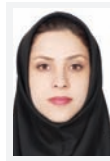
TEHRAN — Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami inaugurated a new runway in Ramsar International Airport in the northern Mazandaran Province, during a ceremony on Monday.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Head of Iran Airports and Air Navigation Company Siavash Amirmokri as well as local officials, the ministry’s news portal reported.

As reported, the new runway, on which 1.5 trillion rials (about \$35.7 million) was invested, has made it possible for Airbus planes to land in the mentioned airport for the first time after 52 years.

“As of now, all [the country’s] 16 airlines can fly to Ramsar Airport,” Eslami said in the inauguration ceremony.

The airport was previously closed, due to infrastructure limitations and no major flights were allowed to land in the airport.



ARTICLE
Mahnaz Abdi
Head of the TehranTimes Economy Desk

Reviving small mines, a big step toward ‘Surge in Production’

Reviving the small mines was one of the major plans that Iran’s mining sector was seriously pursuing in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), which was named the year of “Pickup in Production”.

Last year, Khodadad Gharibpour, the head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), had mentioned this plan as one of the most significant plans of “Resistance Economy”, saying that IMIDRO was strongly determined to carry out it.

Such strong will resulted in reviving 146 small mines in the previous year, although the planned figure was 150, which did not come true because of the coronavirus pandemic in the last month of the year.

Reviving the small mines is also among the top plans of the country’s mining sector in the current Iranian calendar year, which is named the year of “Surge in Production”.

IMIDRO head has announced that the organization is planning to revive 200 small mines in the present year.

“Given the significance of reviving small mines, we have doubled the organization’s internal budget for the plan to revive small mines in the current year”, Gharibpour announced last week in a meeting on monitoring the plan for reviving and developing the small mines.

According to the official, based on an MOU signed three years ago, 500 small mines were planned to be revived throughout the country in a course of five years to create jobs for 25,000 people.

This year’s slogan of surge in production means that more minerals should be supplied as the feedstock for the industrial units, and it indicates the significance of reviving and developing the small mines (which constitute 98 percent of mines in the country) as some major sources of such supply.

IMIDRO and other related organizations have already announced their support for this plan and the mining sector’s officials have been suggesting different strategies for optimizing implementation of the plan. **➔4**

HK security chief warns of growing ‘terrorism’

Hong Kong’s security chief has warned about a rise in violence and acts of “terrorism” as protesters defy coronavirus-related curbs and return to the streets to slam mainland China’s proposed anti-secession laws for the restive territory.

Police fired tear gas and water cannon on Sunday to break up an unauthorized march, which was held in violation of a ban on gatherings of more than eight people amid a coronavirus outbreak.

They said 180 arrests were made during the clashes.

Following months of calm, unrest returned to Hong Kong last week after Beijing announced a plan to introduce new national security laws that are expected to forbid secession, secession and subversion against the mainland.

It will also pave the way for Chinese national security institutions to operate in the city for the first time since 1997, when Hong Kong re-

turned from British to Chinese rule. The bill was submitted on Friday to the Chinese parliament — National People’s Congress.

Critics view such a measure as a blow to the semi-autonomous region’s autonomy and civil liberties, but Beijing has assured that the planned security laws target a minority of troublemakers that disregard law and order in Hong Kong.

Reacting to the new wave of unrest, Hong Kong’s Secretary for Security John Lee warned in a statement on Monday that “terrorism is growing in the city and activities which harm national security, such as Hong Kong independence, become more rampant.”

Lee defended the mainland’s proposed security bill as a necessary measure to restore peace and stability to the violence-hit financial hub.

“In just a few months, Hong Kong has changed from one of the safest cities in the world to a city shrouded in the shadow of violence,” he said. **➔10**

Has Wall Street stolen \$100 trillion from the American public? Will Donald Trump get it back?

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW Part 1
By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — Robert David Steele, a former Marine Corps infantry officer and CIA spy as well as an activist for Open Source Everything Engineering (OSEE), contributes regularly to Tehran Times.

■ The above cartoon was published a few days ago by Ben Garrison, America’s most famous conservative cartoonist who has also been ruthlessly defamed and impoverished by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL).

His cartoons are known to be favored by President Donald Trump. How did you achieve this rather unusual honor and can you explain the cartoon?

A. The cartoon was commissioned by one of my fans, a lady of means who has earned a PhD and MD and believes that my motto “the truth at any cost lowers all other costs” should be the President’s motto as well. This was her way of both respecting my commitment to reform, and seeking to remind the President that I am armed, dangerous, and still waiting to serve him.

She provided the artist with some ideas, he kindly asked me what I thought was important, and out of this came his original creation. I was stunned by his ability to capture in one image everything I despise and seek to reform. He envisioned me as a “Don Quixote” but unlike Don Quixote, he sees me surfing the Trump/ GOP wave, backed up by the National Security Agency (NSA) database holding all the evidence we need to eradicate traitors, elite pedophiles, and both white and black collar criminals. **➔7**



© ISNA/ Masoumeh Bagheri

‘Well No. 1’ celebrates 112th anniversary

The picture depicts the first oil well in Iran dubbed ‘Well No. 1’ which was drilled on May 26, 1908 at Masjed Soleyman Oilfield, southwestern Khuzestan Province.

It is said to be the first oil well which was drilled in West Asia.

Masjed Soleyman field is estimated to contain 6.5 billion barrels of oil and is owned by the National Iranian Oil Company.

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TEHRAN TIMES

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Beheshti newspaper **3**

Revolutionary press should defend truth **11**

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U.S. manufactured ‘emergency’ to sell arms to Saudi Arabia

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo ordered officials at the department under his watch to find a way to justify the use of an emergency declaration meant to expedite the \$8 billion weapons sale to Saudi Arabia, CNN reports.

Four sources in the U.S. State Department told the TV channel on Friday that they were stunned by the request to justify the emergency declared in May 2019 by Pompeo that enabled him to sidestep a congressional ban on arms export to the Riyadh regime amid the war on Yemen.

Under Pompeo’s order, the sources said, State Department officials had to “reverse engineer” the situation to provide the justification for a decision which was made in an aggressive and unconventional manner.

“They seemed to have a game plan and it had to be justified,” said a State Department official.

“The attitude was very Trumpian,” he added, referring to U.S. President Donald Trump.

Pompeo’s demand sent offices at the U.S. State Department, with the regional office, the political military bureau and the legal office all set into motion to figure out how the emergency could be justified, according to the sources. The quick decision did not allow for a thorough discussion about the arms sale between the various government agencies involved.

“It seemed we [the Trump administration] were determined to turn a corner on [Jamal] Khashoggi (the Saudi dissident journalist murdered in Istanbul). The message was we need to move on, and provide the support,” the official said. “It was an incredible display of audacity.” **➔10**

Rouhani says it's necessary to reopen borders with Turkey

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — In a phone conversation with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday, President Hassan Rouhani said that it is necessary to reopen land and air borders by observing healthcare protocols.

"It is essential for the two countries to exchange experiences in fighting the virus [the coronavirus] to resume developing and deepening Tehran-Ankara relations," he said.

Erdogan said that cooperation and exchange of experiences can be very "useful" in fighting the coronavirus.

"I will give necessary orders for reopening the borders and resuming economic interaction," Erdogan said.

In late February, Turkey closed its border with Iran as a preventative measure against the coronavirus outbreak.

Cuban president: Iranian oil tanker arrival in Venezuela breaks U.S. 'criminal blockade'

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel has said that arrival of Iranian oil tanker in Venezuela breaks the United States' "unacceptable" and criminal blockade.



"The first of five Iranian oil tankers arrives in Venezuela breaking unacceptable and criminal blockade. #VivaLaSolidaridad Long live solidarity among the peoples," he tweeted on Sunday.

Amid heightened tensions over what Venezuelan authorities described as threats from the United States, the oil vessel Fortune officially entered Venezuela's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) at about 7:30 pm local time (11:30 GMT) on Saturday, according to the shipping tracker TankerTracker.

It is carrying more than a million barrels of fuel.

The U.S., which has imposed sanctions on both Venezuela and Iran, says it is monitoring the convoy. Both Caracas and Tehran have warned Washington not to interfere with the delivery.

The rest of the Iranian ships - the Forest, Petunia, Faxon, and Clavel - are expected to arrive in the coming days.

The U.S. recently beefed up its naval presence in the Caribbean for what it said was an expanded anti-drug operation. Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman claimed on Thursday he was not aware of any operations related to the Iranian vessels.

U.S. regional presence is coming to an end: IRGC official

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Yadollah Javani, the deputy commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps for political affairs, has said that the United States' presence in the region is coming to an end.

"It seems that the time of the United States' presence is coming to an end. Holding [military] exercises cannot stabilize their presence in the region," he told Tasnim news agency in an interview published on Monday.

He noted, "The United States is familiar with the origin of Iran's power. So, exercises cannot affect determination of the Islamic Republic."

According to a Defense Department press release of May 23, the U.S. conducted military training exercises with live ammunition in the Persian Gulf between May 19 and 21.

■ 'Continuation of U.S. regional presence to be harmful to itself'

Javani also said that continuation of the U.S. presence in the region will be harmful to itself because the people in the regional countries detest Washington's policies.

He said that pullout of U.S. forces in the region helps regional security, because Washington benefits from the regional instability.

The IRGC official noted that security must be maintained by the countries in the region.

President Hassan Rouhani said on April 29 that the U.S. must know that the waterway in the West Asia region is the Persian Gulf and not the New York or Washington Gulf.

"They must understand the situation by the name of the place and the people who have protected it for thousands of years and stop hatching plots against the Iranian people," Rouhani said in a cabinet meeting.

He said, "The United States has witnessed the Iranian people's success in all areas and also in protecting the Persian Gulf waterway. Our soldiers in armed forces, the Guards [the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps], Basij, Army and police forces have always protected and will protect the Persian Gulf."

Rouhani made the remarks after U.S. President Donald Trump said in a tweet on April 22 that he had ordered the U.S. Navy to destroy Iranian boats "if they harass" U.S. ships in the Persian Gulf.

"I have instructed the United States Navy to shoot down and destroy any and all Iranian gunboats if they harass our ships at sea," Trump said in a tweet on April 22.

The IRGC rejected U.S. description of the Iranian boats' behavior in the Persian Gulf, saying such a depiction is like "Hollywood scenarios".

Rouhani also described the Persian Gulf as a very "important" and "sensitive" region.

"The Persian Gulf belongs to the Iranian nation and has always been and will be the Persian Gulf," the president noted.

IRGC Navy chief Alireza Tangsiri said on April 27 that the United States is an "uninvited guest" in the Persian Gulf.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on April 20 that foreign forces' presence in the region is the source of insecurity, instability, and tension.

"We consider presence of foreign forces, especially forces of the United States, in the region a source of tension, instability, and insecurity. Their presence is illegal and illegitimate. This is our region and our armed forces must be able to patrol without hurdle," Mousavi said in a press conference held through video conference.

He said, "It has been for thousands of years that Iran is in this region and the regional security must be provided by the regional countries, especially Oman which is in the Strait of Hormuz region."

The spokesman urged foreign forces to leave the region and not make Iran give them warning.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif wrote on his Twitter page on April 23 that "US forces have no business 7,000 miles away from home, provoking our sailors off our OWN Persian Gulf shores."

Ayatollah Khamenei: Virus of Zionism will not last long

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has said that the "virus of Zionism" will not last much longer and it will be uprooted.

"Undoubtedly, the long-lasting virus of Zionism will not last much longer, and it will be uprooted thanks to the determination, faith and pride of the youth," Ayatollah Khamenei said during a speech on May 22 on the occasion of Quds Day.

Following is full text of his speech published by khamenei.ir:

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and His peace and greetings be upon Muhammad, upon his pure Household, upon his chosen companions and upon those who follow them until the Day of Judgment.

I extend my greetings to all the Muslim brothers and sisters throughout the world and I congratulate them in advance on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr. I also pray to God to accept their worship acts and servitude in this Holy Month of Ramadan, and I thank the Benevolent Creator for the blessing of being present in this month of this divine banquet.

Today is Quds Day, a day created - thanks to Imam Khomeini's (r.a.) intelligent initiative - to unite Muslims on the issue of Holy Quds and in support of the oppressed people of Palestine. It has played an important role in this regard for several decades now, and God willing, it will continue to do so in the future as well. Nations welcomed Quds Day and considered it to be a religious obligation to hold up the flag for Palestine's liberation. The main policy of the Arrogant Powers and Zionism is to push aside the issue of Palestine in the minds of Muslim communities and to cause it to fade into oblivion.

The most urgent responsibility in this regard is fighting this treachery, which is conducted by the enemy's political and cultural mercenaries in Islamic countries. The truth is that an issue as important as Palestine is not something that the pride, self-esteem and increasing intelligence of Muslim nations will allow to sink into oblivion, even if the Americans, other domineering powers and their regional minions use all their money and power to achieve this goal.

First, I would like to highlight the magnitude of the tragedy of the occupation of Palestine and the formation of the Zionist cancerous tumor in that country. Among crimes against humanity in recent times, there is no crime that equals this crime in terms of scope and gravity. Occupying a country, permanently driving its people out from their homes and their fatherland, and continuing this historical oppression for decades using the most horrifying forms of murder, crime, destruction of farmlands, and genocide - this is indeed a new record in brutality and wickedness.

The main agents and criminals behind this tragedy are the western governments and their satanic policies. The day when the governments who had won the war in the First World War were carving up West Asia - namely, the Asian territories of the Ottoman Empire - among themselves at the Paris Conference as spoils of war, they felt the need for a safe stronghold in the heart of this region more than ever in order to guarantee their permanent hegemony. Years earlier, through the Balfour Declaration and conspiring together with Jewish plutocrats, the British had prepared the ground for the innovation of Zionism to carry out this role. And now the practical groundwork was in place. During those early years, they gradually prepared the preliminaries, and finally, after the Second World War, they used the opportunity created by the negligence and problems of the regional countries and dealt their blow. They announced the creation of the bogus regime, the nationless Zionist state.

The primary target of this blow was the Palestinian nation and secondarily all the other nations in the region. A look at the events that followed in the region shows that the main, short-term goal that westerners and Jewish company owners pursued by creating the Zionist regime was to build a stronghold for their permanent presence and influence



in West Asia and also to gain easy access for the opportunity to interfere, coerce and dominate over the regional countries and governments. Therefore, they equipped the bogus and occupying regime with various kinds of military and non-military tools of power, even with atomic weapons, and their plans included the growth of this cancerous tumor from the Nile to the Euphrates.

Sadly, after their initial struggles of resistance, some of which were praiseworthy, the majority of Arab governments gradually succumbed. Particularly after the United States took charge in this matter, they forgot their human, Islamic and political responsibilities and their Arab pride. With delusional hopes they contributed to the enemy's goals. The Camp David Accord is a clear example of this bitter historical fact.

After brave sacrifices and struggles in the early years, resistance groups were gradually pulled to the path of unsuccessful negotiations with the occupier and its supporters. They abandoned the route that could have led to the realization of the Palestinian dream. Negotiations with the United States and other western governments, and also negotiations with useless international groups, were bitter, unsuccessful experiences for Palestine. Holding out an olive branch at the United Nations General Assembly had no result other than the injurious Oslo Accords, and it led to the eye-opening fate of Yasser Arafat.

The dawn of the Islamic Revolution in Iran opened up a new chapter in the struggle for Palestine. From the first steps - namely, driving out the Zionist elements who considered Iran of the Pahlavi period to be one of their safe strongholds - to delegating the unofficial embassy of the Zionist regime to the Palestinian representative, stopping the flow of oil, other great achievements and widespread political activities. All of these measures brought about the emergence of a front of resistance in the entire region. The hope of solving this issue flourished in hearts. The emergence of the resistance front presented the Zionist regime with increasing problems. God willing, the Zionist regime will encounter even more problems in the future.

However, the efforts of the supporters of that regime - with the U.S. in the front - increased sharply in order to defend the Zionists. The emergence of the faithful, young, self-sacrificing force of Hezbollah in Lebanon and the formation of highly-motivated groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad within the Palestinian borders unsettled and alarmed not only the Zionist ringleaders but also the U.S. and other aggressive western powers. After and in addition to their support of the occupying regime with weapons and propaganda, they added recruiting from within the region and from within Arab society to the top of their agenda. Today the result of their voluminous work is obvious and in plain view, revealing itself in the actions and words of certain leaders of Arab governments and certain treacherous political and cultural Arab activists.

U.S. not qualified to judge other countries, Iran says

"It is better for it to deal with its own dark and evil record"

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Monday that the United States is not politically and legally qualified to judge other countries.

"The United States is not politically, legally and morally qualified to judge other countries and it is better for it to deal with its own dark and evil record," he said.

His comments came as response to a report issued by the U.S. State Department on May 22 titled "Iran's Assassinations and Terrorist Activity Abroad".

Mousavi rejected the report and called the accusations against Iran "fake" which come from "plot" and "illusion" aimed at launching a psychological warfare against Tehran.

