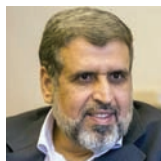




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DEFC to produce doc on Qajar businessman Amin al-Zarb **12**

Coronavirus cuts Iran's GDP by 15%

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©ISNA / Mona Hoobehfetr



ARTICLE
Yuram Abdullah Weiler
Analyst and journalist

George Floyd's slaying: A clarion call to topple the U.S. regime

George Floyd's savage slaying at the hands of white racist police has ignited the fuse on the powder keg of suppressed rage against 400+ years of injustice. Blacks and people of color, who have had little choice but to endure the inhumanity of racism and its unspeakable cruelties, have poured onto the streets in U.S. cities and towns for widespread mass protests. The looting and vandalism occurring as collateral damage should be viewed as justifiable but minuscule down payments toward the rightful retribution owed to Blacks by their white capitalist masters.

Racism is not merely a systemic problem in the United States, it is a direct consequence of the two pillars upon which the country was founded; namely, the enslavement of Blacks and the genocide of Native Peoples, which by some estimates ran as high as 10 million. According to David E. Stannard, professor of American studies at the University of Hawaii, perhaps even as many as 100 million were exterminated. Slavery at its peak before the American civil war held 4 million human beings in its cruel clutches. How would it be possible for such a country to be transformed into something less malevolent? I believe it would be impossible barring a revolution and a complete dismantling of the existing white capitalist power structure, which has amassed its wealth through the unconscionable methodology of slavery and genocide.

History has shown that peaceful demonstrations do not achieve even incremental change in the direction of social justice. This fact can be seen by the absence of meaningful change in the racial attitudes of a disturbingly large number of Americans who embrace the repugnant rhetoric emanating from the neofascist in the White House, which itself was built by slave labor. Support for programs to help Blacks and other minorities has been flat since the 1970s, and worse still, whites have increasingly expressed "no interest" in addressing racial issues. **→7**

Iran ranks higher in environmental performance

TEHRAN — Iran has improved 13 spots in the 2020 Environmental Performance Index (EPI), moving up to 67th place as compared to 80th two years ago.

The ranking was released in an online ceremony on Friday concurrent with the World Environment Day.

The 2020 EPI provides a data-driven summary of the state of sustainability around the world. Using 32 performance indicators across 11 issue categories, namely, air quality, sanitation and drinking water, heavy metals, waste management, biodiversity, ecosystem services, fisheries, climate change, pollution emissions, agriculture, and water resources.

The EPI ranks 180 countries on environmental health and ecosystem vitality. These indicators provide a gauge at a national scale of how close countries are to established environmental policy targets.

EPI indicators provide a way to spot problems, set targets, track trends, understand outcomes, and identify best policy practices. Overall EPI rankings indicate which countries are best addressing the environmental challenges that every nation faces.

Currently, the criterion for comparing the development of countries is condition of environment is determined by the World Economic Forum (Davos) every two years in collaboration with Yale University and Columbia University. Notably, the 2020 rankings include for the first time a waste management metric and a pilot indicator on CO2 emissions from land cover change.

World Environment Day

World Environment Day, hosted by Colombia this 2020, is the most renowned day for environmental action. Since 1974, it has been celebrated every year on 5 June, engaging governments, businesses, celebrities, and citizens to focus their efforts on a pressing environmental issue. **→9**

Protests worldwide embrace Black Lives Matter movement

Thousands of people took to the streets in European and Asian cities, demonstrating in support of U.S. protests against police brutality.

The rolling, global protests reflect rising anger over police treatment of ethnic minorities, sparked by the May 25 killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis after a white officer detaining him knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes with fellow officers beside him.

After a largely peaceful protest in London, a few demonstrators near British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's residence threw bottles at police, and mounted officers charged push protesters back, Reuters reported.

Earlier, more than a thousand protesters had marched past the U.S. Embassy, blocking traffic and holding placards.

Many thousands had also crowded into the square outside parliament, holding placards reading "Black Lives Matter", ignoring govern-

ment advice to avoid large gatherings due to the risk from the coronavirus.

Police in the German city of Hamburg used pepper spray on protesters and said they were ready to deploy water cannons. One officer was injured, they added.

Several hundred "hooded and aggressive people" had put officers under pressure in the city centre, police said, tweeting: "Attacks on police officers are unacceptable!"

In Paris the authorities banned demonstrations planned outside the U.S. Embassy and on the lawns near the Eiffel Tower.

However, several hundred protesters, some holding "Black Lives Matters" signs, gathered on Place de la Concorde, close to the Embassy. Police had installed a long barrier across the square to prevent access to the embassy, which is also close to the Elysee presidential palace. **→10**

Guardian Council approves bill to support children's rights

TEHRAN — The watchdog Guardian Council approves a bill to support the rights of children and teenagers.

"According to the Guardian Council's view, the bill to support children and teenagers does not run contrary to religious law and the constitution and was approved by the council," Guardian Council spokesman Abassali Kadkhodaei said on Sunday, ISNA reported.

Majlis passed a law on children's right in 2002, however, a lack of clarity in the law and

ineffective legislative strategies prompted the parliamentarians to start to revise the law in 2006. Six years later in 2012 a new bill on children's right was brought before the parliament which was approved in the Iranian calendar year of 1397 (March 2018-2019). The previous law on children's right was ineffective in that in many cases of child abuse the punishment did not fit the crime. Releasing criminals on parole, giving remissions, and not granting responsible bodies the authority to fight violence against children

were some of the shortcomings of the previous law.

According to the ratification, there is a need for establishment of special courts or child-friendly courts for cases of child abuse. As per an article agreed by parliamentarians, offices for the protection of children's right, which will be affiliated to the judiciary, will be established in order to identify cooperation areas with other institutions, prepare case reports and periodic reports, conduct statistical studies, and monitor and evaluate provincial offices actions toward enforcing the law. **→2**



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Schools holding exams under health protocols

With the coronavirus forcing school closures and bans on group gatherings, students are sitting for exams nationwide observing strict health protocols.

To address the needs of educational system under the outbreak, which is expected to extend for upcoming months and may even continue till the next Iranian educational year (late September), the government has urged schools and universities to try online training system.

'Most extensive' field research in central Iranian plateau yields 21 historical sites

TEHRAN — A total of 21 historical sites have recently been identified during what is called the 'most extensive' systematic field research so far conducted in the central Iranian plateau.

"A total of 21 historical sites have been recognized in (and around) Sadrabad village [which is situated in Zarandieh county, Markazi province] through a systematic field research in the central Iranian plateau," ISNA quoted senior archaeologist Mojtaba Baqershahi say saying on Saturday.

"The sites that add up to 250 hectares in the area date from various historical eras," Baqershahi, who is leading the project, said, adding that the project will be running through June 14.

"A ruined citadel, locally called Qaleh Kohnah, is situated near the entrance to the village. Shreds of Sassanid era (224-651) potteries are seen adjacent to the citadel," the archaeologist noted.

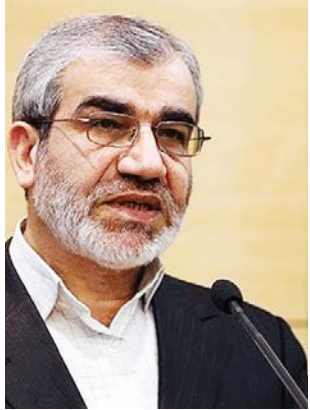
Talking about the earliest and latest archaeological settlements so far recognized in the region, he said: "The earliest human settlement in the region dates from the New Stone Age (or the Neolithic era, which was approximately characterized by the adoption of agriculture) and the latest one dates back to the Safavid epoch (1501-1736)."

The archaeologist also emphasized on Bronze-Age related potteries that are found across the region, saying "One of the important points of this study is the discovery of special figurines of a goat, horse, eagle, and a fragment of a relatively huge container made of obsidian stone, as well as small cups from the Neolithic period; all testifying to the archaeological richness of the region." **→8**

Guardian Council approves bill to support children's rights

1 → Based on the article, the aforesaid offices will be set up in all provinces throughout the country, which operates under the supervision of the head office.

As per another article of the law, any parents, legal guardians or whoever has the custody of the child that neglect their child or their responsibilities towards them, which leads the child to be subjected to any criminal misdemeanor or injuries to their physical, mental, social, moral, safety or negatively affect their educational achievement, and in general could result in harm to children, are liable to imprisonment.



Such maltreatments will result in legal interference and protection of the child.

Situations that could result in harm to children are including addiction of parents or legal guardians to harmful psychotropic substances or drugs, being infected with transmissible viruses, being involved in the business of prostitution, recurrent aggression and domestic violence.

Moreover, parents who refuse to register their child birth or denying to get identification documents for a child without

any legal justification, may also face imprisonment.

Other forms of child neglect such as truancy or not letting children to attend school is also punishable by the law.