"This so-called report is a mixture of illusion

Today, both fronts engage in various activities in the arena of struggle. The difference between them is that the resistance front is moving with increasing power and hope, and it marches on towards attracting increasing elements of power, while the opposing front of oppression, unbelief and arrogance is growing more hollow, hopeless and powerless by the day. A clear manifestation of this assertion is the fact that the Zionist army—which was once considered to be invincible and lightning fast, one that would stop the aggression of two great armies in a matter of days—is currently forced to retreat and accept defeat against popular forces in Lebanon and Gaza.

Nevertheless, the arena of struggle is volatile and full of dangers. It requires constant vigilance, and the objective of this struggle is very important, fateful and vital. Any kind of negligence, inattention or mistakes in fundamental calculations will inflict heavy damage.

Therefore, I would like to offer some advice to all those who have strong feelings for the issue of Palestine:

1- The struggle to liberate Palestine is Jihad in the way of God, and it is an obligation and an Islamic goal. Victory in such a struggle has been guaranteed, because the person who is fighting, even if he is killed, will receive "one of the two excellent things; [Quran 9:52] ." Apart from this, the issue of Palestine is a human issue. Driving out millions of human beings from their homes, farmlands and places of business, and doing so through murder and crimes, troubles everyone's conscience and it inspires opposition in everyone who enjoys courage and determination. Therefore, restricting this to be merely a Palestinian issue, or at best an Arab issue, is a grave mistake. Those who consider the concessions made by a few Palestinian elements or rulers of a few Arab countries as a license to sidestep this Islamic and human issue are making a grave mistake in understanding the matter, and perhaps they are guilty of betrayal for distorting the truth.

2- The aim of this struggle is the liberation of all the Palestinian lands - from the river to the sea - and the return of all Palestinians to their homeland. Reducing this struggle to the formation of a government in a corner of the Palestinian lands - particularly, in the humiliating way that is mentioned in the discourse of shameless Zionists - is neither a sign of righteous struggle nor a sign of realism. The truth is that today millions of Palestinians have achieved a level of thinking, experience and self-esteem such that they can focus their efforts on this great struggle in the way of God and be certain of divine assistance and the ultimate victory. "Surely God will help him who helps His cause; most surely God is Strong, Mighty; [22:40]." Undoubtedly, many Muslims throughout the world will support them and share in their struggle, God willing.

3- Although using any halal and religiously permissible means, including global support, is allowed in this struggle - it is absolutely essential

to avoid trusting western governments and international groups that are covertly or overtly dependent on them. They are opposed to any effective entity of an Islamic nature. They have no regard for human rights. They themselves are the cause of the worst harm and crimes against the Islamic nation. Which international entity and which criminal power is currently being held accountable for the assassinations, the mass murders, the warmongering, the bombings and the human-made famines in many Islamic and Arab countries?

Today, the world is counting one by one every victim of the coronavirus across the globe, but nobody has asked who is responsible for the hundreds of thousands of martyrdoms, imprisonments and disappearances in countries where the U.S. and Europe have waged wars. Who is responsible for all the unlawful bloodshed in Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya, Iraq, Syria and other countries? Who is responsible for all these crimes and for the occupation, destruction and oppression in Palestine? Why didn't anyone count the millions of oppressed children, women and men in the world of Islam? Why doesn't anyone extend their condolences for the mass murder of Muslims? Why should millions of Palestinians spend 70 years away from their homes and in exile? And why should Holy Quds, the first Qiblah of Muslims, be desecrated? The so-called United Nations is not fulfilling its function and the so-called human rights organizations are dead. The slogan of defending the rights of women and children excludes Yemeni and Palestinian women and children.

This is the current condition of the oppressive western powers and dependent global organizations. The disgrace of certain regional governments that follow them is beyond words.

Therefore, a proud and pious Muslim society must rely on itself and its internal forces. It must raise its powerful hand and remove obstacles by relying on and trusting in God.

4- The important point that must not be ignored by the political and military elites of the Islamic world is that the policy of the U.S. and the Zionists is to transfer conflicts to behind the frontlines of the front of resistance. Staging civil wars in Syria, the military siege and constant killings in Yemen, the assassinations, the destruction, the creation of ISIS in Iraq and other similar things in some other countries in the region are all machinations to divert the attention of the resistance front and to provide opportunities for the Zionist regime. Some Muslim politicians knowingly, and some others unknowingly, have contributed to these machinations of the enemy. The main way to prevent these machinations is for the proud youth throughout the world of Islam to seriously make this demand. Young people in all Islamic countries, particularly in Arab countries, must pay attention to this advice from Imam Khomeini (r.a.), "Vent all your shouts on the U.S." and of course, on the Zionist enemy.

5- The policy of normalizing the presence of the Zionist regime in the region is one of the main policies of the United States of America. Certain Arab governments in the region, which act as the minions of the U.S., have been preparing the ground for this normalization by establishing economic ties and the like. These efforts are completely vain and futile. The Zionist regime is a deadly, cancerous growth and a detriment to this region. It will undoubtedly be uprooted and destroyed. Then, the shame will fall on those who put their facilities at the service of this policy of the arrogant powers. To justify such disgraceful behavior, some people argue that the Zionist regime is a reality that the region must come to terms with. They forget that it is necessary to fight and destroy fatal and harmful realities. Today the coronavirus is a reality and yet all wise people agree that it is necessary to fight it. Undoubtedly, the long-lasting virus of Zionism will not last much longer, and it will be uprooted thanks to the determination, faith and pride of the youth.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Guardian Council will announce its final view on eliminating

four zeros from the national currency in the coming days, council spokesman Abassali Kadkhodaei said on Monday.

Iranian parliament (Majlis) approved a government's

bill proposed by the central bank for eliminating four zeros from the national currency, central bank governor wrote in an Instagram post on May 4.

Speaking in an open session of the Majlis on May 4, Abdolnaser Hemmati said it was also approved that the

national currency will be changed from "rial" to "toman", IRNA reported.

The decision was made in order to maintain the efficiency of the national currency and facilitate and restore the role of cash in domestic monetary transactions.

On coasts of Venezuela

Iran defies U.S. by sending fuel to Venezuela

By staff and agencies

The first of five Iranian oil tankers has entered Venezuela's waters carrying more than a million barrels of fuel. The tankers are being escorted by the Venezuelan navy and air force.

The U.S., which has imposed sanctions on both countries, says it is monitoring the convoy, BBC reported.

Both Tehran and Caracas have warned Washington not to interfere with the delivery.

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro thanked Iran for its support, describing the two countries as "two revolutionary peoples who will never kneel down before North American imperialism".

In a televised address, Maduro said, "We have the right to trade freely."

He added, "Venezuela and Iran both want peace."

Maduro thanked Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani for the assistance, saying Venezuela had "good and brave friends" in the world, Press TV reported.

The United States has imposed sanctions prohibiting trade with both Iran and Venezuela.

The five tankers - Fortune, Forest, Petunia, Faxon and Clavel - are carrying about 1.5m barrels of fuel and passed through the Suez Canal earlier this month, according to shipping data on Refinitiv Eikon.

"The ships of the sister Islamic Republic of Iran are in our exclusive economic zone," Venezuelan Oil Minister Tarek El Aissami wrote on Twitter after the arrival of the first tanker, named Fortune.

"The first Iranian tanker reached the Venezuelan coasts," the Iranian embassy in Venezuela said in a Twitter post. "Grateful to the Bolivarian Armed Forces for escorting them."

The U.S. recently beefed up its naval presence in the Caribbean. Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman claimed on Thursday he was not aware of any operations related to the Iranian vessels.

The U.S. reinstated economic sanctions



on Iran after President Donald Trump unilaterally and illegally abandoned a landmark nuclear deal in May 2018.

Venezuela's permanent representative to the UN has welcomed the arrival of Iranian tankers, urging Trump to avoid an act of aggression based on the "wrong advice" of warmongers.

In a series of tweets on Sunday, Samuel Moncada cited an open letter to Trump written by a group of 14 retired experts of the U.S. intelligence community, who warned him against a military attack on the Venezuela-bound Iranian fuel tankers.

"The Iranian gasoline reaching Venezuela is a landmark in the struggle for sovereignty, independence and peace. Trump and his minions are thinking of a military attack against the tankers amidst the pandemic. His experts advise him otherwise," he wrote.

In a post on his Twitter page, Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza also said, "Iran and Venezuela have always supported each other in times of difficulty." He added,

"Today, the first ship with gasoline arrives for our people."

■ 'Defiance to hegemony'

Mohammad Marandi, a professor at the University of Tehran, said the United States has no right to dictate how Iran and Venezuela conduct their business.

"What is important is that these are trade ties between two sovereign countries, and the regime in Washington is in no position to dictate terms to the international community," Marandi told Al Jazeera.

"Iran is not a weak country like countries within the EU that bow down to the United States when it makes it mad. Sending five ships is a big message - it wasn't just one or two - so the Iranians did that both to give support to the Venezuelan people to prevent them from suffering, and also in an act of defiance to U.S. hegemony."

President Rouhani had on Saturday warned the U.S. against disrupting the shipments as the oil tankers passed through the Caribbean Sea on their way to Venezuela.

"If the Americans cause problems for our oil tankers in the Caribbean Sea, we will also cause problems for them," Rouhani said in a telephone call with Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

Rouhani stressed that Iran did not want a new conflict with the U.S., but his country would reserve the right to defend its interests.

"We, therefore, hope that the Americans will not make a mistake in this regard," said the president, according to comments published on his office's web portal.

Iran and Venezuela have held a close relationship since late Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez took power in 1999.

■ 'U.S. sanctions on Venezuela broken by arrival of Iran's oil tanker'

Abdel Bari Atwan, the editor-in-chief of the Rai al-Youm website, has told Al Mayadeen TV that President Trump has suffered a defeat as Washington's sanctions on Venezuela have been broken by arrival of Iran's oil tanker.

In a report on May 24, the Washington Post said Venezuela and Iran are forging a closer strategic partnership, providing President Maduro a vital lifeline and offering Tehran the prospect of a new center of influence just across the Caribbean Sea from Florida.

Elliott Abrams, U.S. special representative to Venezuela, said Iran and Venezuela are "finding that they are able to exchange things they need for things they have."

U.S. sanctions on Iran target anyone purchasing or facilitating the purchase of petroleum products from that country, but Venezuela's oil company is already under similar sanctions. The Trump administration has also invoked the Monroe Doctrine — the 19th-century policy that rejects outside intervention in the Western Hemisphere — to move against foreign entities that do business with Maduro.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif had already written to UN Secretary General Guterres warning against any kind of disturbance for the vessels.

Zarif's deputy Abbas Araqchi had also warned that Iran's response to any disturbance will be "quick and decisive".

JCPOA ensuring Iran's nuclear program is peaceful, says Russia

'The goal of opponents is to undermine confidence and cooperation between Tehran and IAEA'

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal, fulfils its task of making sure Iran's nuclear program is peaceful, says Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia's permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations.

"The purpose of #JCPOA is to restore confidence in exclusively peaceful nature of nuclear program of #Iran," Ulyanov tweeted on Monday.

"The deal fulfils this task," he wrote. "No sign of military dimension was found. The goal of opponents is opposite - to undermine confidence and cooperation between Tehran and #IAEA."

In an earlier tweet on Sunday, the Russian envoy wrote, "Opponents of #JCPOA call for a 'renewed coalition of pressure on Tehran'. In their article in Newsweek, published on Sunday, they try to instruct #IAEA what it 'must' and 'should' do. IAEA is independent. It's Board of Governors and Secretariat will decide for themselves on how to proceed."

The Newsweek article that Ulyanov referred to, titled "The IAEA must report its latest findings on Iran's nuclear weapons program", called for a renewed coalition of pressure on Tehran in order to "address the regime's nuclear program from its roots."

"World powers should make clear to Iran that it can no longer conceal its nuclear past and potentially its present—or swift international penalties will follow," added the article written by Jacob Nagel, former acting national security advisor to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Andrea Stricker, a research fellow at FDD.



This is while Iran tops the list of countries which accepted inspections of the International Atomic Energy Agency in 2019.

"Last year, the Islamic Republic received 21 percent of the entire visits that were made to various nuclear sites across the world by inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Organization (IAEA)," Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's ambassador to the Vienna-based international organizations, said earlier this month.

He was citing the IAEA's 129-page 2019 Safeguards Implementation Report.

"The agency continued to verify and monitor the nuclear-related commitments of the Islamic Republic of Iran under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action," read the 129-page report prepared for diplomats that accounts for resources spent on enforcing the landmark 2015 agreement among world powers.

U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally quit the nuclear deal in May 2018 and introduced the harshest ever sanctions in history on Iran as part of his administration's "maximum pressure" strategy against Iran.

Two years after the United States withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal, the Trump administration is looking to extend a UN ban on conventional arms sales to and from Iran, a strategy designed to kill the deal for good.

In a May 9 statement marking the second anniversary of the Donald Trump administration's withdrawal from the nuclear deal, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pledged to "exercise all diplomatic options" to extend the UN ban on conventional arms sales to and from Iran beyond its current expiry date on October 18.

In response to the move, Ulyanov tweeted last week that Annex B of resolution 2231 is a trap for the United States.

"If US is a #JCPOA participant, it cannot question current provisions on arms embargo," he stated. "If Wash. tries to revise decisions on arms embargo, it becomes yet another (one of many) reasons to reject US ridiculous claims to be a participant."

Resolution 2231 was adopted in July 2015 by the UN Security Council endorsing to the nuclear agreement.

Iran at highest level of defense power: general

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran has reached the highest level of military preparedness for defense, according to chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force.

"We are currently at the highest level of defense readiness since victory of the Islamic Revolution," Tasnim on Sunday quoted Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh as saying.

"Iran is militarily powerful," Hajizadeh

said. He rejected threats from Iran's enemies as a sign of their "fear and concerns" over Iran's rising power.

The commander further stressed that domestic capabilities should be focused on efforts to settle the economic woes.

Iranian officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, and that Iran's defense capabilities



will be never subject to negotiations.

In February 2018, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called for efforts to maintain and boost Iran's defense capabilities, hitting back at the enemies for disputing the country's missile program.

"Without a moment of hesitation, the country must move to acquire whatever is necessary for defense, even if the whole world is opposed to it," Ayatollah Khamenei said at the time.

so that a new legal framework and enforcement mechanism are established to help safeguard national security in Hong Kong, he told a briefing.

China has said the United States is "blackmailing" Hong Kong by invoking domestic legislation and threatening to end the U.S.'s special treatment of the Chinese territory over its treatment of violent anti-government protesters.

On Wednesday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo claimed the treatment of what he called activists in Hong Kong complicated the assessment of whether the territory remained highly autonomous, a requirement for special treatments the city gets under the so-called Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act.

Larijani praises resistance struggle, felicitates Lebanon on Liberation Day

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani has congratulated Lebanon as the country marks the 20th anniversary that ended two decades of the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon through resistance. The date is known as Resistance and Liberation Day.



"The liberation of Lebanese lands is a shining point in the history of the Islamic resistance's struggle against the Zionist regime," Larijani wrote in a message to Secretary-General of the Lebanese Hezbollah Resistance Movement Hassan Nasrallah.

"I would like to express my sincere congratulations on the anniversary of the liberation of the occupied territories of southern Lebanon to you and the fighters of the Lebanese Islamic Resistance," he noted, Mehr reported.

In a separate message to Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, Larijani described the event as a turning point in the history of the region which proves Lebanese resistance against the Zionist regime and illustrates the futility of the occupiers.

Every year in May, Lebanon commemorates the anniversary of the Israeli withdrawal from its southern territories, known as Resistance and Liberation Day.

Hezbollah forces pushed the Israeli troops out of the southern parts of Lebanon on May 25, 2000, after more than two decades of occupation.

The national holiday in Lebanon is seen as a turning point that changed the regional equations and debunked the myth of Israel's invincibility.

Ambassador underlines strong ties between Iran and Venezuela

TEHRAN (FNA) — Iranian Ambassador to Venezuela Hojatollah Soltani has said that relations between Tehran and Caracas are stronger than ever, adding that the two nations care for each other's needs.

Friendly and brotherly ties between Iran and Venezuela are now stronger than ever, Soltani wrote on his twitter page on Sunday.

He also posted a photo of a meeting between late Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, noting, "Two leaders, two countries, and two revolutions that care for each other."

His remarks came as two of the five Iranian tankers, laden with fuel, arrived in Venezuela's waters despite threats by the United States.



Soltani also appreciated Venezuelan Defense Ministry for escorting the tankers.

In another tweet, he said that the response for kindness is kindness, saying that led by Hugo Chavez, Venezuela transferred gasoline in 2008 to Iran that was under U.S. sanctions, and today, the Iranian nation, guided by Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah Khamenei, sent fuel tankers to Venezuela.

Iran's second oil tanker, Forest, arrived in Venezuela amid the U.S. threats.

Forest entered the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Venezuela early Sunday, met by the country's navy.

It follows the first of five Iranian vessels carrying an estimated total of 1.53 barrels of gasoline between them.

The first vessel, the 'Fortune', successfully reached Venezuela the day before and was escorted into the port by the Bolivarian Navy.

Three more oil tankers are expected to arrive in Venezuela from Iran. The five vessels are carrying an estimated 1.53 million barrels of gasoline between them.

Iran has warned of repercussions from the potential interception of Iranian tankers by the U.S.

On Saturday, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said his country is always entitled to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and warned that if his country's oil tankers in the Caribbean or anywhere in the world get into trouble by the Americans, Tehran will definitely retaliate.

"Although some of the U.S. measures have created unacceptable conditions in different parts of the world, we will not be the initiator of tension and clash," Rouhani said in a phone call with the Qatari Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

Referring to the American moves in the Caribbean, he reiterated, "If our oil tankers face problems in the Caribbean Sea or anywhere in the world by the Americans, they will face problems reciprocally."

We see the conditions today more apt for cooperation, especially given the outbreak of this disease; but the U.S. continues its incorrect decisions and inhumane behaviors, the president noted.

He made it clear, "As before, we stress that the security of our region, particularly the marine security, is maintained by the regional countries and we have always announced that we are ready for cooperation with the neighboring countries."

Tehran condemns interference in China's affairs, says backs 'One-China' policy

1→ condemns any foreign interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of China and any harm to that country's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and stresses the need for enforcing law and keeping order for the stability, welfare and security of the people of Hong Kong," he added, according to the Foreign Ministry website.

Responding to the statement, Chinese Ambassador to Tehran Chang Hua tweeted, "We appreciate the just position of the Iranian government on the Hong Kong issue."

The statement came after U.S. President Donald Trump warned that the United States would react "very strongly" against what he called an attempt by China to impose new national security legislation on Hong Kong.

Speaking to reporters at the White House on Thursday, Trump said that "nobody knows yet" the details of China's plan. "If it happens we'll address that issue very strongly."

Meanwhile, a spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry's office of the commissioner to Hong Kong has said Beijing is determined to implement the "one country, two systems" policy with regards to Hong Kong and opposes any external interference in Hong Kong's affairs, Press TV reported.

Zhang Yesui, spokesman for the China's National People's Congress, said details would be released on Friday when the parliament holds its annual session.

"In light of the new circumstances and need, the National People's Congress (NPC) is exercising its constitutional power"

Facilitation of trade discussed between Iran, Armenia

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran and Armenia discussed facilitation of trade between the two neighbors in a meeting held via video conference on May 23, Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) published on its news portal.

Organized by the international affairs department of the ICCIMA, the meeting was participated by Iranian ambassador to Armenia, ICCIMA vice chairman for the international affairs, the chairmen of ICCIMA's committees of transportation, and non-oil exports development, the head of Iran-Armenia Joint Chamber of Commerce, and the representatives of Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).



During the meeting, Mohammadreza Karbasi, ICCIMA vice chairman for the international affairs, emphasized that Iran attaches priority to its neighbors for trade, saying, "Iran and Armenia have many cultural commonalities while a positive diplomatic relationship, so, there is no limitation for the expansion of ties with Armenia, especially considering the free trade agreement (FTA) that Iran has signed with the member states of Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) which has improved trade condition."

Back in mid-January, the head of Iran-Armenia Joint Chamber of Commerce said Iran's trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union has had a significant impact on the country's trade relations with Armenia.

Speaking to IRNA, Hervik Yarijanian said: "The two sides are applying tariff discounts offered based on the agreement and there has been no problem in this regard."

According to the official, the volume of trade between the two countries has witnessed an outstanding rise since the agreement became effective in October 2019.

"Turkey used to dominate the Armenian market, but now the Iranian products are much cheaper than the Turkish ones, which has given Iran a competitive advantage," Yarijanian added.

Iran mainly imports red meat from Armenia, while Armenia imports polymer raw materials, machinery, industrial gases, manufactured artifacts, leather and leather goods from Iran, he said.

He further noted that Iran has a much greater export capability compared to Armenia, adding that traders have not yet gotten used to the idea of the preferential trade agreement and hopefully with the expansion of this deal, more Iranian traders will be attracted to the Armenian market.

Iran and Armenia have been emphasizing the need for preserving and expanding trade relations between the two countries since the preferential trade deal between Iran and EAEU was implemented.

While the U.S. renewed sanctions on Iran are aimed at isolating the Islamic Republic both politically and economically, Iran's relations, especially in the economic sectors, with its neighbors are seemed not to be affected by the sanctions.

The northwestern neighbor Armenia is one of the countries preserving and expanding its economic relations with Iran regardless of the sanction condition.

The interim agreement enabling the formation of a free trade area between Iran and the EAEU was signed on May 17, 2018, and officially came into force on October 27, 2019.

Iran is a very important market in the region and the development of ties with this country is of high significance for the EAEU members (Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan).

The free trade agreement between Iran and this union has laid the ground for the expansion of trade ties between the two sides.

Last month, IRICA announced that the value of trade between Iran and the members of the Eurasian Economic Union reached \$1.489 billion in the five-month period after the implementation of the preferential trade agreement on October 27.

According to the spokesman of IRICA, Ruhollah Latifi, 67 percent of the mentioned figure has been the share of Iran's imports and 33 percent was gained from exports.

The official put the weight of the exports to the EAEU countries at 1.15 million tons with a value of \$489.9 million, while the imports from the zone were 2.95 million tons at the value of \$999.3 million.

He further noted that the preferential exports of Iran to the EAEU zone have been 123,960 tons with a value of nearly \$136 million, while the preferential imports stood at 2.38 million tons with a value of nearly \$750 million.

Iran's biggest export destination among the EAEU countries has been Russia which accounted for about 50 percent of the total trade with the region.

Armenia and Kazakhstan occupied the second and third places with 24.6 percent and 16 percent shares, he said.

The biggest EAEU exporter to Iran has also been Russia, accounting for 71.4 percent of EAEU export to Iran followed by Kazakhstan and Belarus, according to the official.

Iran's exports to the EAEU members were mainly fresh apples, fresh and dried pistachios, liquefied natural gas, fresh kiwis, cucumbers and fermented cucumbers; and the main preferential-tariff goods exported to the zone has been kiwis, fresh pistachio, dried grapes, lettuce, cauliflower, and broccoli.

The main imported items from the EAEU zone have been barley, livestock corns, sunflower seed oil, meat, and newsprint.

After several years of negotiations, Iran and Eurasian Economic Union finally reached a free trade agreement in 2018 based on which about 862 commodity items are subject to preferential tariffs.

5,000 km of arterial roads under maintenance across Iran

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization (RMTO) said more than 5,000 kilometers (km) of arterial roads across the country are going through maintenance operations, IRIB reported.

"The nationwide plan to improve the quality of asphalt coating of the country's arterial roads with 20 trillion rials of (about \$476 million) of funding is being implemented on 5,000 kilometers of the country's roads to improve their condition," Abdolhashem Hassan-Nia said.

According to the official, the country's roads have been severely damaged due to heavy rains and snowfall in the past two years and studies by the country's Pavement Management System (PMS) conducted before the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20) show that 18,000 km of highways, 20,000 km of main roads and 2,400 km of highways across the country are in bad condition.

Currently, 350 asphalt quality improvement projects are being carried out in the country's roads, especially arterial roads in main corridors such as Bandar Abbas - Tehran, Isfahan - Shiraz, Bushehr - Tehran, Tehran - Tabriz and Tehran — Mashhad, he said.

Noting that the plan will continue until



the end of the eighth Iranian calendar month of Aban (November 20), the official said: "In this extensive operation, in addition to all the RMTO facilities, we have also used the potentials of the private sector."

According to the official, the PMS categorizes the roads into three groups in terms of the level of damage, which are severe, moderate and low, and after this categorization, the roads are prioritized by RMTO to go through

maintenance operations.

In late December 2019, RMTO's Deputy Director Heidar Mataei had said that the country's roads need 120 trillion rials (about \$2.8 billion) of annual funding to be properly maintained.

"In order to carry out maintenance operations for 36,000 kilometers of arterial roads in the country, 120 trillion rials is needed annually," he said.

In the most optimistic case, credits and allocations will provide about 35 percent of the required fund, so maintaining roads have been prioritized in order to optimize the costs, in this regard, transit corridors are the top priority, according to the official.

Earlier that month, Iran's deputy transport minister for resource planning and management said the county needs over 1.8 quadrillion rials (about \$42.8 billion) of financial resources for completing its transportation infrastructure projects.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 4th International Exhibition of Transportation, Logistics, and Related Industries, Amir Mahmoud Ghaffari said: "In this regard, the Transport Development Fund has been established as the only specialized and financial institution in the field, for supporting the Transport Ministry's infrastructure projects and the modernization of the transport fleet."

In the past two decades, Iran's transportation infrastructure has gone through major transformation and every year the country is advancing more in this area.

Currently, more than 80 percent of the country's roads are paved and the government is also hugely planning on expanding and developing the country's railway network.

Reviving small mines, a big step toward ‘Surge in Production’

1 → During the last week's meeting on monitoring the plan for reviving and developing the small mines, IMIDRO head noted that omitting the tax on the export of decorative stones can pave the way for reviving a noticeable number of 900 existing mines of such stones.

Gharibpour also mentioned establishment of a consortium of small and

medium-sized mines for financing the related projects via stock market as another strategy to facilitate reviving of such mines.

The official has also announced that IMIDRO plans to support knowledge-based companies with innovative ideas that can solve problems in the mining industry.

Addressing the same meeting, Vajihol-

lah Jafari, the chairman of the coordination council of reviving and developing small mines, said, "We support any new and innovative idea in terms of reviving the small mines."

He said, "Some 27 MOUs were signed with the large mining holdings in the past year, and also over 100 investors have announced readiness to implement small

mines reviving projects, which indicate the plan's success in attracting the private sector's contribution."

Chairman of Iran Mine House Mohammadreza Bahraman, for his part, mentioned reviving the small mines a proper measure and stressed that this plan can be more successful through the reduction of unnecessary bureaucracy.

Annual investment making in power sector to be doubled by Mar. 2021



ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Spokesman of Iran's electricity sector says investment making in the power industry's equipment sector is expected to double in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), IRIB reported.

"The flow of investment into the electricity industry will be seriously pursued, and the mechanisms needed for funding projects in this sector will be on the agenda," Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi said.

Referring to the fact that nearly 60 percent of the country's electricity is generated by the power plants operated by the private sector, Rajabi Mashhadi noted that the government should support this sector and pave the way for them to invest in the industry even more.

He noted that about 150 trillion rials (about \$3.57 billion) of investment is attracted in the industry every year, but the amount of annual realized resources is about 70 to 80 trillion rials (up to \$1.7 billion).

This has forced the Energy Ministry to prioritize the projects in this sector,

he added.

The official further mentioned the 3.9 percent increase in the country's electricity consumption since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20) and said, prioritization of the projects is done based on regional power companies, distribution requirements, and also based on the requirements for maintaining the sustainability of the network, all of which are based on technical and specialized studies.

Earlier this month, Rajabi Mashhadi announced that the electricity consumption in Iran since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year up to May 6 increased by five percent compared to the same period last year.

According to the official, despite the coronavirus outbreak which led to the closure of some industrial units, the country's electricity consumption has increased.

The nominal capacity of electricity generation at Iranian power plants reached 85,500 megawatts [85.5 gigawatts (GW)] in April.

IMIDRO to support knowledge-based mining companies



ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) announced that the organization plans to support knowledge-based companies with innovative ideas that can solve problems in the mining industry.

If the needs of the mining sector can be met with knowledge-based capacities, IMIDRO will have the necessary support measures for the project or knowledge-based companies through Mining Investment Insurance Corporation (MICO), Khodadad Gharibpour said.

As reported by the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), given the high risk of investing in startups by mining companies, IMIDRO will make it possible for these two sides to cooperate.

"The organization's support program for mineral startups is being pursued in collaboration with the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology," Gharibpour said.

The official noted that for a startup to be included in the program, first there must be a request from the mining sector for a service

or product offered by the startup, and the said knowledge-based company (startup) should be validated and approved by the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology.

He said that the mentioned program has started since the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), it is a demand-driven program to cover the technical needs of the mining sector.

IMIDRO, is a major state-owned holding company active in the mining sector in Iran.

The Organization has eight major companies and 55 operational subsidiaries active in steel, aluminum, copper, cement and mineral exploitation fields.

According to Gharibpour, IMIDRO plans to put projects worth \$2.276 billion into operation during the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021).

Holding 68 types of different minerals Iran stands at the 10th place in the world in terms of diversity of its mineral reserves.

The country has over 60 billion tons of untapped mineral deposits, of which 40 billion tons are proven reserves, placing Iran at the 15th place globally.

Housing price up 9% in Tehran



in the past year.

The number of deals has also fallen 70 percent to 1,250 in the capital city, Tehran, during the mentioned month.

The number of real estate deals in the country had fallen 70 percent in the last month of the past Iranian calendar year, Esfand (ended on March 19), which was the highest drop that this sector has experienced over the past three years, according to Hesam Oqbaei, the vice-chairman of Iranian Real Estate Agencies.

"Last year, when house prices experienced a 100-percent

growth, rent prices rose by as much as 30 percent. Of course, this year we anticipate that rent growth will not reach inflation and will stay below the inflation rate," according to Hesam Oqbaei, the deputy head of Tehran Real Estate Association.

The housing market is experiencing inflation and rise in prices, both in terms of rentals and sales, but the rise in prices is not going to be like the last year's sudden surge, he said on May 2.

According to the official, 37 percent of the country's urban population are tenants, who are from the low and middle classes of the society and their salary increase has been up to 22 percent, so if the rent prices were supposed to grow along with the house prices people won't be able to afford it.

Noting that the government planned to provide financial facilities for the low-class tenants last year, Oqbaei said: "Now is the time to grant financial facilities, because the transfer season has begun and it is time for the government's last year's proposal to become operational."

Oqbaei underlined the lack of balance in supply and demand as the main reason for the upward trend in housing prices and said since there are not enough bank facilities available to homebuyers, more people will stay as tenants and the demand for house rents increases, so consequently rent prices will also rise in areas where there is an imbalance between supply and demand.

Govt. launches plan to expand dual-fuel public transport fleet

E N E R G Y TEHRAN — Deputy Director of National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company (NIOPDC) says the government has started a program to turn public vehicles into dual-fuel cars, IRNA reported on Sunday.

According to Hamid Qasemi Deh-Cheshmeh, the program was started with converting 600 public pickup trucks.

"We expect that about 1000 public vehicles including pickup trucks and taxis to be converted every day [during the program]," Qasemi said.

The official mentioned a website which has been created for registering the vehicles in the program and noted that so far 45,000 vehicles have been registered of which 25,000 were ruled out of the program since they weren't public vehicles.

Back in February, Qasemi had announced that the government plans to implement a program for converting the country's public transportation fleet into dual-fuel cars.

According to the official, the said program was aimed for converting over 1.46 million public vehicles into dual-fuel ones within 15 months.



The program includes converting a variety of public vehicles like vans, pickup trucks, and buses.

In early December 2019, National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) signed a memorandum of

understanding (MOU) with state-owned automaker Iran Khodro Company (IKCO) to add new dual-fuel vehicles to the country's public transportation fleet.

Based on the mentioned MOU, the two sides agreed to cooperate in converting or

manufacturing 1.46 million dual-fuel vehicles to be added to the public transportation fleet.

The program is expected to reduce the country's daily gasoline consumption by 10 million liters and save the government 200 trillion rials (about \$4.7 billion).

Iran started a program, last year, for the rationing of subsidized gasoline and increased fuel prices to reduce the energy subsidies and to use the revenue for supporting underprivileged families.

According to the spokesman of Iranian Oil, Gas and Petrochemical Products Exporters Union (OPEX), the gasoline rationing scheme has made it possible for the country to export 25-30 million liters of gasoline every day.

Iran produces 115 million liters of gasoline per day, of which 60 to 65 million liters are provided as subsidized fuel and another 20 million liters are sold in the free market, the rest which is about 30 million liters is exported.

Qasemi, who is the director for NIOPDC's CNG project, also announced in February that in 15 months, NIOPDC will put 40 new compressed natural gas (CNG) filling stations into operation throughout the country.

Britain's largest solar farm poised to begin development in Kent

Britain's largest solar farm, capable of generating enough clean electricity to power 91,000 homes, is poised to receive the greenlight from ministers this week.

The subsidy-free renewables park is expected to reach a capacity of 350MW by installing 880,000 solar panels — some as tall as buses — across 364 hectares (900 acres) of farmland in the Kent countryside.

The project is expected to be constructed one mile north-east of Faversham close to the village of Graveney and may also include one of the largest energy storage installations in the world.

The developers expect to receive a development consent order for the £450m project from the business secretary, Alok Sharma, on Thursday almost three years after talks began with local stakeholders over plans for the park.

Once it has the final go-ahead from the government the developers hope to begin building the Cleve Hill solar farm from early next year, and begin generating clean electricity by 2023.

Renewable energy is considered a crucial element in the UK's plans to end its contribution to the climate crisis by building a carbon neutral economy by 2050, and it could also help spur economic growth in the wake of the coronavirus.

The UK's growing fleet of solar panels has produced record levels of clean electricity in recent weeks, reaching fresh highs

of 9.68GW last month and helping the UK energy system to its longest stretch without coal-fired power since the Industrial Revolution.