The law also will be applied to children who are stigmatized due to their physical or mental disabilities or gender identity disorder by their parents or guardians.

MPs also considered involvement of children in illegal activities such as smuggling, as well as addiction to drugs, psychotropic substances or alcoholic beverages, as examples situation which do harm to children.

As per the bill proposed, any harmful situation caused by extreme poverty, displacement, asylum seeking, immigration or statelessness; as well as abuse or sexual exploitation will be considered as dangerous and leads to a punishment fitting the crime which has become harsher under the new law.

Moreover the parliamentarians tasked responsible bodies including Welfare Organization, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare, Ministry of Education, Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, and Police to take necessary actions in child maltreatment cases where necessary.

Police chief: Enemies hell-bent on damaging Tehran-Kabul ties

TEHRAN (FNA) — Enemies are making every effort to cause tension between Iran and Afghanistan in a bid to promote violence, Iranian Police Chief Brigadier General Hossein Ashtari said, adding that ill-wishers are using the border incident to separate the Iranian and Afghan nations.



Ashtari expressed grief over the drowning of a number of Afghan migrants on the border, saying, "The enemies are exploiting the issue to wage a media war and forge a dispute between the two nations."

The world is aware of the fact that due to the imposed war and insecurity created by trans-regional powers and their allies, especially the U.S. criminals, a large number of Afghan people emigrated to other countries like Iran, he said.

Despite all problems, Iranian officials hosted them very well and provided them with health, medical and educational facilities, the police chief noted.

He pointed out that even in the current tough conditions of coronavirus outbreak and cruel sanctions, Iran continues offering services to Afghan brothers and sisters just like the services rendered to Iranians.

Ashtari stressed that Harirud accident had nothing to do with border guards, adding that the Afghan side is expected to introduce a team for joint probe.

Both sides should assume legal responsibilities with regard to border relations, he reiterated.

U.S. has no right to initiate anything under 2231 resolution: Iran

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Majid d e s k Takht-Ravanchi, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, has said that the United States has no right to initiate anything under the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 which endorsed the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA.

"@USAmbUNbelieves US retains right to initiate snapback of sanctions under UNSCR 2231. WRONG: US cannot be a JCPOA "Participant", since

@realDonaldTrump ceased U.S. participation. The US—which is in violation of the resolution—has no right to initiate anything under 2231," he tweeted on Friday.

U.S. Ambassador to the UN Kelly Craft announced on Friday that Washington had shared the draft resolution on the extension of Iran's arms embargo with Russia, Britain, France, Germany and Estonia which are all members of the Security Council.

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 Iran 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.

Former Democratic presidential candidate

Elizabeth Warren has dismissed the argument by the Trump administration.

"The international prohibition on weapons going to/from Iran ends in October. To extend this arms embargo, the Trump admin is suddenly arguing that the US is a party to the same Iran Deal it abandoned. That makes no sense. Make up your mind, @SecPompeo,"

Iran not denying access to IAEA inspectors, Russian envoy says

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Mikhail d e s k Ulyanov, Russia's permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations, has said that Iran does not deny access to its nuclear sites by inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"Iran doesn't deny access, it did not provide access so far. It's different. Iran doesn't question the rights of IAEA and stands ready to continue consultations. IAEA expressed concerns in this regard but is also ready for dialogue. Let's hope that problems will be resolved soon," Ulyanov tweeted on Friday.

In another tweet on Thursday, he said the leak of the IAEA confidential report on Iran is "outrageous".

"The leak of #IAEA confidential report on #Iran is outrageous, but it may have one positive implication. It is clear from the content that the issue is of no immediate proliferation concern. Events (if any) took place 20 years ago. The problem lies in a different dimension," he tweeted.

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's ambassador to the Vienna-based international organizations, has said the IAEA's most recent report proves continuation of the agency's verification activities in Iran.

In comments on Friday night, Gharibabadi said the report also shows a suspension of Tehran's commitment to the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

On technical nuclear issues, the IAEA report says Iran's stockpile of heavy water has surpassed the limit of 130 tons and reached 132.6 tons, he remarked, according to Tasnim.

The report also shows that Iran has installed new centrifuge machines, such as IR-4, IR-5, IR-6, IR-S, IR-S6, and IR-2M, for research and development purposes, the Iranian ambassador to the IAEA said.

According to Gharibabadi, the report also



confirms that Iran is enriching uranium up to a purity level of 4.5 percent – above the limit specified in the JCPOA - and that the Islamic Republic has produced 1,571.6 kilograms of enriched uranium, some 550 kg more than the figures in the March report, including 1,356.5 kg of uranium with 4.5 percent purity.

On the verification activities, the new report has pointed to the continuation of monitoring and verification activities under the special conditions after the outbreak of the coronavirus and Iran's proper cooperation with the IAEA, the ambassador added.

The report also maintains that Iran is carrying out the Additional Protocol temporarily and voluntarily and also verifies the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran, he added.

Iran started to remove curbs on its nuclear program exactly one year after the U.S. abandoned the nuclear deal and imposed the harshest sanctions in history against Iran in line with the Trump administration's "maximum pressure" campaign on Tehran.

From the very beginning that Iran started to remove ban on its nuclear program, officials in Tehran announced if the European Union, especially its big trio (Germany, France and Britain which are signatory the deal), takes steps to compensate the sanctions effect it will immediately reverse its decision.

Harirud incident caused by illegal traffic, Foreign Ministry official says

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iranian d e s k Deputy Foreign Minister for International and Legal Affairs Mohsen Baharvand has blamed illegal traffic of Afghan migrants for the human tragedy in Harirud.

"Our investigation does not show that incident in Harirud was caused by interference of the Iranian border guards. However, we considered evidence of the Afghan side important and gave it to the related bodies," Baharvand told IRNA in an interview published on Sunday.

He said, "Due to Afghan armed forces' fight against terrorism, Afghanistan has dismantled its border stations and this has caused lack of control over borders by Afghanistan. This issue has led to problems caused by human traffickers."

Elsewhere, Baharvand said that Iran and Afghanistan will form a joint border committee.

The deputy foreign minister for international and legal affairs said on May 27 that Iran and Afghanistan are in agreement on the incident which led to the tragic deaths of a number of Afghan migrants in border area.

Baharvand told IRNA that there is no different views as reported by certain foreign media outlets.

Iranian diplomats and border guards have carried out investigations which show the Iranian guards were not involved in the incident, he noted.

Iranian and Afghan political delegations held their last round of talks in Kabul on May 26 on the incident. It was the second time that Iranian and Afghan officials met on the issue.

According to ISNA, the talks were inconclusive and the delegations plan to continue the talks.

Afghan media outlets have reported that about 50 Afghan migrants crossing into

Warren tweeted.

Tony Blinken, the Joe Biden campaign's chief foreign policy adviser, has also slammed the Trump administration "sheer hypocrisy" for relying on a mechanism in the JCPOA to reinstate multilateral sanctions on Iran should the United Nations fail to extend an arms embargo on Tehran.

"It's hard not to almost admire the sheer hypocrisy of the action that the administration is trying to take in seeking to, in effect, force countries at the Security Council to find a way to extend the arms embargo on Iran," Al-Monitor quoted Blinken as saying in April on a virtual panel hosted by the Jewish Democratic Council of America.

"They're trying to use this provision in the [nuclear deal] to require the extension of the arms embargo. The only problem is we are no longer participating in the agreement," Blinken said.

In a report published by Reuters in April, it was also said that the United States will face a tough, messy battle if it uses a threat to trigger a return of all UN sanctions on Iran as leverage to get the 15-member Security Council to extend and strengthen an arms embargo on Tehran, diplomats said.

Iran illegally had been beaten and thrown into a river. Iranian political and border officials have refuted the claim, saying the incident happened on the Afghan side of the border.

According to some reports, 18 of the migrants, including a 12-year old boy, were drowned in the Harirud River.

Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry announced on May 9 that an inquiry had been launched into the tragedy.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif held a phone conversation with acting Afghan foreign minister Mohammad Haneef Atmar on May 10 discussing the deaths of Afghan migrants.

Iran's Foreign Ministry has rejected as a "bitter joke" a claim by the United States that Iranian guards were involved in the deaths of Afghan migrants.

"Iran has strong ties with Afghanistan & leads the way to help Afghan leaders for inclusive Gvt. What happened to Afghan nationals in Herat is tragic & unrelated to Iran, but U.S. regime's allegation against Iran is a 'bitter joke'," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement published via Twitter on May 5.

"The (US) regime is a war criminal in Afghanistan & state sponsor of terrorism across the world," the statement added.

According to Tasnim, Iran spends eight billion dollars on Afghan migrants every year in various sectors.

Based on the latest official figures, 951,142 Afghan refugees reside in Iran. In addition to the refugees, there are around 2.5 million Afghan nationals living in Iran, inclusive of passport holders and undocumented Afghans.

The UN refugee agency has, on numerous occasions, praised Iran for hosting Afghan refugees for more than four decades.