The renewables industry believes the UK's solar power capacity could rise to 27GW by 2030 after the UK government dropped a block which prevented solar farms and onshore wind projects from competing in subsidy contract auctions.

A boom in battery projects could mean the electricity generated by solar panels during the day could help to keep lights on at night too, helping to cut carbon emissions and domestic energy bills.

The development partners behind the scheme, Wirsol Energy and Hive Energy, believe the project could help cut the UK's carbon emissions by 68,000 tons a year while generating £1m of revenue for the Kent and Swale councils every year.

But local activists have voiced concerns that the scale of the solar park, which is the equivalent of 600 football fields, could do more harm than good for the local area.

Helen Whately, the Conservative MP for Faversham and Mid Kent, said the scale of the development would have a "devastating" impact by "industrializing" the countryside.

"We're not talking about a few fields — this would destroy an entire landscape. I want to see us reach net-zero by 2050, but this should not come at any cost," she told the Sunday Telegraph earlier this month.



The Campaign to Protect Rural England in Kent has also warned that the proposed battery storage facilities are five times the size of some of the largest storage projects in the world, which could raise the risk of explosions and fire.

The developers have rebutted claims from its critics that the project has failed to give due consideration to the safety concerns of local residents, or the impact of the local environment.

Cleve Hill won the support of the Planning Inspectorate earlier this month after putting forward plans to preserve native woodland and scrub within the bounds of the site by hosting a habitat management

area of more than 138 hectares — including a new bat roost.

The planning will include footpaths for ramblers, and a buffer zone of at least 63 meters between the solar park and the Saxon Shore Way.

A spokeswoman for the project said the developers had responded to concerns over the scale of the project's battery storage ambitions "in great detail" during the examination process with the Planning Inspectorate.

She added that safety considerations had been discussed "in great length" with the supply chain, the Health and Safety Executive and Kent Fire and Rescue Service.

(Source: The Guardian)

Qatar pushing ahead with LNG expansion despite slumping demand

Qatar is forging ahead with the expansion of the world's largest liquefied natural gas project and eyeing investment opportunities overseas despite a slump in global energy demand and the collapse of oil prices.

Saad al-Kaabi, the country's energy minister and chief executive of Qatar Petroleum, said commercial bids for the project in the North Field, the planet's biggest natural gasfield, would be delayed because of the Covid-19 pandemic but insisted that all contracts would be awarded by the end of the year.

"The North Field expansion project is moving full steam ahead, no delay there. The only issue is because of Covid and suppliers and so on," Kaabi said in a briefing with the U.S.-Qatar Business Council. "In my view, you continue your plan and invest in the bad times because these projects are long term."

The project will increase Qatar's production capacity from 77m tons of LNG per annum to 110m by 2025, which could rise to 126m tons two years later. The move should help the small Persian Gulf state regain the title of the world's top LNG producer from Australia at a time when other projects have been thrown into doubt by the pandemic.

LNG prices have fallen to record lows in Asia, the center of demand growth for the supercooled fuel, as the economic impact of the health crisis has curbed gas consumption by industry.

"There's a lot of demand for gas around the world??.??.?it's slowed down definitely because of the pandemic, prices have been low," Kaabi said. "But for us to feel the pain prices would need to be very low??.??.?We are going to expand and if there is room to go above 126m [tons per annum] you might hear us in a few years go for it."

He said that while Qatar Petroleum was cutting costs by



about 30 per cent, there was "absolutely no way" the wealthy Persian Gulf state would be reducing its production as large oil exporters have been forced to do in a bid to stem the slide in crude prices.

"Once you have an issue with demand the most expensive people go out first, they can't sell. So I think a whole bunch of people would have to close down LNG before it gets to us," Kaabi said. "There's absolutely no way we will be reducing production."

He added that the turmoil in energy markets could also create opportunities for state-owned Qatar Petroleum to accelerate its investment in international projects.

"There are opportunities that will arise and we are a company that has resources and we are in a very good financial position," Kaabi said. "Fortunately for us we may be able to take advantage of some of the situations and we can enter maybe

at a better deal."

This month, Qatar Petroleum reached agreements on three blocks in the Campeche offshore basin in Mexico and reached an agreement with Total, the French energy company, to acquire a 45 per cent participating interest in two offshore blocks in Ivory Coast.

The North Field expansion project has attracted huge interest from the world's energy majors including Total, Royal Dutch Shell, ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips, as well as others that see it as an opportunity to invest in a fuel expected to remain more resilient than oil because of its lower emissions.

Qatar Petroleum is seeking to secure partnerships for projects overseas with the same companies and is leveraging the North Field development to boost its international expansion plans.

The global LNG market has grown rapidly in recent years, spurred by new projects in Australia and Russia and the emergence of the U.S. as a significant exporter as the shale boom created ample supplies. However it is also fiercely competitive with many planned projects predicted to struggle to make it to completion without a quick recovery in prices internationally.

"The next few months are highly uncertain but the fundamentals of gas haven't changed on a long-term basis — we will need more LNG supplies," said Frank Harris at consultancy Wood Mackenzie. "When many of their rivals are logjammed it's the perfect opportunity for Qatar to push ahead."

Kaabi said that integrated oil and gas companies in the U.S. would still thrive but cast doubt on the ability of "single players" terminal developers to make it work. "It's the people who can do it at the right cost structure," he said.

(Source: Financial Times)

Europe urged to unlock green hydrogen potential

Renewable hydrogen is the key to unlocking the complete decarbonisation of European industries, according to a new initiative.

The Choose Renewable Hydrogen project, which has the backing of eight companies and trade bodies SolarPower Europe and WindEurope, calls on the European Commission to make the right choices for Europe's upcoming energy system integration and hydrogen strategy, harvesting the full potential of renewable electricity to fully decarbonise Europe.

Choose Renewable Hydrogen urges that, amidst the Covid-19 health crisis and its economic

implications, Europe prioritizes the most efficient, sustainable, and cost-effective pathways to decarbonise its economy.

"Direct electrification will be the primary means for decarbonising heating and road transport, but there are other hard-to-abate sectors — such as some heavy industry, long-haul road transport, aviation, and shipping — where direct electrification is insufficient," the initiative said. Green hydrogen will "play a key role as the most cost-effective and sustainable solution for full decarbonisation", it added.

Hydrogen produced by 100% renewable

electricity, such as solar and wind, has zero greenhouse gas emissions or other pollution, will increase the EU's energy security, and, when produced by grid-connected renewables, presents an "optimized form of sector coupling".

The eight companies supporting the initiative are Akvo Energy, BayWa RE, EDP, Enel, Iberdrola, MHI Vestas, Orsted and Vestas. SolarPower Europe interim chief executive Aurelie Beauvais said: "Renewable energy technologies are ready to form the backbone of the European Green Deal.

"They are cost-competitive, highly scalable

and can provide fully sustainable hydrogen solutions to achieve the last mile of Europe's decarbonisation.

"The upcoming 'Energy system integration strategy' and 'Clean hydrogen strategy' will be pivotal to enshrining the right decarbonisation pathways for Europe: they must build on the immense potential of renewable electricity, which will enhance sectoral integration, create millions of jobs and provide the sustainable hydrogen needed to modernize and decarbonise European industries."

(Source: renews.biz)

Oil falls as U.S.-China tensions take toll

Oil prices eased on Monday on concerns over rising tensions between the United States and China over Beijing's plans to impose security laws on Hong Kong and the possibility of sanctions from Washington.

Oil prices have risen sharply in recent weeks as an easing of coronavirus restrictions has led to increased demand, but the tensions between the United States and China are beginning to weigh on sentiment.

Brent was down 19 cents, or 0.5 percent, at \$34.94 a barrel by 0152 GMT. U.S. oil was down by 6 cents, or 0.2 percent, at \$33.19 a barrel. Both contracts have risen for the past four weeks, although prices are still down around 45 percent so far this year.



Hong Kong police used tear gas and water cannons on Sunday to disperse thousands of people rallying against Beijing's plan to impose national security laws on the city.

"The HK security legislation packs on a hefty amount (of) trade war risk premium," said Stephen Innes, chief market strategist at AxiCorp, noting that it added to market worries last week about the level of Chinese policy stimulus.

Ties between Washington and Beijing have soured since the outbreak of the new coronavirus. President Donald Trump and President Xi Jinping have traded barbs over the outbreak, including accusations of cover-ups and lack of transparency.

Clashes between the superpowers have included Hong Kong, human rights, trade and U.S. support for Chinese-claimed Taiwan. (Source: Reuters)

Oil's sudden rebound is exposing the Achilles' heel of shale

Oil prices have surged more than 75 percent in the U.S. this month. But don't expect a quick rebound in supply from shale explorers.

The quick turnaround in oil markets is exposing the shale industry's big weak spot: Lightning-fast production declines. Shale gushers turn to trickles so quickly that explorers must constantly drill new locations to sustain output.

And they haven't been doing that. Drilling activity touched an all-time U.S. low after Covid-19 lockdowns crushed global energy demand and explorers slashed spending to survive a crash that has erased tens of thousands of jobs and pushed some companies into bankruptcy.

It's a phenomenon that's ultimately attributable to the very geology of shale. Just like a shaken bottle of champagne explodes when its cork is popped, a fracked shale-oil well erupts with an initial burst of supply. The froth is short-lived, however, unlike old-fashioned wells in conventional rocks that are characterized by steadier long-term production rates. To offset the decline curve, shale explorers used to keep drilling. And drilling. And drilling.

"We just have no new drilling and these decline curves are going to catch up," said Mark Rossano, founder and chief executive officer of private-equity firm C6 Capital Holdings LLC. "That hits really fast when you're not looking at new production."

Shale explorers have been turning off rigs at a record pace because the oil rout has gutted cash flow needed to lease the machines and pay wages to crews. Going forward, management teams may be hesitant to re-lease rigs back up again despite higher crude prices because of fears of flooding markets with oil once again and triggering yet another crash.

Left unchecked by new drilling, oil production from U.S. shale fields probably would plummet by more than one-third this year to less than 5 million barrels a day, according to data firm Shale-Profile Analytics. That would drastically undercut U.S. influence in world energy markets and deal a major blow to President Donald Trump's ability to wield crude as a geopolitical weapon.

Such is America's reliance on new drilling that 55 percent of the country's shale production is from wells drilled in the past 14 months, according to ShaleProfile.

"These are much bigger wells than your small onshore conventional wells. We're in a whole other ball park here," said Tom Loughrey, founder of shale-data firm Friezo Loughrey Oil Well Partners LLC. "We have these relatively large and numerous shale wells, but they decline fast."

To get an idea of how dramatically shale wells peter out, consider this: less than 20 percent of this year's expected drop in overall U.S. crude output will come from shuttering existing wells, according to IHS Markit Ltd. Rather, the vast majority of the supply drop will be the direct result of canceled drilling projects.

Cliff edge

"If you want to be a highflier and a fast grower, you do that by adding lots of new wells," said Raoul LeBlanc, an IHS analyst. But when the drilling stops, slumping output produces "a hangover effect."

Some explorers are taking more drastic action than others. While Parsley Energy Inc. and Centennial Resource Development Inc. have said they're halting all drilling and fracking, companies such as EOG Resources Inc. and Diamondback Energy Inc. plan to continue adding new wells, albeit at a severely reduced pace.

Much of the shuttered production probably will be turned back on by the end of this year, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas President Robert Kaplan said during a Bloomberg Television interview.

'Entrapment question'

Companies often don't disclose their decline rates until asked, and even then, not everyone is happy about it. Shale pioneer Mark Papa, who founded EOG and until recently led Centennial, once reprimanded an inquisitive analyst.

"Subash, we don't disclose decline rates," he said during a February 2019 conference call in response to a question from then-Guggenheim Securities analyst Subash Chandra. "That's kind of one of those things — kind of an entrapment question, so that's just something that we really don't want to talk about."

Asked about his company's decline rates earlier this month, Cimarex Energy Co. CEO Tom Jorden responded, "I hate it."

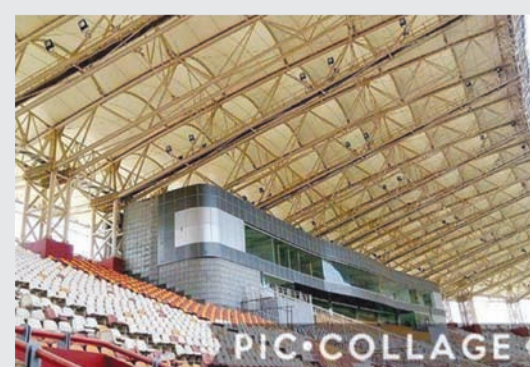
(Source: Bloomberg)

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Has Wall Street stolen \$100 trillion from the American public? Will Donald Trump get it back?

➔ On Friday May 15, 2020 you published "Release: President Trump Urged to Create DoD-DoJ Task Force on Financial Crime." at your new website, Licensed to Steal. That release proposes a strategy that would allow the President to take back – without wasting time in court – over \$50 trillion in wealth stolen by Wall Street from US pension funds and individual investors.

On Monday, May 18, 2020 you published "President Trump Briefed on NSA Capabilities Against Financial Crime" with a quote from your colleague, William Binney, former Chief Technical Officer for NSA:

With 10 people, within 30 days, it would be a simple matter to identify, by name, every person using email, text, cellular or even game chat communications, associated with naked short selling or money laundering. 99% of NSA's data is not processed, this is by design. We have it all.

In the same release you say:

With the exoneration of General Michael Flynn, the time has come to purge our secret intelligence agencies of Obama left-overs, and put those agencies to work for the American people. There is no better starting place to Make America Great again than by stopping Wall Street financial crime against pension funds and individual investors as well as entrepreneurs.

You appear to be declaring war against the two most powerful, ruthless, and wealthy elements of the Deep State – Wall Street and the US secret intelligence community that serves Wall Street. Have you lost your mind? Or is something really exciting happening here?

A. Let me say first that I was well ahead of the pack on 9/11 as a Zionist (not Jewish) and U.S. neo-conservative covert operation backed by Dick Cheney; my 9/11 Truth memorandum for the President, delivered to the White House on 8 August 2018, is the single most read publication on the topic. The book by West Pointer Joachim Hagopian that I have nurtured on Pedophilia & Empire: Satan, Sodomy, & the Deep State is also the single most read publication on that terrible topic that includes child torture, child murder, and Satanic Ritual Abuse (SRA). I have been less successful at addressing #GoogleGestapo – the Zionist-led censorship of our social media (the ADL is the chief censor in America) – and election reform (today 70% of all US voters are excluded from participation in our fake democracy – this is by agreement between the two parties that share power).

I have always known that Wall Street lacked integrity – my reviews of Michael Lewis's *Liar's Poker*, Wayne Jett's *The Fruits of Graft*, and then Matt Taibbi's *Griftopia* about the merger of political and financial crime in the USA and his book *The Divide* about one law for the rich and one for the poor, were capped by two profoundly troubling books by William Greider on *The Soul of Capitalism* and John Bogle on *The Battle for the Soul of Capitalism*. More recently I have read but not reviewed a book just published by Dr. Susanne Trimboth, *Naked, Short, and Greedy*, and many documents by Dr. Robert Shapiro, all available at my new website, StopNakedShortSelling.org. I have conducted several video interviews, and consulted the top attorney in America on this illegal domain, Wes Christian, who has encouraged me in my reflections.

Here is what shocked me once I finished looking at over 900 articles and documents including court filings and administrative actions including fines:

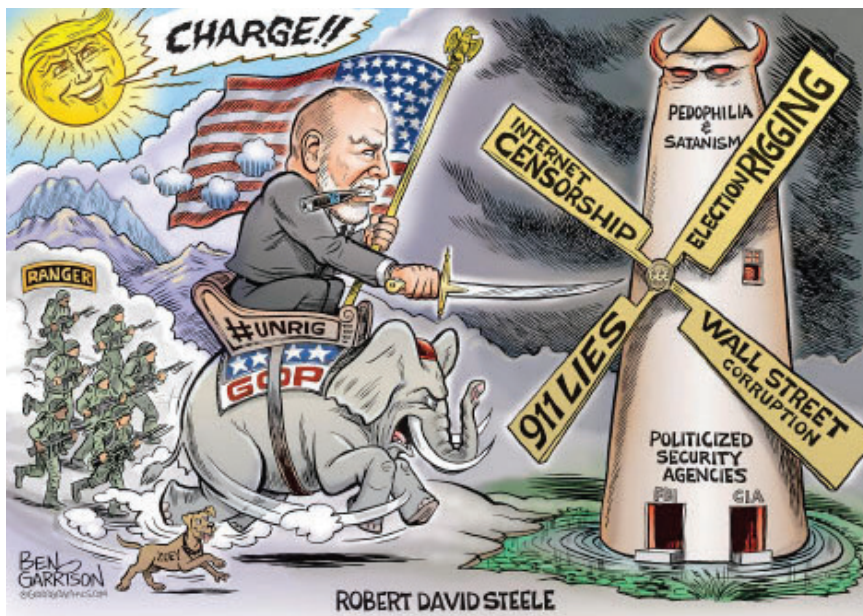
01 According to the SEC, 914,261,864 shares valued at over \$17 billion failed to deliver in the first two weeks of July (\$1.9 billion every market day). At that rate, Wall Street has stolen tens of trillions of dollars over the last 20 years. This was stolen from pension funds and/or investors through market manipulation and particularly a practice known as naked short selling – the selling of counterfeit or "phantom" shares that are never delivered.

02 The US Government – and particularly the Senate Banking Committee, the Department of Justice, and the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) have not done enough to deter this massive theft. Token fines amounting to a half-billion dollars have been levied, and the Holder Memorandum, by Eric Holder under President Barack Obama, decriminalized financial crime by Wall Street – no one goes to jail, fines are the cost of doing business.

03 The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation (DTCC) is a private self-regulating organization managed by the leaders of the Wall Street firms themselves, and allowed – by design – to thumb their nose at oversight from the SEC.

04 In addition to stealing money by selling shares that do not exist, Wall Street aids and abets laundering trillions in illicit cash by pretending that the cash was earned through brilliant stock investments that never actually took place.

It is my opinion after just two weeks of reading that our President has the power to take back at least \$50 trillion from Wall Street



without having to go through lengthy legal battles; and that the President may not realize that the \$15 trillion he appears to have already recovered is chump change – a fraction of what he can get if he creates a Joint Department of Defense – Department of Justice Task Force on Financial Crime and goes for the jugular using NSA and DTCC data.

We all understand that NSA and its partners such as GCHQ in the UK, CSEC in Canada, and European elements that are funded in part by NSA, collect every manner of electronic communication including encrypted communications. But supposedly Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) cannot be used in legal proceedings. What is your strategy here for the President?

A. I have personally seen emails in which the compliance officer for a major Wall Street investment firm informs the leadership that their naked short selling is illegal and advises them to do it anyway. I have also seen the responding email from the leadership saying in essence: "we will suck every ounce of blood

it is just a matter of time.

My vision for the use of NSA data is quite simple. To document for the President and the leadership of the Department of Justice – and the Members of Congress who have been complicit in this persistent massive crime against US pension funds and individual investors and entrepreneurs – a complete and compelling map, "by name," of the 1,000 or so top criminals.

If the six major firms do not immediately transfer the \$50 trillion back to the US Treasury, I envision some combination of Presidentially-declassified intercepts being released to the public each day (a particularly damning email from the CEO of Goldman Sachs, for example), with the end result that if the firms do not capitulate within the week, they will follow Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers into hell.

Warren Buffett just sold his entire stake in Goldman Sachs. He knows what is coming.

Then of course, you always have Army Rangers with fixed bayonets. Given

than \$50 trillion to be spent on rebuilding our economy and our society – the civil war is over, those with morality who hold family dear have won. There is also the matter of returning to local communities all of the land and other physical assets purchased with stolen money, this could be a separate \$25 trillion bonanza for Main Street.

Perhaps I should have asked this at first but what is naked short selling in simple terms?

A. The best analogy I have heard is from Wes Christian. Imagine that you own one car with one title or certificate of ownership. Now imagine making one million – or ten million – copies of that title and selling them to millions of investors, who never receive a car or their money back. That is naked short selling. This is done by most major players in every stock exchange in the world but the US and UK are the worst.

Or put another way: Imagine that you sold a stock at \$5 (without owning any shares), and then lie, cheat and steal – manipulate the information with false legal claims, false government investigations, false media reporting – even using moles inside the target company to plant evidence of wrong-doing, and then when the stock drops to \$2, you buy it, meet your obligations, and keep \$3 in profit. This is a high finance "murder" of a company for profit.

Naked short selling is one of several means by which Wall Street bankers and the hedge funds manipulate the marketplace. Market manipulations are illegal, common, and enabled by US Government elements not doing enough and often complicit in the financial fraud. Stock buy-backs (after manipulating the price), hoarding cash in off-shore accounts to avoid taxes; manipulating supply chain prices to claim false higher prices for incoming products and services and false lower prices for outgoing products and services – this is called import-export fraud – and outright lies to the public with the collaboration of journalists, some of whom are paid, is all part of what has been called the Wall Street "casino."

(to be continued)



William Binney (NSA) and Robert Steele (CIA) are two of America's foremost intelligence reformers, along with General Michael Flynn, co-author of *Fixing Intel*.

out of our unsuspecting clients and you will shut up and like it."

NSA is very badly managed – Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Jim Clapper supported NSA Director Mike Hayden in turning NSA over to contractors and instead of focusing on producing decision-support and processing what it collected, they focused on collection for the sake of budget building, and never invested in processing. NSA processes less than 1% of what it collects – but it does seem to process whatever it needs to blackmail members of Congress.

It is my view that NSA could be a force for great good if the President were to reinstate my friend and colleague William Binney at NSA with a mandate to immediately process all data having to do with identifying traitors, elite pedophiles, and both white and black collar criminals. Bill and I have discussed this, you have his quote above – we can nail every naked short seller on Wall Street within 30 days, by name.

This information would not be used for a legal process. It would be used to confront the leaders within this well-established and well-protected criminal network. Among these are the top naked short sellers and money launderers: Goldman Sachs, Merrill Lynch, JPMorgan, Credit Suisse, Deutsche Bank, and UBS. The proposition is quite simple: immediately return to the US Treasury no less than \$50 trillion, or be destroyed.

What do you mean, be destroyed?

A. Let me first point out that we have not discussed the second line of Presidential attack – a mandatory audit of the DTCC and every single "failure to settle." I am reliably informed that we can audit all Goldman Sachs failures to settle with a few people in a few days at a cost of under \$1 million. Once we do all six of the major criminal enterprises that are "Licensed to Steal" by the US Government (and the State of New York including its current Governor Andrew Cuomo), every other organization will know that we have them dead to rights,

Second Announcement



Water and Wastewater Company of Isfahan Province Call for Prequalification to Hold a Public Bidding

- 1- Water and Wastewater Company of Isfahan Province intends to hold a prequalification for a public bidding through the *Iran Public e-Procurement System* based on the following information:

Item	Subject	Reference No.	Iran Public e-Procurement System No.
1	International Bid for Financing (Foreign Finance), Inspection and Rehabilitation of the Mains and Sub-mains of Isfahan Sewage Collection System	99-1-25	2099001434000001

- 2- The whole bidding process from receipt and delivery of the prequalification documents up to sending invitation for the other bidding processes will be held through *Iran Public e-Procurement System* (www.setadiran.ir); in case the bidders have not registered in the mentioned website yet, they are required to register and obtain their electronic signature certificate in order to attend the bidding. **The publication date of call in website is 13/05/2020.** Information and bidding documents will be submitted to the bidders through the Iran Public e-Procurement System after holding prequalification process and sending invitations.

Title	Hour	Day	Date	Remarks
Deadline for receiving the prequalification documents	14:00	Thursday	18/06/2020	One month after publication
Deadline for responding to prequalification documents	08:00	Sunday	19/07/ 2020	Two months after publication

Information of the bidding holder in order to take more information about the prequalification documents:

Address : Isfahan wastewater renovation project management's office- Isfahan water and wastewater building- Ferdousi Street- Isfahan- Iran ,Phone No: (+9831)32223700

Fax: (+9831)32228800

- 3- **Contact information of Setadiran website in order to attempt the registration process:**

4-1- Call center: 021-41934

4-2- Registration Office: 021-88969737 & 021-85193768

Quake damages historical neighborhood in southwest Iran

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – A magnitude 5.2 earthquake on Sunday caused minor harm to the historical neighborhood of Dehdasht, a city in Kohgiluyeh-Boyer Ahmad province, southwest Iran.

“Surveys conducted across the province show that the historical neighborhood of Dehdasht has been hurt by today’s earthquake, and the exact amount of the damage and ways to compensate for it are under investigation,” provincial tourism chief Majid Safaei said, CHTN reported.



Tehran University’s Seismological Center of the Geophysics Institute said the earthquake occurred at 13:41 hours local time at a depth of 10 kilometers, IRNA news agency reported.

Iran sits on major fault lines and is prone to frequent temblors. It is one of the most seismically active countries in the world, being crossed by several major fault lines that cover some 90 percent of the country. As a result, earthquakes in Iran occur often and are destructive.

Handicrafts workshops established in northeast Iran

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Some 15 handicrafts workshops have been launched in Chenaran county in the northeastern province of Khorasan Razavi since last Iranian calendar year 1398 (started March 21, 2019), CHTN reported.



The workshops have created 50 direct job opportunities, Chenaran’s tourism chief Mohammad Taherian Moqaddam said on Sunday.

About 170 craftspeople in various fields including Kilim, felt products, jewelry, termeh and traditional costumes are working in the region, he added.

He also noted that launching a permanent handicrafts market could help craftspeople to promote their products more properly.

Located 50 kilometers northwest of Mashhad, the provincial capital, Chenaran is a mountainous destination with rich wildlife for local holidaymakers.

Persian dishes: Zereshk Polo (Barberry rice with saffron chicken)

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – The sweet and sour flavor of zereshk (barberries) and the glistening ruby red berries set against the white and saffron tinged grains make this a feast for the taste buds and the eyes.

The dish, which is locally called “Zereshk Polo Ba Morgh” (“Barberry Rice with Chicken”), is an adapted version of the classic Persian rice dish. It is a tangy sweet mouth-watering feast with plenty of protein, healthy fats and is phytochemical rich!! It is also gluten free. Cook this barberry rice with saffron chicken and add a touch of delicious opulence to the table at any banquet!



Traditional Persian recipes use a little bit of sugar while preparing the barberries, to sort of complement the sour taste.

Zereshk Polo is served at weddings and other celebrations because it is impressive and easy to make in large quantities. It is usually served with chicken, but it is also delicious with saffron yogurt lamb.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium onion
- 2-3 chicken breasts
- Liquid saffron
- Sugar (3-4 spoons usually is enough)
- 3 cups rice – soak in salt water after washing the rice
- 1 cup zereshk (barberries)
- Salt/Pepper
- Turmeric
- Oil

Another archaeological season to commence on Laodicea Temple

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – A team of Iranian archaeologists is to conduct a fresh survey on the enigmatic Laodicea Temple, which is situated in the city of Nahavand, Hamedan province, west-central Iran.

“[The ruined] Laodicea Temple is one of the treasured sites in Nahavand and it bears relics, which date from the time of Seleucid Empire,” Nahavand cultural heritage chief Mohsen Janjan announced on Thursday.

“The fifth archaeological season will begin soon on Laodicea Temple and it is expected, based on speculations and discoveries made from the previous four seasons, there is a high probability of finding [more detail on] the Laodicea Temple in Dokhaharan region.”

“Previous excavations have uncovered capital column heads, their shafts, and bases as well as striking pieces of engraved pottery, which show the temple dates back to the Seleucid era,” the official noted.

Archaeologists believe that the core an ancient Greek temple is buried beneath many residential units built by the locals on the site over the years.

In 1943, archaeologists discovered an 85x36 centimeter ancient inscription of 30 lines written in Greek calling on the people of Nahavand to obey the laws of the government. The inscription indicated the existence of the Laodicea Temple, which had been built by the Seleucid king who ruled Asia Minor, Antiochus III the Great (223-187 BC), for his wife Queen Laodicea.

Two other inscriptions as well as four bronze statuettes have been unearthed at the site, which are on display in the National Museum of Iran in Tehran. A number of capitals and bases of the temple’s columns



excavated over the years are currently being used as decorations in Nahavand’s Hajian Bazaar and several other parts of the city.

Antiochus was the most distinguished of the Seleucids. Having made vassal states out of Parthia in present-day northeastern Iran and Bactria (an ancient country in Central Asia), he warred successfully against the Egyptian king Ptolemy V and in 198 BC obtained possession of all of Palestine and Lebanon.

He later became involved in a conflict

with the Romans, who defeated him at Thermopylae in 191 BC and at Magnesia (now Manisa, Turkey) in 190 BC. As the price of peace, he was forced to surrender all his dominions west of the Taurus Mountains and to pay costly tribute. Antiochus, who early in his reign had restored the Seleucid Empire, finally forfeited its influence in the eastern Mediterranean by his failure to recognize the rising power of Rome.

The Seleucid Empire was a Hellenistic state ruled by the Seleucid dynasty which

existed from 312 BC to 63 BC; Seleucus I Nicator founded it following the division of the Macedonian Empire vastly expanded by Alexander the Great. Seleucus received Babylonia (321 BC) and from there expanded his dominions to include much of Alexander’s near-eastern territories. At the height of its power, the Empire included central Anatolia, Persia, the Levant, Mesopotamia, and what is now Kuwait, Afghanistan, and parts of Pakistan and Turkmenistan.



Beyhaqi mausoleum to undergo urgent restoration

➔ Sabzevar, located in the west of Khorasan Razavi province, has over 100 historical and natural sites inscribed on the National Heritage list.

The history of Sabzevar goes back to the first millennium BC. After the Mongol invasion of Iran, the city was the first part of Iran that moved towards its freedom, under the lead of the Sarbedaran movement.

In the 14th century, Timur, the Turco-Mongol

conqueror and the founder of the Timurid Empire, invaded Iran, and despite the brave defense of people in Sabzevar, the city was destroyed quite completely. It is said that about 90,000 people having been massacred by Timur. After killing all men in the town, he cut their heads and made three pyramids of the heads in a city square, which is known as Sarberiz (literally means place of heads) square nowadays.

Centuries-old Iranian windmills being rehabilitated

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – Several centuries-old windmills, locally called Asbads, are being rehabilitated in the oasis city of Tabas-e Masina, eastern Iran.

“A restoration work has been commenced on mudbrick windmills that are still standing tall in both Kheyraabad neighborhood and in Salimi historical house, which are located in Tabas-e Masina, South Khorasan province,” CHTN reported on Monday.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has almost completed preparations for a chain of such vertical-axis windmills for possibly becoming a UNESCO World Heritage. Asbads can be found in the provinces of Sistan-Baluchestan, South Khorasan, and Khorasan Razavi.

Made of natural clay, straw, and wood, an Asbad is typically comprised of eight chambers, with each chamber housing six blades. As the area’s strong, steady wind enters the chambers it turns the blades, which then turn grindstones. The



structures reach up to about 65 feet in height.

The Asbad used to be a smart technique to grind grains.

It also bears testimony to the human being’s adaption with nature by transforming environmental obstacles into opportunities. “Asbad is a smart technique to grind grains, a technique which goes back to ancient times when the people living in the eastern parts of Iran, in an attempt to adapt themselves with nature and transform environmental obstacles into opportunities, managed to invent it,” according to UNESCO website.

“The earliest known references to windmills are to a Persian millwright in 644 CE and windmills in Seistan [Sistan], Iran, in 915 CE,” the Encyclopedia Britannica says.

Avid visitors and researchers can examine the subtle yet simple mechanism in person as several windmills have been restored and brought back to life to testify how ancient Iranians harnessed the wind to make a living.

The Islamic Republic designated the Asbad as a national heritage site in 2002.

National Museum of Iran reopens as coronavirus curbs eased

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – The National Museum of Iran opened its doors to the public on Sunday as restrictions over the coronavirus pandemic have been relaxed.

The museum is opening its different sections gradually, observing strict sanitary and social distancing requirements, IRNA quoted the director of the museum Jebrael Nokandeh as saying on Sunday.

However, full reopening of all sections of the museum may not be possible yet, he added.

The country closed cultural heritage museums and historical sites in a preventive measure amid fears of coronavirus outbreak back in February.

During Persian New Year (Noruz) holidays in late March, the National Museum of Iran arranged online visits to make the best use of the museum during the



coronavirus pandemic.

Some 10,000 people explored centuries-old objects at the museum at the time, which made the museum to extend its online visits and to launch virtual tours of its joint exhibitions showcasing loaned objects.

Earlier this month, the museum also launched virtual tours for hearing impaired visitors to tell the story of the thousand years of human culture in Iran on the basis of the museum’s collections, with the presence of a tour guide and in sign language.

The National Museum of Iran is somewhat chockfull of priceless relics that represent various eras of the country’s rich history. Its structure was completed in 1928 based on the design by French architect André Godard who was also an archaeologist and historian of French and Middle Eastern Art.

Sassanid-era bridge in need of renovation

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – A Sassanid-era bridge dating back to roughly 1,700 years ago in Dezful, southwest Iran, is in need of vital rehabilitation works.

Best known as the Dezful bridge, the massive monument on the Dez River is believed to be the oldest still-standing bridge in the world and it remained in full functionality until recently.

A number of the bridge’s arches need major repairs due to serious damage, CHTN quoted Hojjatollah Aryaeinia the director of Dezful Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

The new restoration project is to separate parts of the bridge’s metal structure and rebuild it in its old form with the same materials it

was first built with, he added.

He also noted that the project aims at reducing costs and preventing more damages to the historic structure, which has lost some of its original materials by the destruction over the years.

The historical bridge has been extensively repaired and renovated in various eras to ensure its functionally and preservation. Nowadays, cars are no longer allowed to pass over the structure due to its historical value and fragility.

It is said that the monument was built by Roman prisoners of war after suffering a defeat at the hands of the Sassanid king Shapur I the Great, who reigned over Persia from around 240-270 CE.



Imam Reza holy shrine reopens as virus restrictions eased

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iran on Monday reopened the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) after more than two months of closure due to the coronavirus outbreak, IRNA news agency reported.