‘Iran ready to swap prisoners with U.S.’

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Foreign d e s k Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi has said that Iran is ready to swap prisoners with the United States.

"If it is possible to swap prisoners, we are ready to set free the people in the United States' jails and bring them back to the country," he told IRNA in an interview published on Sunday.

He also praised Switzerland's efforts in a recent prisoners swap, noting that there were no direct talks between Tehran and Washington.

Tehran announced on Thursday a prisoner swap between Iran and the United States.

"Pleased that Dr. Majid Taheri and Mr. White [U.S. Navy veteran Michael White] will soon be joining their families," Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif tweeted on Thursday. "Prof. Siros Asgari was happily reunited with his family on Weds."

"This can happen for all prisoners," Zarif said, adding, "No need for cherry-picking. Iranian hostages held in—and on behalf of—the US should come home."

Mousavi said in a statement on Thursday that White, who had been in jail in Iran, was released after being granted Islamic mercy for

his crimes.

White was released from jail given the time served and in respect of human rights considerations, and left Iran on Thursday, Mousavi said.

Zarif said in December that Tehran was ready for a full prisoner exchange with the United States, tweeting: "The ball is in the US' court".

Switzerland which takes care of the U.S. interests in Iran has played a role in the recent prisoner exchange. It has announced that it is ready to act as a facilitator for more prisoner swaps.

■ **U.S. can return to JCPOA if it repents'** Mousavi also said that the U.S. can return

to the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, if it repents, makes up for the harms it has inflicted on the Iranians and remove all the cruel sanctions.

He noted that Iran never left the negotiating table.

Mousavi's comments came as response to a Trump's tweet in which he thanked Iran for releasing White, proposing talks.

"So great to have Michael home. Just arrived. Very exciting. Thank you to Iran. Don't wait until after U.S. Election to make the Big deal," Trump said in his tweet on Friday.

MP says Iran has no will to hold talks with U.S.

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Legislator Mo- d e s k hammad Saleh Jokar has said that the United States' presidents have spared no effort in harming the Iranian people and therefore the country has no will to hold talks with Washington.

"It is not so long since the United States' crime in assassinating General Soleimani and the regional people have not forgotten that this crime was committed by order of the current president of the United States," Jokar told the Tasnim news agency in an interview published on Sunday.

He also noted that talks with the U.S. will not result in removal of sanctions.

His comments came as response to a Trump's tweet in which he thanked Iran for releasing U.S. Navy veteran Michael White, proposing talks.

"So great to have Michael home. Just arrived. Very exciting. Thank you to Iran. Don't wait until after U.S. Election to make the Big deal,"

Trump said in his tweet on Friday.

Ali Motahari, a former top lawmaker, has said that talks with the U.S. president is synonymous with talks with "murderer" of General Soleimani.

"Trump has proposed talks with Iran before the United States' elections. We have to tell him if there was a minimal chance for talks before assassination of General Soleimani, it is ruined by your crime, because it [talks with the U.S.] means talks with murderer of Soleimani," tweeted Motahari who served as deputy parliament speaker in the previous parliament.

On January 3, Trump ordered airstrikes that martyred General Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), in Baghdad's international airport.

In the early hours of January 8, the IRGC fired dozens of ballistic missiles at a military



airbase hosting U.S. forces in Iraq as part of its promised "tough revenge" for the U.S. terrorist attack.

Soleimani was recognized internationally as a legendary commander in the war against terrorist groups, especially Daesh (ISIS).

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JOB VACANCY

Iran says ready to deliver Ukrainian plane's black box

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for International and Legal Affairs Mohsen Baharvand says Iran is ready to deliver the black box of the downed Ukrainian plane to a French or any other foreign company capable of decoding it.

"According to our investigations, Iran, Ukraine, and many other countries are not capable of decoding the black box due to the aircraft's modern technology," Mehr quoted Baharvand as saying late on Saturday.

"Iran can deliver it to a French or any other foreign company capable of decoding it but we have to make sure that there are no risks of abuse of the black box," he added.

He stated that talks with Ukraine on transferring the black box to its intended destination for decryption are underway but not finalized.

According to Baharvand, technical investigations in Iran are on their final stages and the Islamic Republic is well informed of the details of the incident.

"We do believe that decoding the black box will add nothing special to Iran's investigation about the incident," he asserted.

"Our investigations are comprehensively conducted and we know exactly what has occurred to the flight," the deputy foreign minister added.

He also pointed out that Iran has had a warm technical cooperation with other countries on the Ukrainian flight issue and the subject has not been politicized at all.

As reported, the Civil Aviation Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran (CAO, IRI), the agency has requested French and U.S. accident investigation agencies, the BEA and NTSB, respectively, to provide a list of the equipment required to decode the black box.

However, neither organization has "so



"Iran can deliver it to a French or any other foreign company capable of decoding it but we have to make sure that there are no risks of abuse of the black box," Baharvand notes.

far responded positively" to the request, adding Iran is considering the purchase of that equipment.

The Ukrainian airliner was shot down shortly after taking off from Tehran's Imam Khomeini airport on January 8, killing all 167 passengers and 9 crew members.

On January 11, the Armed Forces General Staff released a statement saying the Ukrainian passenger plane was mistakenly downed near the airport.

The incident happened a few hours after Iran fired dozens of ballistic missiles at a U.S. airbase inside Iraq in retaliation for the assassination of top Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani.

The airplane had been mistaken for an invading missile.

Prior to Iran's retaliation, Trump tweeted that if Iran attacks any American assets to avenge the killing of Qassem Soleimani, the U.S. has 52 targets across the Islamic

Republic that "WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD."

"Let this serve as a WARNING that if Iran strikes any Americans, or American assets, we have.....targeted 52 Iranian sites (representing the 52 American hostages taken by Iran many years ago), some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture, and those targets, and Iran itself, WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD," Trump wrote.

Iran deal is, for all intents and purposes, dead: American professor

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — An American professor of political science believes the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is almost completely dead.

"The JCPOA is, for all intents and purposes, dead," Karl Kaltenthaler said in an interview with ILNA published on Sunday.

"Trump would like to replace it (JCPOA) with some sort of deal with the Iranian government that accomplishes his administration's goals in the Middle East," remarked Kaltenthaler from the University of Akron.

He argued that it is highly unlikely that the Iranian government would agree to Trump's demands.

Thus, he said, unless there is a major change of attitude in the Trump administration or the Iranian government, there is unlikely to be forward movement toward a revitalized JCPOA.

He also said it is unclear how much Joe Biden if he were to win in November, would revitalize or re-negotiate the JCPOA.

"While Biden is less hawkish on Iran than Trump, he is also not soft on Iran," the American professor opined.

Trump abandoned the JCPOA, which was signed during the Obama administration, on May 8, 2018 and introduced a maximum pressure policy in the hope of forcing Iran to come to the negotiating table to write a new deal with his own name on it.

Iran waited a year until it began to partially reduce its commitments to the agreement at bi-monthly intervals. Finally, on January 5 of this year, Iran issued a statement announcing suspension of all limits under the JCPOA. Observers say Trump's maximum pressure policy has failed.

In a tweet on Friday, Trump appeared desperate to hold talks with Iran. "Don't wait until after U.S. Election



to make the Big deal," he wrote. "I'm going to win. You'll make a better deal now!"

Trump's appeal for talks with Iran comes while his re-election chances are sinking fast — in part because of his administration's poor performance in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic and the police killing of an unarmed African-American man, named George Floyd, which drew nationwide protests.

According to the CNN, Trump is now a "decided underdog" to reach the 270 electoral votes he needs to win a second term in the fall.

Asked about the recent protests across the United States over the police killing of George Floyd, Kaltenthaler said there have been long-simmering tensions in the U.S. over the relationship between the police and the African-American community.

"It is difficult to assess how the current unrest in U.S. cities over police brutality will affect President Trump's ability to get re-elected in November," said Kaltenthaler whose research and teaching focuses on political violence, public opinion and political behavior, terrorism, and xenophobia.

He noted that recent, credible polls show that the U.S. president has slipped in popularity since the unrest started. "Some analysts take that to show that the protests and riots and the government's response have hurt his standing with some Americans," he explained.

But, Kaltenthaler continued, given the state of the economy and the continuing pandemic, "it is difficult to disentangle how much of the drop in his popularity is due to his response to the unrest and how much of it is due to these other factors."

"It is also unclear that his popularity will continue to erode," the professor said. "One thing is clear, the unrest in American cities is becoming a deeply polarizing issue."

"The president's response to the crisis energizes Trump's base but some of his recent tweets and actions about the unrest have troubled some Republicans because they are viewed as inflammatory."

He pointed out that there is a lot that can happen between now and November.

There are some things that are not helping him politically, namely the economic crisis and the pandemic, he said.

"The massive wave of protests energizes some of his supporters but they also energize his detractors," he added.