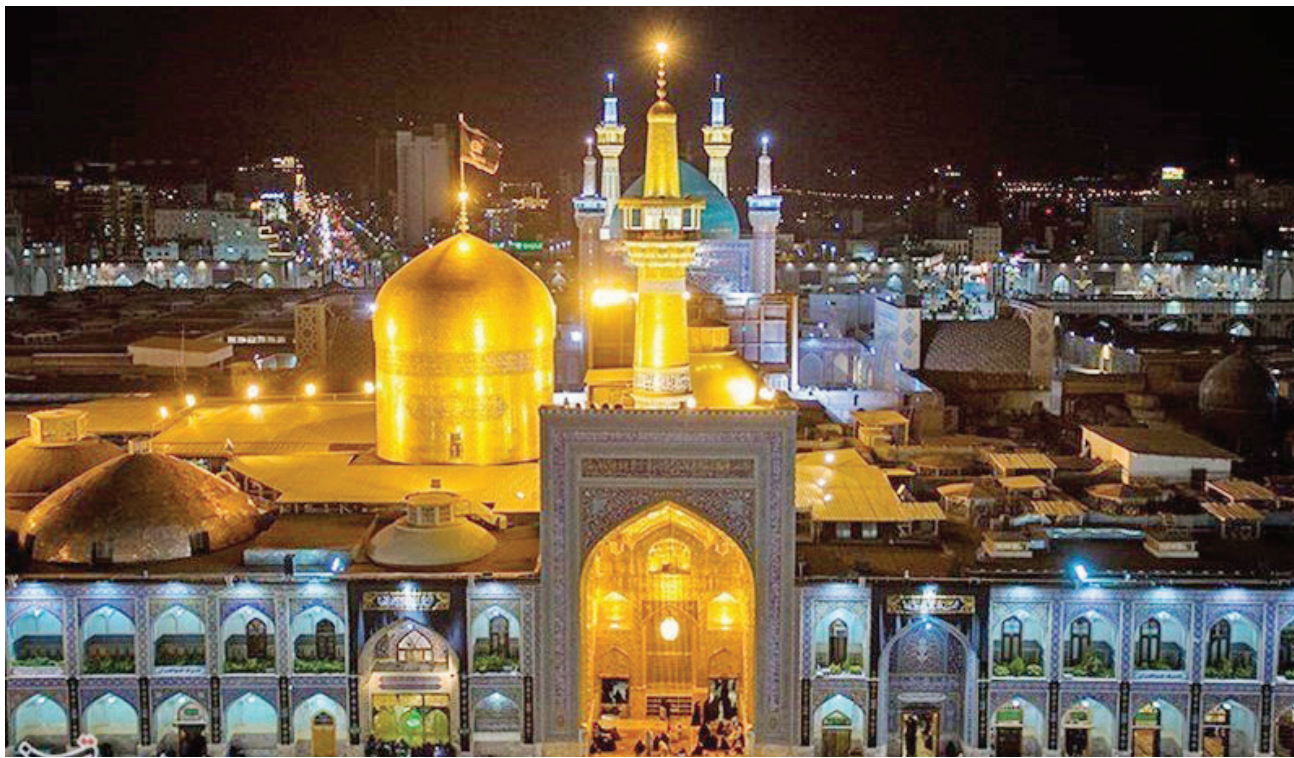
The national headquarters for combating coronavirus has agreed to reopen the courtyards of the holy shrine.

Following the official approval of the coronavirus epidemic in Iran, the national headquarters for combating coronavirus promoted the "Stay Home Movement" after the closure of schools and universities, so that the whole country could act based on scientific and effective steps to combat the virus.

On March 15, the closure of holy shrines and religious places across the country hit the news.

Currently, the major shrines of Imam Reza and Hazrat Masoumeh are allowed to open starting from an hour after dawn until an hour before dusk.

The number of people diagnosed with coronavirus in Iran reached 137,724 on Monday, of whom 7,451 have died and 107,713 recovered so far. Over the past 24 hours, 2,023 new cases of people having the virus have been identified, and 34 died, Deputy Health Minister Kianoush Jahanpour said.



Tropical rainforest 'tipping point' identified as scientists call for immediate action to tackle global warming

Tropical rainforests' vital ability to store carbon is under threat due to rising global temperatures, and the Amazon is particularly at risk, scientists have warned.

Calling for "immediate steps" to conserve forests and stabilise the global climate, the authors of a study based on research from 600 sites around the world said that beyond a maximum daily temperature of 32.2C, trees get too hot and dry, causing them to die and release their stores of carbon.

The scientists said this happens because as temperature rise, the trees may close the pores in their leaves to save water, but that also prevents them from taking in more carbon.

When they die, they release their stored carbon back into the atmosphere.

Tropical forests hold about 40 per cent of all the carbon stored by land plants. For this study, researchers measured the ability of tropical forests in different sites to store carbon.

"Tropical forests grow across a wide range of climate conditions," said Stuart Davies, director of the Smithsonian's Forest Global Earth Observatories, a worldwide network of 70 forest study sites in 27 countries.

"By examining forests across the tropics, we can assess their resilience and responses to changes in global temperatures. Many other studies explored how individual forests respond to short-term climatic fluctuations. This study takes a novel approach by exploring the implications of thermal conditions currently experienced by all tropical forests."

The huge research team, led by Martin Sullivan from the University of Leeds and Manchester Metropolitan University, found major differences in the amount of carbon stored by tropical forests in South America, Africa, Asia and Australia.

South American forests store less carbon than forests in Africa, Asia and Europe,



perhaps due to evolutionary differences in which tree species are growing there, the scientists said.

They also found the two most important factors predicting how much carbon is lost by forests is the maximum daily temperature and the amount of precipitation during the driest times of the year.

As temperatures reach 32.2C, carbon is released much faster, they found. Trees can apparently cope with increases in the minimum nighttime temperature (a global warming phenomenon observed at some sites), but not with increases in maximum daytime temperature.

They predict South American forests will be the most affected by global warming because temperatures there are already higher than on other continents and the projections for future warming are also highest for this region.

Increasing carbon in the atmosphere may counterbalance some of this loss, but would also exacerbate the warming causing the problem in the first place.

Forests can adapt to warming temperatures, the scientists said, but it takes time. Tree species that cannot take the heat die and are gradually replaced by more heat-tolerant species. But that may take several human generations.

"This study highlights the importance of protecting tropical forests and stabilizing the Earth's climate," said Jefferson Hall, co-author and director of the Smithsonian's Agua Salud project in Panama.

Australia's severe bushfire season was predicted and will be repeated, inquiry told

The fires that caused 33 deaths, destroyed more than 3,000 homes, and burned more than 10m hectares of bushland were accurately predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology and in line with predictions Australia's peak scientific body laid down 30 years ago.

And according to evidence given in the first day of public hearings in the royal commission into national natural disaster arrangements on Monday, fires of that scale will occur with greater frequency as the climate continues to heat.

"This isn't a one-off event that we're looking at here," the Bureau of Meteorology's head of climate monitoring, Dr Karl Braganza, told the hearing.

"Really since the Canberra 2003 fires, every jurisdiction in Australia has seen some really significant fire events that have challenged what we do to respond to them and have really challenged what we thought fire weather looked like preceding this period."

Climate change was the focus of the hearing, despite prime minister Scott Morrison saying in February that the inquiry would focus on mitigation and adaptation, including to "changing climatic conditions" but would not consider the climate emergency.

Braganza said both climate and weather forecasts were able to accurately predict the severity of a fire season, and that forecast was made available to fire agencies and governments in the middle of the year.

Asked by the chief commissioner, retired Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin, whether the forecasts in mid-2019 accurately predicted the conditions seen that summer, Braganza said yes.

"Things really played out the way our forecast models, both in climate and weather, suggested they would," he said.

Dr Helen Cleugh, a senior principal research scientist with the CSIRO, said that the frequency of extreme El Niño, La Niña and Indian Ocean dipole events



under global heating meant Australia would experience more extreme weather events in future, and that those events would not be able to be mitigated, or their severity predicted, by looking at what had occurred in the past.

"Climate change means that the past is no longer a guide to future climate-related impacts and risks," she said.

Cleugh said modelling conducted by the CSIRO in 1992 was "very consistent" with the changes in climate that had occurred in the 28 years since.

"The key point I want to make here is that these climate projections are credible and salient, and most importantly they are still current in 2020," she said.

Braganza said the bushfire season in New South Wales and parts of Victoria now began in August, three months earlier than in the 1950s. The fire season in Victoria has also extended one month further in autumn.

Dr Ryan Crompton, a specialist in climate and natural hazards modelling and general manager of Risk Frontiers, told the hearing that better urban planning could play a role in mitigating property loss, even in a heating climate. He said that 38% of houses lost on the NSW south coast over summer were within one metre of bushland, and 80% were within 100m.

Crompton said the 2019-20 summer was "comparable to the most damaging seasons" for property loss recorded since 1925. NSW lost 2.5 times more houses than in the next-worst fire season.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

Iran outlaws private ownership of wild animals

Iran has outlawed the private ownership of wild animals, including cheetahs, lions and tigers, and will fine or imprison anyone parading the wild animals in public, YJC reported on Wednesday.

"If a person seen in public walking an exotic pet, will be fined up to 800 million rials (about \$20,000) and could face up to three-year term of imprisonment," Department of Environment's (DOE) director for hunting and fishing Ali Teymouri has said.

مالکیت شخصی و نگهداری حیوانات وحشی ممنوع شد

مدیرکل دفتر حفاظت و مدیریت شکار و صید اظهار داشت: براساس قانون اگر شخصی اقدام به نگهداری چهارپای وحشی از جمله یوزپلنگ، شیر و ببر کند، به جریمه نقدی و زندان محکوم می شود. علی تیموری مدیرکل دفتر حفاظت و مدیریت شکار و صید سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست در گفتگو با خبرنگار حوزه محیط زیست گروه اجتماعی باشگاه خبرنگاران جوان؛ در رابطه با خیابان گردانی حیوانات وحشی اظهار داشت: برای متخلفان نگهداری از حیوانات وحشی جریمه ۸۰ میلیون تومانی و ۳ سال حبس در نظر گرفته شده است.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

"cryo-, cry-"

■ **Meaning:** freezing or cold

■ **For example:** You can return to most normal activities the day after **cryosurgery**.

PHRASAL VERB

Nail somebody down

■ **Meaning:** to force someone to say clearly what they want or what they intend to do

■ **For example:** Before they repair the car, nail them down to a price.

IDIOM

Cream of the crop

■ **Explanation:** the best people or things in a particular group

■ **For example:** As usual, the cream of the crop of this year's graduates were offered the best jobs.

Windstorm damages agriculture in northern Iran

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — A windstorm brought a loss of 500 billion rials (nearly \$11 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) to the agriculture in northern Golestan province, head of the provincial disaster management organization has announced.

About 18,000 hectares of garden and farming lands in different parts of the province were damaged, IRNA quoted Seyed Reza Qaderi as saying on Monday.

A windstorm swept through the province at a speed of 100 kilometers per hour on Sunday morning, causing damage to various areas.

Efforts to save white rhino from going extinct hampered by travel restrictions

It's not quite a case of coitus interruptus, but efforts to create a very special baby are definitely on hold. Blame the pandemic.

Groundbreaking work to keep alive the nearly extinct northern white rhino subspecies — population, two — by in-vitro fertilisation has been stalled by travel restrictions. And time is running out.

The two northern white rhinos are female. The goal is to create viable embryos in a lab by inseminating their eggs with frozen sperm from dead males, then transfer them into a surrogate mother, a more common southern white rhino.

As of January, three embryos had been created and stored in liquid nitrogen. But further key steps now have to wait.

"It has been disrupted by Covid-19, like everything else," said Richard Vigne, managing director of Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya, home of the two remaining rhinos. "That is, the process of collecting more eggs from the females as well as the process of developing the technique to introduce the northern white rhino embryo into the southern white rhino females."

It is an international effort that includes conservationists from Kenya, the Czech Republic, Germany and Italy — many affected by closed borders or restricted travel.

For those involved in the effort, acutely aware of time, the delay can be painful. The procedure to create viable embryos has proven to be safe, they say, and can be performed regularly before the animals become too old.

In January, the transfer of the embryos to surrogates had been planned for the coming months. In March, the plan had been to collect another round of eggs from the two remaining females.

Because those eggs are limited, scientists are working with embryos from southern white rhinos until they can establish a successful pregnancy. Seven or eight transfers so far have failed to take hold. A receptive female is needed, along with the knowledge of exactly when she ovulates.

"We know time is working against us," said Cesare Galli, an in-vitro fertilisation expert based in Italy. "The females will age and we don't have many to choose from."

He hopes restrictions on international travel will loosen in the coming weeks so key steps can resume in August. "The problem is quite serious," he said. "Certainly as soon as international travel is resumed, it will be the first priority to go" to Kenya and collect more eggs from the two females.

Even when travel can resume, another problem looms. The Ol Pejeta Conservancy also is home to non-human apes which are susceptible to the coronavirus, Mr Galli said.

"If you bring in the virus accidentally, it's an additional risk," he said. "You threaten one species to save another."

So for now, the two northern white rhinos wait. Fatu and her mother, Najin, roam and graze within sight of rangers in the company of one intended surrogate mother, a southern white rhino named Tewa.

One of the rhinos' keepers, Zachariah Mutai, was sympathetic. "They won't have a chance anymore to have babies in a natural way, but the only hope is to save them with the scientific way," he said.

The ultimate goal is to create a herd of at least five animals that could be returned to their natural habitat in Africa. That could take decades.

Decades of poaching have taken a heavy toll on rhino species. The animals are killed for their horns, which have long been used as carving material and prized in traditional Chinese medicine for their supposed healing properties.

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Chilean groups dying out

(October 29, 2003)

Two indigenous groups in Chile have died out and another two are in danger of extinction, according to a major new report by twenty-five experts that was overseen by former president Patricio Aylwin. The report also recommended greater autonomy for the people of Easter Island. This report from Clinton Porteous: At the extreme south of Chile, ethnic groups and languages are being **wiped out**. The reporters found two **indigenous groups**, the Aonikenk and the Selk-am had disappeared and another two are close to extinction. One group, the Kawesqar, has just twenty people left and the other, the Yagans, seventy. One Yagan woman who travelled more than two thousand kilometres north to Santiago for the formal ceremony told the BBC there are only two people left who spoke their language fluently. The report recommended an urgent **census** and new programmes to try to save their culture and language. The study also **called for** the three thousand Rapa Nui people of Easter Island to be given **greater autonomy under the umbrella of** Chilean **sovereignty**. On the key issue of **land rights**, it called for a mechanism to study **ancestral links** to the land. It said public property should be **handed back** to its original owners.

■ **Words**

wiped out: destroyed forever

indigenous groups: ethnic groups whose ancestors were the first to arrive in the country

census: an government survey of the whole population

called for: demanded

greater autonomy: more independence from central government

under the umbrella of: under the protection of

sovereignty: the power to make laws and control a country

land rights: the permission to use or own land

ancestral links: traditional family connections

handed back: here, formally given again

(Source: BBC)

Yemeni army warns Saudi aggressors of 'dire consequences' if air raids continue

The Yemeni army has warned the Saudi-led coalition of "dire consequences" if it continues its aerial attacks against the country. Spokesman for the Yemeni Armed Forces Brigadier General Yahya Saree said on Sunday there will be dire consequences for the Saudi aggressors if they intensify their airstrikes against various parts of Yemen.



He said Saudi Arabia has conducted at least 48 airstrikes on the four Yemeni provinces of al-Jawf, Ma'rib, Hajjah, and Sa'ada in the past two days, killing and wounding several Yemeni people, the Arabic-language al-Masirah TV reported.

General Saree said nine airstrikes were launched in the Majzar district of Ma'rib, whilst Saudi-led jets pounded different neighborhoods in the northern Yemeni province of al-Jawf on six occasions.

He went on say that Saudi-led jets carried out 15 airstrikes against Abs and Harad districts in the northern province of Hajjah. A total of 18 raids were mounted by Saudi-led aircraft against Maran, Malahit and Baqim districts of Sa'ada province.

At least three civilian were killed in air raids by the Saudi-led coalition in the mountainous northwestern province of Sa'ada as people were celebrating Eid al-Fitr holiday.

The Saudi-led military aircraft hit a highway in Maran area of the Haydan district, leaving three people dead and as many injured.

The airstrikes came despite a ceasefire Saudi Arabia announced in early April to help contain the coronavirus outbreak in Yemen.

Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched the devastating war on Yemen in March 2015 in order to bring Yemen's former president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, back to power and crush the popular Houthi Ansarullah movement.

The U.S.-based Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), a nonprofit conflict-research organization, estimates that the war has claimed more than 100,000 lives over the past five years.

Netanyahu says annexation set for July

Zionist regime Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told his Likud faction on Monday that his new government would initially embark on six key goals.

The goals are returning work lost due to the coronavirus, passing the state budget, preparing for a second wave of the virus, security threats from Iran, the International Criminal Court's false claims of war crimes and applying Israeli sovereignty in Judea and Samaria, J post reported.

Netanyahu said Monday that the timetable set for July regarding the annexation of territory within the West Bank will not change.

Netanyahu called implementing U.S. President Donald Trump's peace plan "a historic opportunity that we will not let be missed."

Russian mediation reopens major highway in NE Syria

Traffic returned to a major highway in northeastern Syria for the first time in seven months Monday, following Russian mediation to reopen parts of the road captured last year by Turkey-backed opposition fighters.

Syrian Kurdish media and a Syrian Kurdish official said several vehicles accompanied by Russian troops began driving in the morning between the northern towns of Ein Issa and Tal Tamr. The two towns are controlled by government forces and Syrian Kurdish fighters while the area between them is mostly held by Turkey-backed opposition fighters.

Turkish troops and allied Syrian fighters captured parts of the highway known as M4 in October, when Ankara invaded northeastern Syria to drive away Syrian Kurdish fighters. The M4 links Syria's coastal region all the way east to the Iraqi border.

Four convoys will drive on the M4 every day with two leaving from Tal Tamr and two from Ein Issa, according to the Kurdish ANHA news agency. The report said a convoy will leave from each town at 8 a.m., and another set of convoys will do the same, three hours later.

The ANHA agency added that the opening of the highway will shorten the trip between the two towns as people previously had to take roundabout, side roads.

British PM defiant as political scandal rages over aide

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson failed Monday to draw a line under a scandal over his top aide Dominic Cummings allegedly breaching coronavirus rules as pressure mounted on the Brexit mastermind to go.

Johnson faces the threat of his government's authority being undermined in the heat of a health crisis that has claimed nearly 37,000 lives in Britain and thrown one of the world's top 10 economies into its biggest downturn of modern times, AFP reported.

Cummings was already a lightning rod for many Britons over his role in orchestrating the 2016 Brexit campaign that eventually saw Britain pull out of the European Union after nearly 50 years on January 31.

But he is also Johnson's trusted adviser, helping him become prime minister a year ago and then choreographing Britain's delayed exit from the European bloc.

Politicians of all stripes have been joined by scientific advisers and even some members of the clergy in condemning Cummings for driving across the country with his wife -- while she was suffering from the virus -- when the official advice was to stay at home.

"If you give the impression there's one rule for them and one rule for us, you fatally undermine that sense of 'we're all in this together'," scientific adviser Stephen Reicher told ITV.

HK security chief warns of growing 'terrorism'

➔ 1 Other governmental agencies in Hong Kong issued similar statements in support of the new legislation, including the Commissioner of Correctional Services and Hong Kong Customs office, pointing out the necessity "to prevent, stop and punish" unlawful acts.

Meanwhile, China's Foreign Ministry branch in Hong Kong said on Monday that some acts during last year's protests were "terrorist in nature," posing "imminent danger" to national security.

Xie Feng, the commissioner of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Hong Kong, made the remarks during a speech over the security situation in Hong Kong.

He was referring to the months-long demonstrations that hit Hong Kong last year over a bill that would have allowed the extradition of suspects to mainland courts for trial.

The local administration later dropped that bill in the face of angry protests.

■ Taiwan backs Hong Kong protesters

In contrast, the leadership in Taiwan -- a self-governing island viewed by China as a breakaway province -- criticized the proposed security laws and offered assistance to the protesters in Hong Kong.

Taiwan's pro-independence President Tsai Ing-wen -- which has American support -- said in a Facebook post late Sunday that Beijing's move would threaten the people's freedoms



and Hong Kong's judicial independence in comments that are likely to spark anger in the mainland.

"In face of the changing situation, the international community has proactively stretched out a helping hand to Hong Kong's people," Tsai wrote. Taiwan will "even more proactively perfect and forge ahead with relevant support work, and provide Hong Kong's people with necessary assistance," she added.

Tsai is opposed to internationally-practiced "One China" policy, under which Beijing claims sovereignty over Taiwan.

■ U.S. threatens China with sanctions

Meanwhile, the White House threatened to impose new sanctions on China over its Hong Kong policy amid a deepening war of words between the two sides over the coronavirus pandemic and trade deals, among other disputes.

"It looks like with this national security law they're going to basically take over Hong Kong and if they do ... Secretary [of State Mike] Pompeo will likely be unable to certify that Hong Kong maintains a high degree of autonomy," said National security adviser

Chomsky slams 'megalomaniac' Trump over 'chaotic' coronavirus response

Activist scholar Noam Chomsky attacks the administration of US President Donald Trump over its "chaotic" response to the coronavirus pandemic, arguing the government is unable to stem the virus outbreak.

Speaking in an interview with AFP, the 91-year-old intellectual called Trump "a sociopathic megalomaniac" who thinks about nothing but himself and his power.

"There's no coherent leadership. It's chaotic. The presidency, the White House, is in the hands of a sociopathic megalomaniac who's interested in nothing but his own power, electoral prospects -- doesn't care what happens to the country, the world."

"The president himself has said that it's none of his business. He's said that the federal government can't do anything," he added.

The U.S. is currently the worst-hit country with more than 1,686,400 recorded cases of infection and 99,300 deaths.

Chomsky predicted that "there will a lot more" deaths in the United States as "there's no coordinated plan."

He also criticized the Republican president for "de-



funding the Center for Disease Control" and "canceling programs that were working with Chinese scientists to identify potential viruses."

The U.S. has repeatedly blamed China for the COVID-19 pandemic, with Trump recently lashing out on Twitter, claiming that the "incompetence of China" led to "mass Worldwide killing."

Trump also proclaimed that a laboratory in the Chinese

city of Wuhan, where the first outbreak was reported, had accidentally unleashed the virus.

The U.S. president, nonetheless, had praised China's coronavirus response more than 30 times between January and March as the virus started to spread around the globe, according to a CNN tally.

Chomsky also criticized the U.S. government for lacking "a universal health care system," describing the current one as "ultimate neoliberal."

Drawing a comparison between the U.S. and the Europe, the American professor did say that there were problems in Europe, but added it still enjoys a social democratic structure that can provide the kind of support the U.S. cannot.

"Europe in many ways is worse, because the austerity programs just amplify the danger, because of the severe attack on democracy in Europe, the shifting decisions to Brussels.... So Europe has its own problems, but at least it has the residue of some kind of social democratic structure, which provides some support, which is what I think is lacking in the U.S."

Al-Aqsa Mosque red line for all Muslims: Erdogan

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has reiterated Ankara's support for Palestinians, vowing to help protect their lands amid Israel's plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.

Erdogan -- in a video message on Twitter addressed to U.S. Muslims on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan on Sunday -- said, "We will not allow the Palestinian lands to be offered to anyone else."

"I would like to reiterate that al-Quds al-Sharif, the holy site of three religions and

our first Qiblah, is a red line for all Muslims worldwide," he added, referring to the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem al-Quds.

Erdogan also condemned Israel's plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.

"Last week we witnessed that a new occupation and annexation project, which disregards Palestine's sovereignty and international law, was put into action by Israel."

The Israeli regime's plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank and the Jordan Valley, which had been envisaged in U.S. President

Donald Trump's so-called "deal of the century", were unveiled earlier this year.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that he would start plans for annexing more areas in the occupied West Bank on July 1, in accordance with Trump's scheme, further infuriating Palestinians.

According to Press TV, the American president officially unveiled his scheme in January at the White House with Netanyahu on his side, while Palestinian representatives were not invited.

The proposal gives in to Israel's demands while creating a Palestinian state with limited control over its own security and borders, enshrining the occupied Jerusalem al-Quds as "Israel's undivided capital" and allowing the regime to annex settlements in the West Bank and the Jordan Valley.

Trump's highly provocative scheme, which further denies the right of return to Palestinian refugees, is also in complete disregard of UN Security Council resolutions and rejected by the vast majority of the international community.

Afghan ceasefire holds as prisoner release expected

A surprise Taliban ceasefire appeared to be holding for a second day Monday as authorities planned to release up to 2,000 insurgents held by security forces.

The Taliban made the three-day truce offer to mark the Eid al-Fitr holiday that started Sunday -- a move swiftly welcomed by the government, which reciprocated by announcing plans to free insurgent prisoners, AFP reported.

President Ashraf Ghani said the government was also ready to hold peace talks with the Taliban, seen as key to ending a nearly two-decade-long war in the impoverished country.

"The ceasefire is holding. There have been no reports of any violation so far," National Security Council spokesman Javid Faisal told AFP.

"We hope this will eventually lead to a lasting peace that the people of Afghanistan so much desire and deserve."

Faisal said the authorities plan to release the insurgents in batches of 100 daily, with the first group of inmates to be freed later Monday. "The release process will continue with 100 prisoners each day until the 2,000 count is reached," Faisal said.

In the northern city of Kunduz, attacked just days ago by the Taliban, calm prevailed as residents celebrated Eid.

"Just two days ago panic had set in the city," said Atiqullah, a shopkeeper from Kunduz.

"Today, you go out and feel as if there is no more fighting. People are actually celebrating Eid."

- 'Goodwill gesture' - The normally restive southern province of Uruzgan was also calm, police said.

"There was non-stop fighting every single day, but since the ceasefire was announced not a single shot has been fired," said Haji Lal Agha, the provincial police chief.

"It is especially good for the residents of Trinkot who would hear the sound of gunfire every day," he added, referring to the provincial capital.

There were no reports of fighting from Kandahar, once a bastion for the Taliban, and the southeast province of Khost was also peaceful, police said.

Violence had escalated since the Taliban signed a deal with Washington in February to withdraw all U.S. forces from the country by early next year.

The agreement also set the stage for intra-Afghan peace talks and stipulated that the government would first release up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners, while the militants would free about 1,000 national security.

Before Sunday's announcement to free up to 2,000 Tal-



iban prisoners as a "goodwill gesture", Kabul had already released about 1,000 Taliban inmates while the insurgents had let go roughly 300 Afghan security forces members.

The Taliban insists that Kabul must release 5,000 of its members as agreed in the deal with the U.S.

"This process should be completed in order to remove hurdles in the way of commencement of intra-Afghan negotiations," a Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen said on Twitter.

Since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 there has only been one other ceasefire -- a three-day pause between the Taliban and Kabul, also marking Eid, in 2018.

That ceasefire was initiated by Ghani.

U.S. manufactured 'emergency' to sell arms to Saudi Arabia

➔ 1 Last week, Trump fired State Department Inspector General Steve Linick, who was investigating his administration's use of emergency powers to sell arms to Saudi Arabia despite congressional opposition.

House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Eliot Engel said he believes the probe into the \$8 billion weapon sale could be one of the reasons for Linick's abrupt dismissal.

Pompeo denied any knowledge of the investigation, but The New York Times reported that the inspector general had sent the top U.S. diplomat questions regarding

the inquiry.

Pompeo also claimed that the allegations that he retaliated against Linick were "patently false".

On Thursday, however, a group of House Democratic leaders sent a letter to Pompeo denouncing Linick's removal and demanding that he be reinstated.

"Based on longstanding concerns with your actions - and new reports this week about potential abuses - this assault on the integrity and independence of Inspectors General appears to be an intentional campaign to undermine their ability to expose

corruption and protect taxpayer dollars from waste, fraud, and abuse," they wrote.

According to Press TV, in a May 24, 2019 letter to U.S. lawmakers, Pompeo said that he "determined that an emergency exists, which requires the immediate sale of the defense articles and defense services" to Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Jordan in a bid to deter what he called "the malign influence" of Iran throughout the Middle East.

"The law is written broadly, but an emergency still means something even in the broadest of context," said a U.S. congres-

sional aide. "It is outrageous to suggest that an emergency would require an \$8 billion arms sale of this nature whereby much of the weaponry was not built, some licenses were even given to start building those weapons in Saudi Arabia, it is laughable."

Riyadh is the largest buyer of American-made weaponry. Trump signed an arms deal worth \$110 billion with Saudi Arabia in May 2017 on his first foreign trip since becoming president.

Before his presidency, he described the kingdom as "a milk cow" which would be slaughtered when its milk runs out.

Skocic better coach than Wilmots: Azmoun

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran national football team forward Sardar Azmoun believes that Dragan Skocic can help Iran qualify for the 2022 World Cup since he is a better coach than Marc Wilmots.

The Croatian coach replaced Wilmots in early February after the Belgian left Iran for his unpaid salary.

Iran have a tough task ahead at the 2022 World Cup qualification after suffering two defeats against Bahrain and Iraq under coaching of Wilmots. After back-to-back appearances in 2014 and 2018, the aim now is to secure a third consecutive participation for the first time.

Iran have reached the World Cup on five occasions.

The Persians sit third, five points behind Iraq in in Group C.

“I think we can book our place at the 2022 World Cup because Skocic is a better coach than Wilmots,” Azmoun said in an interview with Iran’s state-run TV.

“We talked to each other before the Coronavirus outbreak and I understood he has a winning spirit. It’s a pity that Iran sit behind Iraq and Bahrain in the table. I hope we return to top of the standing with support of our fans,” he added.

“Wilmots has gone and it’s time to forget what he has done in our team. Iran will definitely return to their good days with this good guy,” Azmoun went on to say.

“In the match against Iraq, I didn’t realize what was my role and wanted to be substituted in the 70th minute. I had to play against five defenders but I am not Messi or Ronaldo who dribble past several players and score. At the time of Carlos Queiroz, I knew that what was my responsibility. He wanted me to help the team not to score,” he stated.



Azmoun was heavily criticized by the Iranian fans after he failed to score at the 2018 World Cup.

“As I’ve said, I was forced to help

our defenders and I could not to score. I ask the critics can they run length of the field twice? They don’t know anything about tactics and I think they

are jealous of me. But I have to say I am proud of myself for being among Iran’s top five goalscorers,” Azmoun concluded.

Pahlavan named best midfielder of ACL2016 Team

Zob Ahan player Ehsan Pahlavan was voted the best midfielder of AFC Champions League 2016 Team.

With the 2020 AFC Champions League currently on hiatus, the-AFC.com continues its series of articles to determine the best sides from the last four editions of the Continental competition.

The-afc began with the 2016 edition’s best goalkeeper, next came the candidates for the backline and now it’s time to turn attention to the more attacking positions.

There were nine players in contention for the four places in the midfield.

Ehsan Pahlavan was just 22 years old when he made his maiden Continental club appearance at the 2016 AFC Champions League, but the young Iranian winger showed no fear with several fine performances in the tournament.

Most notable was Pahlavan’s leading role in the Matchday Five win over Saudi giant Al Nassr where he netted a brace in a 3-0 win, before again getting on the scoresheet in the return meeting a week later.

In a poll conducted by the-afc.com,



40 percent of participants voted for the Iranian midfielder.

Omar Abdulrahman, Leonardo, Lee Jae-sung, Lee Myung-joo, Jucilei, Wu Lei, Walter Montillo and Osmar were vying for the award.

(Source: the-afc)

Hosseini nominated for best last-minute winner

Persepolis defender Jalal Hosseini’s winner against UAE’s Al Jazira has been nominated for the 5 Best Last-minute Winners the AFC Champions League.

It’s hard to beat the feeling of snatching victory from the jaws of defeat at the very last, and this week’s ‘5 of the Best’ highlights some of the most dramatic climaxes ever seen in the AFC Champions League.

From elation in Osaka to joy in Jeddah and fantastic finishes in Dubai, Sydney and Tehran, the-afc latest edition shines the spotlight on the magical moments that help make the beautiful game the most watched sport in the world.

Persepolis brought plenty of drama to the 2018 AFC Champions League as the Iranian side’s never-say-die attitude helped them advance all the way to the final.

In the last 16 against the UAE’s Al Jazira, it was a case of ‘cometh the hour, cometh the man’.

Having seen their second-half goal cancelled out, the Tehran side was heading for the exit door with 89 minutes gone, only for captain Jalal Hosseini to come up with a finish any striker would be proud of as the center-back volleyed home to send the



80,000 inside Azadi Stadium into raptures.

Hosseini will compete with Koki Yonekura (Gamba Osaka), Hao Junmin (Shandong Luneng), Abdulrahman Ghareeb (Al Ahli Saudi) and Kwon Kyung-won (Al Ahli Dubai) for the award.

(Source: the-afc)

Azadi shortlisted for Great Grounds of Central, South Asia

Tehran’s Azadi Stadium has been nominated for the Great Grounds of Central & South Asia.

The Central and South zones are home to some of the most spectacular stadiums in Asia, where they have frequently welcomed the world.

Built as the center-piece of the hosting of the 1974 Asian Games, Azadi Stadium in Tehran is the home venue for the Islamic Republic of Iran national team as well as domestic heavyweights Persepolis and Esteghlal.

The bowl-shaped structure, which helps create a vibrant and often intimidating atmosphere, sits within the Azadi Sports Complex, which also contains an aquatics center and several other sporting venues.

Opened in 1971, the record attendance was set in September 1997 as a crowd of 120,000 attended the 1998 FIFA World Cup qualifier between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which ended in a 1-1 draw.

In April 2015, the meeting between Persepolis and Sau-



di Arabia’s Al Nassr attracted an AFC Champions League record crowd of 100,000 — beating the previous best set at the same venue as Persepolis entertained Qatar’s Al Gharafa three years earlier.