Kaltenthaler concluded that the key to the election in November will be voter turn-out. "If Democrats want to defeat Trump, they have to get their voters to come to the polls. Opinion polls only tell you part of the story. Who actually shows up to vote is a much more difficult thing to predict."

Armed forces equipped with 10 overhauled helicopters

TEHRAN (FNA) — The Iranian Armed Forces in a ceremony on Sunday were equipped with 10 helicopters which have been overhauled by the defense ministry experts in recent months.

The overhauled helicopters from Chinook 212, 214, 206, 205, CH and SH as well as Mil-171 classes were delivered to the Armed Forces in a ceremony participated by Iranian Deputy Defense Minister Brigadier General Qassem Taqizadeh and other high-ranking commanders.

Addressing the ceremony, General Taqizadeh said that Iran is among the pioneering states using a variety of helicopters for different missions.

He added that the overhauled helicopters have been equipped with new hi-tech systems, including APU system, night-vision system, GPS system and other equipment, noting that the flight durability of a number of helicopters has also increased.

In relevant remarks in May, Iranian Army Airborne Commander General Yousef Qorbani said that his country's powerful helicopter fleet ranks first in West Asia and fifth in the world.

"We are in possession of the most powerful helicopter fleet in West Asia and our great helicopter fleet is the fifth in the world," General Qorbani told FNA.



He added that the Iranian helicopters' winning card in the battleground is their fire power, saying that this power has been enhanced appropriate to the conditions of today wars.

"This means that we do not fire at the enemy from close range, but we target them in the fire and forget format from far distance," General Qorbani said.

He also added that Iranian experts are

combining the helicopters' arms systems with night-vision systems to strengthen their combat power at night, noting that a large number of the country's helicopters will also be equipped with self-protection systems.

"Today, we do not send unarmed helicopters to anywhere that it cannot defend itself; meaning that today, even our logistic helicopters have been armed," General Qorbani said.

Also, in 2018, General Qorbani announced that the country's helicopters have been equipped with night-vision systems.

"Our dear experts in the air industry have had a highly successful performance and have equipped our helicopters with night-vision systems," he said.

"We have also become fully indigenized in the field of long-range missile systems. Turning ground-based missiles to air-based missiles and enjoying the best fire-and-forget missiles are among other achievements of the Army Airborne Unit," the Iranian General added.

General Qorbani underlined that Iran is among the pioneering states in developing helicopters with the capability of fighting electronic warfare, targeting guided missiles, interception of targets from distance and using cruise missiles.

He also underlined that his forces are always on alert to show rapid reaction against enemies' possible moves against the country.

"The enemies of the Islamic Republic of Iran will face the Army Airborne's rapid reaction in case of any threat," General Qorbani said.

He added that the Army Airborne unit relies on the capabilities of Iranian experts and has increased its military power in different fields.

Tehran marks 3rd anniversary of ISIS attack on Iranian parliament

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Tehran has marked the third anniversary of the Daesh (ISIS) terrorist attack on Iran's parliament, saying the attack was carried out as retaliation against success of the Resistance Front under the leadership of Major General Qassem Soleimani, who was assassinated by the U.S. military earlier this year.

"3yrs ago today, US-backed ISIS carried out the botched terror attack on Iran Parliament to retaliate the successes of 'Resistance Front' under MG Soleimani's leadership & sacrifice," Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi wrote in a tweet on Sunday.



"2yrs later, the MG as counterterrorism champion was cowardly assassinated by terrorist America. RIP!" he added.

On June 7, 2017, Iran's parliament and the mausoleum of Imam Khomeini, founder of the Islamic Revolution, were targeted by two simultaneous gun and suicide bomb assaults.

The attacks unfolded as a number of gunmen stormed the main gate of the parliament building in central Tehran and opened fire. At the same time, a shooting spree targeted Imam Khomeini's shrine about 25 kilometers away in south Tehran.

The incident marked one of the most brutal terrorist attacks to hit the Iranian capital Tehran in decades. A third attack was also foiled, according to the Intelligence Ministry.

The Interior Ministry issued a statement afterwards saying two terrorist teams targeted the shrine of Imam Khomeini and the parliament to bring terror and destabilize the country.

"The first terrorist team, comprising of two persons, entered the premises of the Imam Khomeini shrine at 10:30 (local time). One of them exploded himself and the other one was killed in clashes with security forces," the statement said.

It also said that the second team, comprising of four, simultaneously attacked the office building of the parliament, adding that one of them was killed in a suicide blast and the other three were gunned down during clashes with the security forces.

Daesh (ISIS) claimed responsibility for the coordinated attacks. Its media wing, Amaq, claimed "fighters with the Islamic State" carried out the attacks.

Parliament speaker warns of hostile plots against Iran

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf on Sunday warned of the evil plots the enemies have hatched to harm the Islamic Republic, saying the adversaries would have no compunction about committing crimes against the Iranian people.

In an address to a session of the Parliament, Ghalibaf paid tribute to the people and security forces who were killed in a terrorist attack on the Iranian Parliament three years ago.

He said the 2017 attack on the Parliament by members of the Daesh (ISIS) terrorist group was a reminder of the enemies' evil dreams of hurting Iran.



Without the efforts by the Iranian soldiers and guardians, the enemy would feel no compunction about committing crimes against the people of Iran, he added.

Ghalibaf also pointed to the evidence that the spy agencies of the U.S., the Zionist regime and certain regional states were behind the terrorist attack on the Parliament, saying the enemies had plots for massacre of people in the streets of Tehran.

On June 7, 2017, terrorists launched simultaneous attacks on Iran's parliament building and on the mausoleum of late founder of the Islamic Republic Imam Khomeini in Tehran.

Daesh claimed responsibility for the attacks, which killed 17 people and wounded more than 40.

All the gunmen directly involved in the attacks were killed by security forces.

A week later, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) fired six missiles into eastern Syria, targeting Islamic State strongholds in retaliation for the recent ISIS-claimed terrorist attacks in Tehran.

The national TV showed footages of missile attacks launched from western Iran.

"In the operation, code-named Laylat al-Qadr (Night of Destiny), the Guards launched six medium-range ballistic missiles at various targets in ranges between 650km to 700km," IRGC spokesman Ramazan Sharif said at the time.

"The missiles were launched in coordination with Syria," the IRGC official said.

"The missile launches from the two Sunni-majority provinces at headquarters of Daesh terrorists carry the message of unity of all Iranians in the face of terrorists," Sharif said.

The missiles successfully hit the targets, he concluded.

Iran, Brazil discuss expansion of agricultural ties

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — In a meeting via webinar between Iranian Ambassador to Brazil Hossein Gharibi and Brazilian Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, and Supply Tereza Cristina, the two sides explored the ways to expand cooperation in the fields of agriculture and livestock.

During the webinar which was held on Saturday, Gharibi referred to the status of agricultural products in the trade relations between the two countries and underlined Iran's interest in long-term economic relations through a comprehensive framework and sustainable and balanced cooperation, IRNA reported.

Tereza Cristina, for her part, referred to Iran and Brazil as two friends with a long-standing background of cooperation.

She also expressed readiness for having a trip to Tehran in the post-coronavirus pandemic.

Agricultural products account for the major part of trade between Iran and Brazil. These products consist of corn, soy, press cake, meat, and sugar.

Last year, the secretary of Iran-Brazil Chamber of Commerce had said that the two countries were seeking to establish bartering systems in order to keep their trade afloat during the sanctions era.

"Currently, Brazil is one of the main providers of agricultural commodities to the country, however we are facing some banking issues in our trade and that is why the two sides are looking at bartering as a solution to this problem," Farhad Taherian told ILNA at the time.

According to the official, Iranian imports from the Latin American country are limited to 12 major commodities.

Of the total imports, 48 percent is corn, 24 percent is soy, while soybean oil, tobacco, and ethanol are other imported goods.

Petrochemical products such as urea, bitumen and petroleum are the main exported goods from Iran to Brazil, according to Taherian.

Single-window business system to be launched in 4 provinces soon

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) announced that single-window business system will be launched in four provinces of the country soon, IRNA reported.

Referring to the major hindering factors affecting the business environment in Iran during July 2018-March 2020, Gholam-Hossein Shafeie mentioned unpredictable prices of raw materials and continuous changes in the prices of these materials as the main hindrance.



ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafeie

environment in the country.

He said the first step in improving the business environment is to establish a single-window to facilitate the process of starting a business.

Deputy Economy Minister Mohammad-Ali Dehqan Dehnavi along with the ministry officials and TCCIMA representatives were also present in the inaugural ceremony.

Addressing the attendees, Khansari noted that in order to turn threats [U.S. sanction] into opportunities the government needs to support the private sector by reducing unnecessary bureaucracies and facilitating license issuances.

To this end, improving the business environment and improving competitiveness indicators are of utmost importance, and fortunately, in both areas, the Tehran and Iran chambers have taken very good steps that can help government agencies, Khansari said.

"We are happy to have been able to do that in the Tehran chamber, and we hope that this will be a prelude to other measures to improve the business environment," he stressed.

Also speaking in the ceremony, Deputy Economy Minister Dehqan Dehnavi said that with the single-window system going operational, the time for issuing business licenses, which previously took 72 days on average, is going to be reduced to three days.

"Up until now, it took an average of 72.5 days to obtain these licenses, and in this regard, we are in the 178th place among the world countries," Dehnavi noted.

Referring to the Economy Minister's support for the single window project, the official said: "With the approval of the minister, the 55 days required to authenticate in the tax system is now eliminated, which means there is no need to obtain an economic code to start a business."

Govt. trying to cushion low-income groups against economic turbulence: Rouhani

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Sunday that all the government's efforts have been focused on strengthening the economic resilience of the low-income groups and protecting them against the economic shocks, IRIB reported.

"The government has tried to ensure that the low-income groups are not seriously harmed in the event of economic shocks caused by various domestic and global issues," Rouhani said in a meeting of the government economic coordination headquarters.

"To ensure social justice, the government has tried to increase wages and salaries as much as possible, and according to statistics, this trend has been ongoing every year," the president stressed.

Rouhani further emphasized that the government has adhered to its commitment to combating poverty and will continue to do so.

According to the official, increasing the monthly pension of families supported by the government institutions like Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation and State Welfare Organization of Iran, increasing the number of families supported by such organizations (more than one million) and providing affordable housing units for low-income families are some of the measures taken by the government to combat poverty.

Headed by President Rouhani, the government economic coordination headquarters, in its 137th meeting, discussed some of the country's most important economic issues.

The granting of coronavirus support facilities to those who have lost their jobs and become unemployed during the restrictions related to the management and control of the pandemic was also reviewed and approved in the meeting.

Coronavirus cuts Iran's GDP by 15%

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dehpasand said the coronavirus pandemic has caused the country's gross domestic product (GDP) to shrink by 15 percent, IRNA reported.

Speaking in an open session of the parliament on Sunday, Dehpasand stressed that the government should look for new strategies to stimulate demand in order to improve the domestic economy.

Based on the latest data released by Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), Iran's GDP stood at 24.73 quadrillion rials (about \$588.8 billion) at the end of the ninth month of the past Iranian calendar year (December 19, 2019), Mehr news agency has reported.

Referring to the impact of the U.S. sanctions on the country's economy, the finance minister said: "Even if oil exports were underway without any problems, we wouldn't still be able to access all our resources, so this year we must experience a non-oil budget, which is based on tax revenues."

According to the official, the revenues gained from the elimination of hidden energy subsidies as well as increased tax incomes



will replace oil revenues.

Mentioning the alternative ways for replacing oil revenues, the official said: "The country's treasury has made plans to supply the development budget completely."

This does not mean pressuring the taxpay-

ers, Dehpasand said, adding that by setting new tax bases and eliminating unnecessary exemptions at a time of economic warfare, more tax revenues will be provided.

Referring to the motto of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March

What does extension of OPEC+ cuts mean for Iran?

1 → ■ The OPEC+ agreement

Following the news of the possible extension of the OPEC+ cuts, oil prices exceed \$40 in recent days after three months, this means that market is eager to recover from months of lagging and the condition is ripe for a hot summer in the oil market!

After several hours of negotiation through a video conference on Saturday, OPEC+ nations reached a new agreement to cut their production by 9.6 million barrels per day (bpd) next month.

The new figure is 100,000 barrels a day lower than the previously agreed level in June because Mexico will end its supply constraints.

The parties also agreed that the nations (mainly Iraq, Nigeria, Angola, and Kazakhstan) which wouldn't fulfill their May and June commitments completely, will make

extra reductions from July to September to compensate for their failings.

Iran, Libya, and Venezuela remain exempt from production cuts.

■ The consequences

Asked about the consequences of the deal on Iran's oil market and the county's economic situation, Salehi noted that considering the current level of Iran's oil exports, the new agreement is not expected to have a drastic impact on the country's oil revenues at least not directly.

Iranian oil prices which were in the \$50 a barrel range last year, fell to very low levels following the spread of coronavirus and its drastic impacts on the demand in the global markets. However, in recent weeks, as global indicators have shown, Iran's heavy oil, which makes up the majority of Iran's oil basket, is recovering along with other global grades.

Exports from Qeshm Island's ports rise 7.8 folds in 2 months



ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— Exports of commodities from the ports of Iran's southern Qeshm Island have increased by 7.8 folds during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-May 19) compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to a port and maritime official.

In an interview conducted by the Fars news agency on Saturday, Allahmorad Affipour, the director-general of Ports and Maritime Department of Hormozgan Province (where the island is located), announced that 676,000 tons of goods have been exported from the island's ports during the mentioned two-month period, showing a significant growth compared to the same time span in the past year.

He expounded upon the performance of his department in loading and unloading of goods on Qeshm Island in the first two months of the current year and said, "In this period, 676,933 tons of commodities were loaded and unloaded on this island."

Of the mentioned figure, 656,737 tons were the non-oil goods, and the remaining 20,196 tons were the oil products, Affipour added.

Qeshm Free Trade Zone is the second free trade zone established in Iran.

Last December, Iranian Free Zones High Council Secretariat and Pardis Technology Park (PTP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the aim of developing and enhancing innovation and technology in the country's free and special economic zones.

The MOU was signed by Akbar Eftekhari, Iranian Free Zones High Council Secretariat's deputy for economic affairs and Head of PTP Mehdi Safarinia.

Development of the country's innovation and technology ecosystem,

especially in the industrial parks and free and special economic zones, facilitating and expanding the export of knowledge and technology-based goods and services in the country, developing investment in the production of knowledge- and technology-based commodities and services in free and special economic zones through the joint venture with Pardis Science and Technology Park were reported to be among the major goals of signing the mentioned MOU.

The signing ceremony was also attended by the Secretary of Iranian Free Zones High Council Morteza Bank.

Establishment of free trade zones in Iran dates back to the Iranian calendar year 1368 (March 1989- March 1990) following the fall in the country's oil income in the preceding year which prompted the government to promote the non-oil exports.

The first two free trade zones of Iran were established in the south of the country. The first one was Kish Free Trade Zone established in 1368 on Kish Island in the Persian Gulf and the second one was Qeshm Free Trade Zone established the year after on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz.

Development of existing free trade zones and establishment of new FTZs is currently one of the major economic approaches of Iran and in a bid to attract more investments to these zones Iranian government offers various incentives to the investors.

Tax exemption is one of those incentives which has been offered for more than a decade to the investors in the free zones.

This incentive has been criticized by some officials and economists over the recent months, while there are still many supporters of this exemption.

Armenia's Lori ready to facilitate trade with Iran's Mazandaran



ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The governor of Armenia's Lori City announced that the city is prepared to facilitate trade for the businessmen from Iranian northern province of Mazandaran, IRNA reported.

Speaking in a video conference with the Mazandaran governor, Andrey Ghukasyan said Lori is ready to fulfill Iranian and Armenian businessmen's demands in line with reinforcing economic ties.

The Armenian official further vowed for facilitating and accelerating clearance of goods from the customs for the Iranian businessmen.

Investment in Mazandaran is an opportunity for Armenian businessmen, he noted.

He also underlined Mazandaran's good infrastructures in trade and tourism fields.

"We will spare no efforts for satisfying Mazandaran businessmen", Ghukasyan reiterated.

He went on to say that Mazandaran enjoys good garden, food, and dairy products which can fulfil considerable part of Armenian provinces' needs.

He referred to signing an MOU between Mazandaran and Lori, saying we are committed to implementing these MOUs.

The MOU was signed last year aiming to develop economic interactions between Lori and Mazandaran.

Iran has resumed exports to its neighbor Armenia since early April.

"The exports are conducted via Iran's north-western Norduz border in a limited quantity", Rouhollah Latifi, the spokesperson of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), announced at the time, adding, "With 250 trucks passing through the border on Aras River, trade with the neighboring country is normalizing after weeks."

"Armenia imported over \$430 million worth of Iranian goods in the past Iranian calendar year [ended on March 19] to become the country's

20) which is the surge in production, the minister said: "In this situation, we should put more importance on the development and surge in production; achieving this goal will mobilize other sectors and pave the way for eliminating unemployment and managing inflation."

"To achieve sustainable economic growth, in the face of sanctions, we need to consider two issues: first, investing in the country's new production capacities, and second, policymaking to increase the country's already operational capacities", according to Dehpasand.

He further noted that currently, only 55 percent of the existing capacities are being utilized in the country and if the figure increases to 75-80 percent, a good surge in production will be realized.

The official went on mentioning the country's non-oil trade, saying, despite the sanctions, foreign trade is well underway, so that in the Iranian calendar year 1397 (ended on March 20, 2019) the country's trade balance was positive, and in the previous calendar year 1398 (March 2019-March 2020), despite the escalation of pressures, non-oil exports fell only slightly.