The stadium also matched those numbers in the two

subsequent ties hosted by Persepolis against Uzbek side Bunyodkor and Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia.

The Azadi Stadium has also hosted some of Asian football’s most prestigious matches, including the final of the 1976 AFC Asian Cup, when Ali Parvin scored the only goal of the game to give the home team victory over Kuwait. And in 1999 and 2002, the stadium played host to the final of the Asian Club Championship.

The stadium hosted its first AFC Champions League final in 2018, when Persepolis played Kashima Antlers in the second leg before a packed stadium. The match ended 0-0, with Kashima securing the title with a 2-0 aggregate win.

Azadi will vie with Bangabandhu National (Dhaka, Bangladesh), Salt Lake (Kolkata, India), Pakhtakor (Tashkent, Uzbekistan) and Central Republican (Dushanbe, Tajikistan) Stadiums for the Great Grounds of Central & South Asia.

(Source: the-afc)

Iran a great team, Saudi basketballer Gabar says

Khalid Abdel Gabar says that Iranian national basketball team is a great team with great players.

Saudi Arabia will be playing Iran in the near future in the World Cup qualifier. The two teams are currently scheduled to play on November 27, 2020 in Iran before a rematch in Saudi Arabia on February 21, 2021.

“Great team, great players,” Abdel Gabar said of Iran. “I’m looking forward to the match and we’re trying our best to prepare as much as possible. We’re very optimistic. We always want to come into the game knowing that we’re going to win and that’s our goal.”

“That’s really what we’re trying to pursue and we’re hoping that we can surprise some people out there that are watching and continuing to support us.”

“I would say [we are] very fast-paced and athletic,” he said about the style of Saudi Arabia basketball. “We have very athletic guys. That was something that really surprised me because I didn’t really know too much about Saudi Arabia basketball but I noticed when I got there that guys were very athletic. So, you’ll definitely see a lot of dunking, blocking shots, and just going up and down,” Gabar told FIBA.



Abdel Gabar’s national team career is still quite young and he’s already looking forward to many more high-level clashes down the road.

“Some teams really stand out,” he said. “I’m thinking about like guys and teams that have played in the World Cup so teams like Australia, China, Japan, Philippines. Those are some great teams. A lot of them have NBA representatives like Australia, thinking about guys like Patty Mills, Ben Simmons. Japan has Rui [Hachimura]. He’s a really great player.”

(Source: FIBA)

Coronavirus: Each team with five players tested positive, not allowed to play

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — If five players of a team are tested positive, the team’s matches will be canceled, acting head of Iran Football League Organization Soheil Mahdi said.

The Iranian teams, who were not allowed to play due to coronavirus outbreak, have started their trainings from last week after more than two months.

According to the league organization, Iran Professional League will resume on June 18.

“If five or more players of a team are tested positive, the matches of the team will be postponed but they can keep training if they take safety protocols into consideration,” Mahdi said.

Iranian media have reported that Gol Gohar’s seven players are known to have tested positive but Mahdi said that the organization has not been officially informed by the club.

“Some clubs have started their training before we allow them back in the training. From tomorrow, no team are allowed to train without overseer,” he added.

Iran to participate at Thailand Five’s Futsal tournament

IRNA — Iran national futsal team will take part at the Thailand Five’s Futsal Tournament.

Iran coach Mohammad Nazemalsharia has said Team Melli will take part at the competition as part of preparation for the AFC Futsal Championship.

According to Nazemalsharia, Spain have so far announced its readiness to participate at the event.

The Thailand Five’s Futsal Tournament is the international championship for futsal, the indoor version of association football organized by Football Association of Thailand or FA Thailand.

The Thailand Five’s tournament is held every year. The first event was held in 2008.

Iran have chance of World Cup qualifying: Skocic

TASNIM — Dragan Skocic says that Iran still have a chance of booking a place at the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Iran national football team sit third in Group C, five points behind Iraq in qualification.

“I know that the expectations are very high but I also expect Team Melli to qualify for the 2022 World Cup. We have suffered two losses against Bahrain and Iraq but we can start anew and book a place in the next stage,” Skocic said.

“We have a good team and I miss working in Iran. I hope we prepare the team for the qualification with the beginning of the training,” he added.

“There is a long time ahead of Team Melli for matches against Iraq and Bahrain and we can obtain more information about the teams,” the Croat stated.

“I will be in Iran to monitor the league competition. To plan the program in Iran is not a difficult task” Skocic concluded.

Antwerp eye Iran’s Kaveh Rezaei

Antwerp have shown interest in signing Iranian forward Kaveh Rezaei.

Rezaei joined the Charleori from Club Brugge on loan last season and scored 14 goals and provided five assists in 25 games for the team.

Club Brugge football club are going to re-sign its player. But Voetbal24.be has reported that Antwerp wants to hire the Iranian forward.

Charleroi chairman Mehdi Bayat had already said the club would make efforts to keep Kaveh Rezaei.

(Source: Voetbal24.be)

Benfica join Sporting in race for Taremi

Portuguese giant Benfica have joined Sporting in the race for signing Rio Ave’s Iranian international Mehdi Taremi.

The crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic generated a cloud of uncertainty over the global transfer market, but it did not prevent Benfica from starting to prepare what it intends to be the squad that Bruno Lage will have at his disposal next season.

The attacking front was one of the sectors identified as needing reinforcements, and according to the newspaper Record, Taremi is, at this moment, one of the names that most appeals to the leadership led by Luis Filipe Vieira.

Benfica have not yet come into contact with the villagers but according to reports, they already know that they will be submitting a proposal of approximately 10 million euros to bring the business to a successful conclusion.

(Source: Record)

Saipa player tested positive for coronavirus

TASNIM — Saipa have confirmed one of the club’s players tested positive for coronavirus.

The Iranian teams have started testing for Covid-19 from last week.

Saipa have not named the player.

The Iran Professional League teams began training on Saturday after more than two months.

The competition will restart on June 18.

Persepolis are leading the standings on 47 points with Sepahan and Tractor 10 behind.

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Patience is a fitting cover, and wisdom is a sharp sword. So cover your ugly conduct with patience, and kill carnal desires with wisdom.
Imam Ali (AS)

Composer Loris Tjeknavorian nominated for Books for Peace Award

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian composer Loris Tjeknavorian has been nominated for the Books for Peace Awards 2020.

He received the nomination from Iran's Art for Peace Festival, which was nominated for the 2019 edition of the awards.

Winners will be honored during a special ceremony on September 12 in Rome, Italy.



Iranian composer Loris Tjeknavorian in an undated photo.

The Books for Peace Awards was launched in 2017 in a project by FUNVIC (Fundação Universitária Vida Cristã), UNESCO BFUCA-WFUCA Brazil club, Section Europe, and ANASPOL (Local Police) to honor works promoting peace through culture and words, not only as a concept between nations at war, but also among all individuals living in the world.

The Art for Peace Festival, which is held every year in Tehran, is concerned with world peace and environmental issues such as the water crisis in the country.

The festival showcases a variety of artworks by Iranian and international artists in the media of painting, photo, sculpture, graphic design, installation, video art, cinema and theater to promote the culture of peace and a world without violence.

Every year the organizers also honor an individual who has made a significant contribution to peace with a medal.

Actress Sediqeh Kianfar passes away at 88

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian actress Sediqeh Kianfar, who played roles in Dariush Mehrjui's cult film "Hamun" and Marzieh Borumand's popular series "All My Children", died from heart failure at her home in Tehran on Friday. She was 88.



Sediqeh Kianfar acts in a scene from director Hossein Qanaat's comedy film "Pishi Mishi".

She began her acting career in radio dramas in her hometown Abadan. She made her debut in cinema by acting in "The Crisis" by Ali-Asghar Shadravan in 1987.

She played roles in over 20 movies, including director Abolhassan Davudi's comedy "I Love the Earth" and Yadollah Samadi's comedy-drama "Apartment No. 13".

Iranian filmmakers such as Hassan Fat'hi and Hengameh Mofid had her collaboration in over 50 TV series, including "The Children of Doosti Alley", "Forbidden Fruit", "The Innocents", "The Champions Never Die", "Mirror" and "The Tradition of Love".

Stage director Masud Delkhah hired Kianfar to play a role in his play "The Hidden Lake", which was performed at Tehran's Molavi Hall in 2008.

She experienced another stage performance in "Highlight" by director and actor Sussan Parvar in 2017.

Kianfar made her last appearance in the Iranian media through a statement published on March 16 when she asked Iranians to stay at home due to the outbreak of coronavirus in the country.

"Even when I have no offers from filmmakers, I always have something to do on the radio, but many projects have shut down due to the coronavirus," she said.

Her last film was "Pishi Mishi", director Hossein Qanaat's comedy film that has not premiered yet.

Iran's "Eyes and Arms" honored at Hot Docs 2020

A R T TEHRAN — "Eyes and Arms" by Iranian filmmaker Panahbarkhoda Rezai has won an honorable mention at Hot Docs, a major Canadian international documentary festival, which is currently being run online in Toronto.

In "Eyes and Arms", deeply in love and perfectly matched, an isolated Iranian couple overcome their disabilities, with her becoming his eyes and him her arms. His only hesitation is her ongoing desire for a child as he copes with his own tragic loss.

The documentary was an entry to the World Showcase and received the honor in the Best Mid-Length Documentary category.

"This tender portrait of a marriage captures the delicate choreography of an intimate partnership; this loving couple with disabilities are the players and their humble home in Iran is the stage," the jury wrote in their statement published after announcing the winners.

The mid-length jury members were Monika Navarro, João Federici and Denae Peters.

The award for Best Mid-Length Documentary went to "Mother-Child" directed by Andrea Testa from Argentina.

"Stray" by American director Elizabeth Lo won the award for Best International Feature Documentary while "499", a co-production between the U.S. and Mexico by director Rodrigo Reyes received special jury prize in this category.



"Eyes and Arms" by Iranian filmmaker Panahbarkhoda Rezai.

American documentarian Todd Chandler was honored with the Emerging International Filmmaker Award for "Bulletproof", and

"Unforgivable" directed by Marlén Viñayo from El Salvador was picked as Best International Short Documentary.

The Hot Docs festival opened online on May 28 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will run until June 6.

Ramiz Guliyev, Iranian orchestra performs Vasif Adigozelov's "Lullaby"

A R T TEHRAN — Azerbaijani tar virtuoso Ramiz Guliyev and the Iran National Instruments Orchestra has released the music video "Lullaby" during the pandemic.

The idea came from the orchestra and Guliyev warmly welcomed it, the orchestra said in a press release, adding that the Azerbaijani musician has said that listening to music in these difficult days of quarantine even for a short period of time will help relieve and encourage people.

The orchestra proposed several compositions and Guliyev proposed "Lullaby" by Azerbaijan's most distinguished composer Vasif Adigozelov.

Members of the orchestra and Guliyev have recorded their performances for the video separately under the supervision of conductor Ali-Akbar Qorbani.

Alireza Daryai, Kurosh Danai, Shahin Safai, Maryam Khodabakhsh, Masud Firuznejad, Forugh Fazli and Amin Heidari are the members of the orchestra.

Conductor of Tehran Symphony Orchestra Shahrddad Rohani quits

A R T TEHRAN — Maestro Shahrddad Rohani has announced his decision to resign as the conductor of the Tehran Symphony Orchestra in a post published on his Instagram on May 21.

Rohani, who has led some prestigious orchestras, including London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, was appointed the conductor of the Tehran Symphony Orchestra in May 2016.

"After four years of collaboration with the orchestra as the conductor and general music director of the Tehran Symphony Orchestra, I hereby express my gratitude over having been able to serve the art and music of the country," he wrote.

"I express my thanks to every member of the orchestra as well as the Rudaki Foundation for providing grounds for the expansion and elevation of music, and I hope the orchestra will continue its activities and achieve continued success in the coming years," he said.

Meanwhile, the Rudaki Foundation published a statement expressing appreciation to Rohani. The foundation also said that Rohani is suffering from heart disease.

"The Tehran Symphony Orchestra, as the oldest orchestra



Shahrddad Rohani conducts the Tehran Symphony Orchestra during a performance at the 34th Fajr Music Festival in Tehran in February 2019. (Tehran Times/Bahman Vakhshur)

of the country, has had the duty to elevate the music of the country in its 90-year-old life. All these years, the conductors have played a key role and each new conductor has had his own share in the elevation of the orchestra, whose names and memories have always been respected," reads part

of the statement released by the foundation on Sunday.

"However, the collaboration of Rohani has been halted due to his illness and finally his contract with the orchestra as the conductor and general music director has ended. The Rudaki Foundation expresses thanks to Rohani and hopes to make other use of his experiences and advice," it concludes.

In January, Rohani was said to be outside of Iran to receive treatment for heart disease, and the Tehran Symphony Orchestra under the baton of guest conductor Manuchehr Sahbai gave a performance at Tehran's Vahdat Hall.

However, in an unprecedented act before the beginning of the concert, Sahbai told the audience, "Despite what you have heard or read, Rohani had fled the country after the recent events and whatever you have read about his illness is a lie."

Sahbai's remarks were strongly criticized by the audience and the members of the orchestra refused to perform the second part of their concert.

However, after a long break, they agreed to resume their performance without Sahbai, who allegedly was transferred to a hospital due to repercussions caused by his disagreements with the musicians.

Actor Mohammad-Ali Keshavarz hospitalized over kidney disease

A R T TEHRAN — The legendary actor Mohammad-Ali Keshavarz, famous for his roles in Ali Hatami's hits such as "Mother" and "Hezardastan", has been admitted to a hospital in Tehran.

The actor was hospitalized due to an elevated creatinine level and impaired kidney function, Persian media have announced.

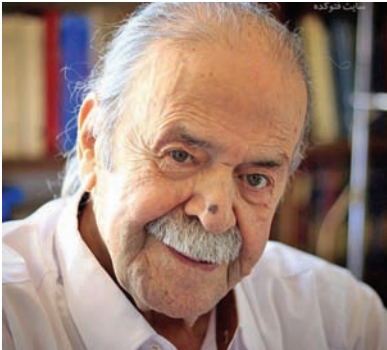
Mohammad Tabatabai, the director of the Veteran Artists Institute that is affiliated with the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, paid a visit to Keshavarz at the hospital and said he is now out of danger and making a recovery and will be released after his physician's approval.

Born in 1930 in Isfahan, Keshavarz began his stage acting career in 1948 and entered the world of cinema with "Night of the Hunchback" by Farrokh Ghaffari in 1964.

He has so far acted in many famous hits including "Mother", "Hezardastan", "Kamalolmolk" and "Delshodegan" by Ali Hatami, as well as "Through the Olive Trees" by Abbas Kiarostami.

The actor also played the role of Shakkur in "Caravans", a 1978 Iranian-American film directed by James Fargo based on the novel by James Michener. The movie was shot in Iran and the Mexican-American actor Anthony Quinn acted in the movie, playing the role of Zulfiqar.

Keshavarz donated memorabilia to the Film Museum of Iran on his 90th birthday anniversary in mid-April.



Actor Mohammad-Ali Keshavarz in an undated photo.

A handwritten letter from his late friend, stage director and playwright Hamid Samandarian, was a highlight of the collection.

Some of his certificates and the obituary of Shaban Ostadkhani (Ostokhuni), the villain whose role he played in Ali Hatami's acclaimed TV series "Hezardastan", were also among the donated items.

The contracts for several films and TV series in which he has acted, including "Mirza Noruz Shoes", "Dear Uncle Napoleon", "Sarbedaran" and "Sadeq Kordeh", were also in the collection.

Also included were his ring, pen, eyeglasses, fountain pen, hat and several other items.

A life-sized statue of the actor is due to be set up in the hall of the museum this year.

Iran reopens movies theaters in "white areas" after virus shutdown

A R T TEHRAN — The Cinema Organization of Iran (COI) has announced on Monday that the movie theaters in the so-called "white areas" or regions with no coronavirus hospitalizations in the past two weeks are allowed to reopen.

However, the protocols issued by the Coronavirus Control Operations Headquarters for the theaters must be observed.

The cinemagoers are asked to observe social distancing, while the employees are asked to wear face masks and plastic gloves.

Fever test before entering the cinemas, frequent sanitization of the halls and public restrooms, as well as the screening of a video on how to protect oneself from the coronavirus before the feature film are also among the regulations required by the Coronavirus Control Operations Headquarters.

Earlier last week, the Association of Iranian Theater Owners asked President Hassan Rouhani to lift the coronavirus restriction on cinemas, calling for reopening of the theaters across the country based on the health protocols during the pandemic.

On May 10, the Cinema Organization of Iran announced that Iranian cineastes can resume their activities in the near future.

The organization said that the filmmakers are allowed to resume their activities while observing the new regulations.



A file photo shows a movie theater in Tehran.

"Unfinished projects that possess a production license can resume activities, which follow the regulations," COI said.

"However, those projects that are seeking production licenses can upload the required documents at the COI website for further studies, and the councils that are responsible to study and issue a production license will soon resume their activities," it added.

All the activities must be carried out based on the medical protocols for filmmakers under producers' supervision.

The producers are asked to observe social distancing while at the project, and in case the regulations are not observed, each individual can inform the organization for further decisions.