"In this regard, the government should make plans for supporting the country's producers to adapt to the post-corona situation; it should help them pass through this situation with the least damage," he said.

The growth of oil prices is a good sign showing that the global economy is slowly passing through the pandemic. It is an indication that governments are implementing new strategies to help their productive sectors and their economies to put the current situation behind with the least possible losses, he explained.

"Our country can also benefit from improving conditions by following new policies and strategies for supporting domestic production."

The rising oil prices could be a great support for other areas like petrochemicals and oil products, Salehi stressed.

second export destination among the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)'s member states after Russia," he said.

Iran's preferential trade agreement with the EAEU has had a significant impact on the country's trade relations with Armenia, according to the head of Iran-Armenia Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"The two sides are applying tariff discounts offered based on the agreement and there has been no problem in this regard", Hervik Yarianjan said in January.

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

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.

Zamaninia appointed as Iran's new OPEC governor

ENERGY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Deputy Oil Minister for International Affairs and Trading Amir-Hossein Zamaninia was officially appointed on Saturday as Iran's OPEC governor, replacing Hossein Kazempour Ardebili who died in mid-May.

The decision was made during the 179th meeting of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) conference which was held on Saturday via video conference, Shana reported.

Zamaninia was named Iran's ad-hoc OPEC governor back in May following Kazempour's death.

Iran's former governor to OPEC passed away on May 16 after suffering a brain hemorrhage and falling into a coma. Kazempour Ardebili, 68, died at a hospital in capital Tehran.

He was appointed as Iran's representative to OPEC — the oil organization that accounts for about a third of world supply — in 1995 and served for 13 years.

Kazempour Ardebili once again became Iran's governor to OPEC in 2013 and had



held the post until he passed away.

In the early 1990s, Kazempour Ardebili had been Iran's ambassador to Japan. He

also served as the country's deputy foreign minister and deputy oil minister in the 1980s.

"Nearly 23 years of close cooperation with Hossein Kazempour Ardebili placed me in a position where I can testify that he was a religious, educated, humble and very honorable man as well as a true and unassuming servant of the Iranian nation, who was loyal to the Islamic Republic and loved Iran, and its pride and progress was his constant concern," Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zangeneh said after the death of Kazempour Ardebili.

"He was a prominent diplomat who intelligently and vigorously defended our national interests at OPEC for more than three decades in the most difficult circumstances despite all troubles," he added.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif also described Kazempour Ardebili as "a prominent and unique diplomat," adding that his passing is "a great loss for the diplomatic community."

Over the past four decades, Zarif said, Kazempour Ardebili had always been "a clever and strong defender of national interests and a trustworthy, precise and candid advisor to the Islamic Republic's officials."

South Pars 6th refinery's overhaul operation to begin in Oct.

ENERGY **TEHRAN** — The managing director of South Pars gas field's sixth refinery told IRNA on Sunday that the overhaul of the refinery, which is planned to begin in October, will help stabilize gas output in Assaluyeh.

Ahmad Valipour said that repair of the sixth refinery has been envisaged to be completed in 2021 to upgrade the strategic indicators in the fields of production, environment and management.

"The planning has been made in a way that the sixth refinery will not have major repairs in 2021 and we will see an improvement in the accessibility and operational efficiency of the refinery in the near future", he noted.

On May 31, the managing director had said that the feedstock supplied to the sixth refinery will be increased by 42 percent by the next Iranian calendar year (begins on March 21, 2021).

He said that by growing operational output and accessibility of the refinery by 2021, its feedstock will augment by 42 percent.

Valipour said that the refinery pursues its strategic plans in two axes: supplying the feedstock through a marine pipeline of the South Pars phase 16 of development which will materialize 42 percent increase in the feedstock and output, and implementation of plans to lower gas flares that would be beneficial for both environment and refinery

output.

He said that the refinery made strategic plans last year to maximize, stabilize, and improve the production from the joint reserve in the South Pars field.

South Pars is the world's largest gas field, covering an area of 3,700 square kilometers of Iran's territorial waters in the Persian Gulf.

The giant field is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate.

The field is divided into 24 standard phases that send the extracted gas to 14 refineries on the shore.

On May 19, the operator of phase 19 of South Pars said overhaul operations for the field's 10th refinery, which processes the gas from phase 19, are going to be started on June 9.

The mentioned operations are expected to take 23 days to be completed, Soheil Rafiee said.

According to the official, the field's offshore facilities overhaul program is aimed to maintain the production levels in the current year which has been called the year of "Surge in Production" by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyed Ali Khamenei.

He noted that changing the catalytic bed



of the first gas train, repairing the interior cover, and inspecting the pre-flash drum are among the activities planned for this period.

"Inspection and cleaning of the re-boilers of the regeneration tower, inspection and minor repairs of the burners, internal repair of the sulfur tank, elimination of leaks from the header steam lines, and solving mechanical problems of various valves are also planned for this year's overhaul program," he added.

Rafiee also mentioned cleaning and

inspection of various types of drums as another important part of the overhaul program and said: repairing the internal cover and inspection of DSO separator, inspection of heat exchangers, preventive repairs of electrical items and precision instruments that cannot be done in normal condition are also some of the most important activities that will be carried out in the major repairs of the current year in collaboration with exploitation, overhaul, engineering, technical inspection and safety units.

OPEC+ tries novel strategy to turn oil price curve upside down

By Javier Blas

On the surface, it's the old OPEC strategy of production cuts. When the cartel and its allies meet on Saturday, they are set to extend their output curbs for an extra month into July in an effort to consolidate the price recovery.

But a closer look shows subtle changes that point to Saudi Arabia, Russia and their OPEC+ allies adopting a more sophisticated approach: trying to flip the shape of the oil price curve upside down. In many respects, the cartel is borrowing from the playbooks of the world's top central banks, where policy makers often focus on the interplay between long- and short-term interest rates.

The alliance, which includes 23 of the world's oil-rich nations, has traditionally targeted a reduction in inventories. But now it's also actively focusing not just on stockpiles but also on the shape of the oil curve, designing policy to influence short-term prices relative to those further in the future, according to a delegate.

The idea within OPEC+ is to try to push near-term, or spot prices, higher than forward contracts, a structure known among

traders as backwardation, the delegate said. In short, OPEC wants oil today to be more sought after than oil for delivery months or years in the future, encouraging refiners and traders to take crude out of inventories.

"This marked a departure from previous aims to draw down inventory, a more subtle way of communicating it," Eagle Commodities Brokers Ltd, an oil brokerage, said in a note to clients.

The shift, first reported by Bloomberg on Friday, could have important implications for U.S. shale producers, who benefit from higher longer-dated prices as they use them to hedge their future production. While front-month West Texas Intermediate remains slightly below \$40 a barrel, the price of 2021 is trading higher. The price for 2022 is almost \$42.50 a barrel.

The Brent price curve remains in contango, the term for a market where long-term oil is more expensive than short, although earlier this week the front of the curve briefly flipped into backwardation. The price difference between contracts for delivery now and in six months remains in contango, although it has narrowed significantly over the last two months.

Controlling the shape of the curve is difficult, and would

require OPEC+ to make short-term adjustments to its output, reacting quickly to changes in supply and demand. But there are signs OPEC+ is adopting a more nuanced policy approach, extending its deep output cuts by a single month, rather than committing to a longer period.

"We expect such a strategy to limit price upside into year-end and cap long-dated prices, helping achieve the backwardation," Damien Courvalin, oil analyst at Goldman Sachs Group Inc., said in a note to clients.

For the OPEC+ alliance, the ideal scenario would be to move the shape of the curve from its current contango, when near prices are lower than future prices, into a mild backwardation, with spot prices higher than forward ones. The cartel's preference is a shallow backwardation of about 20-30 cents per barrel per month. Right now, the West Texas Intermediate is on a mild contango of 15-20 cents per barrel per month.

"We believe that OPEC remains focused on sustainably increasing revenues through a combination of higher prices but also higher market share," said Courvalin of Goldman Sachs. "Structurally, this comforts us in our long-held view that OPEC will start targeting backwardation rather than high prices alone."

Mexico to sit out extension of OPEC+ oil output cuts

Mexico will not join other top oil producers in extending through July output cuts aimed at propping up the price of crude, Reuters quoted Energy Minister Rocio Nahle as saying on Saturday.

Made up of OPEC members and allies led by Russia, the group known as OPEC+ agreed in April to cut oil supply by 9.7 million barrels per day (bpd) in May and June to support prices.

Under that deal, Mexico pledged to reduce its crude output by 100,000 bpd in May and June, after resisting pressure from other oil producers to make cuts of 400,000 bpd.

The cuts had been due to taper to 7.7 million bpd from July to December, but on Saturday, OPEC+ agreed to extend the production cuts until the end of July.

Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, who has vowed to ramp up the country's crude oil production, said on Friday that Mexico was not in a position to make additional cuts on top of what it had agreed in April.



His energy minister Rocio Nahle confirmed Mexico would not participate in the fresh cuts agreed on Saturday.

"There are other countries that extended their cuts to July, in this case we said no, we'll stick to the agreement that we signed in April," she told reporters in the eastern state of Veracruz. "There's no problem."

Mexico's unwillingness to go as far as other OPEC+ countries in making output cuts caused friction with Saudi Arabia in April. Agreement was reached after Mexico said the United States would help make up the difference.

Long-term market balance depends on global economy recovery: Zanganeh

ENERGY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said on Saturday that the long term increase of demand in the oil market depends on the recovery of the entire global economy, Shana reported.

"In the long-term, a growth in demand and balanced oil prices would depend on the global economic recovery," he told reporters following an OPEC ministerial meeting.



He said the Covid-19 outbreak had left significant impacts on the global economy and the oil market.

Noting that big economic powers were set to see their economy shrink this year, Zanganeh said: "Negative economic growth in the world means lower demand for oil. During the first quarter of the current year, demand for oil was down nine million barrels per day (bpd). This reduction shows that action has to be taken urgently to keep prices from falling further."

The official further noted that oil producers that had not complied with the previous OPEC+ production cut had promised to compensate for their non-compliance in coming months so that "the supply glut in the market would be reduced and prices would recover".

Brent prices' growth to above \$40 a barrel showed that OPEC had made correct decisions, he said.

"In the long-term, as far as the global economy does not recover and the world does not get rid of negative economic growth, demand for oil will not go and oil prices will not be balanced. But so far OPEC+ agenda has been correct," he added.

OPEC+ agreed on Saturday to a one-month extension of its record output cuts and adopted a stricter approach to ensuring members don't break their production pledges.

The deal is expected to underpin the oil market recovery, easing the financial pain felt by resource-dependent emerging economies, shale explorers in Texas, and blue-chip companies.

The agreement required the countries such as Nigeria and Iraq, which exceeded production quotas in May and June, compensate with extra cuts in July to September.

OPEC+ had initially agreed in April that it would cut supply by 9.7 million bpd during May-June to prop up prices that collapsed due to the coronavirus crisis. Those cuts were due to taper to 7.7 million bpd from July to December.

Benchmark Brent crude climbed to a three-month high on Friday above \$42 a barrel, after diving below \$20 in April. Prices still remain a third lower than at the end of 2019.

As global lockdowns ease, oil demand is also expected to exceed supply sometime in July but OPEC has yet to clear 1 billion barrels of excess oil inventories accumulated since March.

Korea's biggest shipbuilder warns LNG boom will not offset virus

Forthcoming megadeals worth billions of dollars to manufacture LNG carriers will not be enough to offset the damage from the coronavirus pandemic, the head of one of the world's biggest shipbuilding companies has warned.

The order books for the South Korean shipbuilders — who hold more than a quarter of global market share — are a bellwether for future international shipping activity and global trade, according to Financial Times.

Ka Sam-hyun, chief executive of the country's biggest shipbuilder, Hyundai Heavy Industries, told the Financial Times that while some customers have already requested payments and deliveries of ordered vessels to be delayed, the worst could be still to come.

"We cannot pinpoint when and how the current situation will be brought under control. However, what is clear is that a short-term demand shock for the shipbuilding industry is becoming obvious," Mr Ka said in an interview.

The warning comes despite Qatar's state-owned oil producer reserving capacity with Korean shipyards as part of its plans to spend \$20bn building more than 100 carriers to ship fuel from the world's largest liquefied natural gas project off the country's north-east coast.

Shares in South Korea's so-called "Big Three" shipbuilders — Hyundai Heavy Industries, Samsung Heavy Industries and Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering — soared in Seoul on Tuesday after Qatar Petroleum confirmed the plans, recovering much of the ground they had lost during the first five months of the year.

Analysts are hopeful for further upside with announcements linked to massive LNG projects being developed by France's Total in Mozambique and by Russia's Novatek in the Arctic expected as soon as in the coming weeks.

Sung Yop Chung, an analyst at Daiwa Capital Markets in Seoul, said Hyundai Heavy's main shipbuilding unit was poised to benefit from the longer-term growth of the LNG market as well as the shift by shipping companies towards more environmentally friendly ships.

However, Mr Ka said with new orders shrinking by almost one-third in the first quarter, the potential windfall from the LNG contracts "is not big enough" to change the fundamental problems facing Korea's shipbuilders.

"The whole volume of work cannot reach to even less than half of [the Korean] shipyards' LNG carrier building capacities. Moreover, the portion of those Korean shipyards' LNG carrier production is not more than 30-40 percent of each company's total shipbuilding capabilities," he said.

According to industry tracker Clarksons Research, investment in new vessels so far in 2020 is down 60 percent year on year to \$10bn. Beyond falling global consumer demand stemming from the pandemic, tensions between the US and China over trade and the lower oil price have further spooked ship owners.

"Once [ships already under construction] are delivered, I'm pretty sure shipping companies are not going to be placing new orders," said Roberto Giannetta, chairman of the Hong Kong shipping liner association.

Iraqi parliament appoints Ihsan Abdul Jabbar as new oil minister

Iraqi lawmakers approved the appointment of Ihsan Abdul Jabbar as oil minister, to succeed industry veteran Thamer Ghadhbhan, Bloomberg reported citing the parliamentary media office.

Parliament voted on Saturday to appoint Jabbar, the acting director general of state-run Basra Oil Co., along with six other officials to the cabinet of new Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi. The previous cabinet resigned in December after nationwide protests over jobs and the government's performance. Ali Allawi had been serving as acting oil minister.

Jabbar earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering in 1995. Before taking the helm at Basra Oil in 2017, he worked as a rotating operating engineer for the company and oversaw various departments at South Gas Co. Both state-run companies are based in the south, where Iraq produces most of its oil.

Iraq, the second-largest producer in the Organization of Petroleum



Exporting Countries, has struggled with low oil prices, reduced production quotas and disruptions due to the coronavirus. The World Bank sees the nation's economy shrinking by 10 percent this year.

Ghadhbhan served three different times as Iraq's oil minister. During his latest term, starting in November 2018, he was also deputy prime minister for energy. As a member of parliament, he helped draft a law for oil and gas investment, though it has yet to be approved.

First Announcement



1399.1178

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN
TENDER NO. : 48-32-9800107
 National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
06	HYDRAULIC DRIVEN DIAPHRAGM PUMP ACCORDING TO API 675	15 Nos & 15 SETs

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: WWW.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 6,148 EURO or 990,000,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: WWW.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab

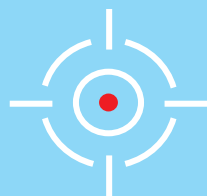
ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOCs MATERIAL APPROVAL

NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
 Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex
 Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
 E-MAIL: KALA.F.P@nisoc.ir Tel. No.: **061 341 23589** Fax No.: **061 3445 7437**
 Public Relations www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir
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America 2020 – Where anti-racists are terrorists & racists are president

By Tommy Sheridan

Lying face down on the ground with his hands handcuffed behind him George posed no threat to anyone but was restrained by three Minneapolis police officers kneeling on him and one of those brutes placed his knee deliberately and sadistically onto George's neck.

George Floyd's muffled and fear-laden cries of 'I can't breathe' were ignored by the four police officers who surrounded him. He died on May 25th but the agonized calls for his mother before he drew his last breath have been heard by black mothers across America and human beings with a heart across the world.

Make no mistake about it, George Floyd was murdered. He was an unarmed black man presenting no threat to anyone when he was hauled to the ground by law enforcement officers who are employed to 'Protect and Serve' the community. They were called by a grocery store to investigate an allegation that a forged \$20 bill was used to buy cigarettes. The Cup Foods grocery store owner described George as a regular and friendly customer.

Watch the video footage of George's detention for yourself and see with your own eyes the extent of systemic and chronic racism that pollutes America today and is particularly prevalent within the police forces across the United States. This is how the police deal with an unarmed black man suspected of a minor crime in broad daylight.

■ Officer Chauvin must be charged with first-degree murder

The thug who placed his knee on George Floyd's neck should be charged with First Degree murder but the other officers participated in this crime and must face charges of complicity and failing in their



sworn duties to prevent a serious crime being committed. I've signed the online petition for First-degree murder charges against Derek M. Chauvin. Why don't you? Familiarize yourself with the background of bully boy thug Chauvin.

For the last six days, America has been rocked by protests and expressions of rage that such incidents of racist police brutality are still a daily occurrence across this deeply divided country. Many in power and within the media will try and concentrate on examples of fire-raising and looting in an attempt to shift the focus away from why hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets in almost all of America's fifty states toward the condemnation of the nature of the protests. The nature of the protests is a mere footnote to the very substance of why people are protesting.

Thousands of ordinary black Americans hold aloft placards which proclaim, 'Black Lives Matter' and 'I Can't Breathe' in solidarity with George Floyd. Tens of thousands of white American citizens join those protests holding aloft 'Your Fight Is My Fight' placards. Only

those with hearts of stone are not now filled with sorrow that an innocent black man has lost his life so brutally and unnecessarily at the hands of individuals who are supposed to 'protect' not kill defenseless human beings.

■ America was built on violence, white supremacy and racism

America is a society and country built on the poison and bile of racism, white supremacy, and violence. Slavery underpinned its early economic development while the violent extermination of the Native American communities marked the beginning of its white supremacy history. The struggle for black civil rights has been long, violent, and bloody but it is a journey which is far from over.

The 'I Can't Breathe' placards are not new. The name Eric Garner may not be familiar in white American households but in black communities, his death in July of 2014 sparked outrage and solidified the 'Black Lives Matter' organization as a primary and necessary force in modern America.

Eric was accused of selling unlicensed single cigarettes in New York's Staten Island borough and wrestled to the ground by several

New York police officers. One of those officers placed him in a chokehold and despite Garner frantically repeating 'I can't breathe' eleven times the officer did not release the handcuffed man who was prostrate on the ground until his body became limp.

Eric Garner was an unarmed father of six children and grandfather of three. He posed no threat to anyone. His only 'crime' was the color of his skin. He was murdered by a white police officer.

Incredibly that white police officer Daniel Pantaleo escaped criminal indictment by a local Richmond County grand jury in December of 2014 even though the Medical Examiner ruled Garner's death a homicide. According to the medical examiner's definition, a homicide is a death caused by the intentional actions of another person or persons. So, Eric Garner was killed by the intentional actions of another person but apparently not the one who held him in a chokehold while he was lying face down handcuffed until he breathed no more.

■ The names change but police killings of unarmed black men continue

The fact the Department of Justice in America declined to bring Federal charges against this officer for a racially motivated killing rubbed corrosive salt in an already gaping wound. The officer concerned had several complaints of police brutality against his name before the Garner execution, but he did not face an internal police tribunal until August 2019. An administrative judge recommended he be fired. He was. On 19th August 2019. Over five years after being responsible for the death of Eric Garner.

Six years on from unarmed Eric Garner's police slaying and the fatal shooting and murder of unarmed eighteen-year-old Michael Brown we have George Floyd.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Empires and their puppets including Israel will eventually fall: “Free Gaza Movement” co-founder Greta Berlin

1 → A: Israel has achieved what all white/colonial/racist entities have achieved; subjugating, terrorizing, marginalizing and stealing from the indigenous population to make an illicit country. It's no different than the U.S. or Canada or South Africa or Australia.

It's gotten its legitimacy from the very countries who have done the same thing to a population that was already there and perceived as, somehow, being "less human" than the invaders. After 72 years, it's only legitimate claim to the land of Palestine has been through force, and all empires and their puppets eventually fall. Israel will as well.

■ How do you analyze the situation inside Israel?

A: There are three strata inside Israel; Ashkenazi Jews, the white Jews from Europe/Russia and the U.S. who control the power, politics and money. The second tier is the Sephardic or

Arab Jews who were often forced to immigrate to Israel immediately after Israel was founded on the backs of the Palestinians. Once the European Jews drove out 750,000 Palestinians, they needed workers to come and settle in the land they stole. What better place to find them than the Arab Jews of the Middle East and North Africa? If they didn't want to come peacefully, Mossad made sure they changed their minds.

After arriving in Israel, they even made up a name for themselves... Mizrahi... so they didn't have to be called Arab Jews. They are becoming the largest segment of the population, but they have little power. You'll often see them as members of the IOF, subjugating the third tier in Israel, the Palestinians, who have no power whether they are Israeli citizens or living in the Bantustans of the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

This kind of situation, like its predecessor

in South Africa, will eventually fall apart, and the country will end up being a country for all citizens, Jews/Christians/Muslims.

■ Israel plans to annex parts of the West Bank, and Netanyahu and opposition leader Benny Gantz are unanimous in this move. Netanyahu has confidently said that annexation will take place within "a few months," or before the American presidential election in November. What has made Israel to behave so unashamedly and intransigently? Don't you think that an impotent international community or inaction by international bodies have made Tel Aviv so emboldened?

A: Israel has the biggest gorilla in the room on its side and that's the U.S. It makes no difference who is President in the U.S., Israel controls Congress, and most politicians will bow to its demands. However, watching what is happening in the U.S., everything is going to change over the next few years, as China emerges triumphant and the U.S. becomes another failed empire like Britain and France.

Personally, I'm all for a one-state solution and have been for decades. And the sooner, the better for everyone living there. Palestinians already outnumber Jews, and those demographics are only going to improve for Palestinians, both Christian and Muslim.

■ You are internationally famous for advocating "justice" for Palestinians since the early 1960. What prompted you to highlight the sufferings of the Palestinians?

A: While in graduate school

in 1963, I met and married a Palestinian and had two Palestinian/American children who couldn't return to Safad, the city where their father was raised, while a Jew from New York City could immigrate there with no other credentials except religion.

That sense of injustice has challenged me since then. The most outspoken advocate for the rights of marginalized people like Palestinians are often the people who learned the truth after being lied to as children. Like many Americans, I grew up thinking Israel was the victim and Jews had the right to settle in the Holy Land. When I met my husband, and he began telling me the truth of the violent takeover of his land by European terrorist Jews, I became an advocate for justice in Palestine for life.

■ You were a co-founder of the Free Gaza Movement and among those brave persons who broke the Gaza siege. Can you please explain about your experiences and the reactions?



A: This is such a long story, encompassing two years of planning, buying the boats, sailing to Gaza and so much pain, laughter and delight at finally getting there. It's a book and a movie and a webinar already.

■ The U.S. has been blindly defending the illegal behavior of Israel toward Palestinians over the past seven decades. How can such a support be justified by a country which proclaims leadership of the free world and defender of democracy and human rights?

A: The U.S. has never been a defender of democracy and human rights. The country was founded on the genocide of the native population and got rich on the back of slavery. It has had, however, one of the most brilliant PR campaigns of any country in the world. Israel tries to emulate it with many of the same catch phrases such as, "the only democracy in the Middle East." That's as big a lie as the U.S. saying it stands for human rights.

However, there is a difference between government propaganda and the citizens of the U.S. Americans, once they wake up, are among the most outstanding advocates for justice for people seeking equal rights, and have put their lives on the line, from the martyrs of the civil rights movement, <https://www.spl-center.org/what-we-do/civil-rights-memorial/civil-rights-martyrs>

to Rachel Corrie in Palestine. They are the one bright and hopeful beacons of light in the U.S., especially this younger generation. I have great hopes they will become like many of us out of the 1960s, advocates for a better world.

■ How is it possible that successive Congresses and to a lesser extent administrations remain so biased in favor of Israel? Does it show that the American people who vote for their representatives are indifferent or ignorant toward the situation of the Palestinians?



A: Bribery, Blackmail and Benjamins.

It is true, however, that Americans are beginning to wake up to the terrorism of the Israeli occupation. But to be honest, Americans can barely make it from one paycheck to the next and are overwhelmed with problems in their own backyards.

And the country is huge, with 331 million people, only 20% who even own a passport. Very few of us travel outside the Northern Hemisphere. America and much of its population are isolated and not very well-educated about other countries.

■ And, why anybody who opposes the stealing of the Palestinian lands or criticizes suppression of Palestinians is easily being accused of anti-Semitism?

A: It's become a badge of honor to be called anti-Semitic. Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Jimmy Carter, Stephen Hawking, Roger Waters have all been called anti-Semites. I'm proud to be in their company.

Second Announcement			
Call for public tender (First/Second publish)			
Two-Stages (semi compressed) tender			
 N.I.O.C 1399.1051			
 National Iranian Drilling Company			
Subject of Tender :			
Indent No.		Description	
01-22-9746031		Wire Rope	
01-22-9746028		Wire Rope	
Tender descriptions:			
The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. /Indent No.	Estimated value)Rial(
National Iranian Drilling Company	4,373,947	Tender No.: FP/11-99/023-3 Indent No.: 01-22-9746031	38 , 038 , 849 , 644
	4,373,945	Tender No.: FP/11-99/022-3 Indent No.: 01-22-9746028	6,453,850,000
• Qualitative evaluation of tenderers			
Method	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Based on minimum scoring (50) made in award criterion reflected in the tenderers pre-qualification forms.		
• Purchasing & Submitting			
Tender Document Distribution by Company	Distribution Place	Hall No.:113, 1 st floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN 061-34148601	
	Submitting Method	• Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 190,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491(Shaba No. IR 52010004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank. • Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents.	
Documents Receiving Method	Closing date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 14Days after the last time of Purchasing.	
	Address	Hall No. 107, 1 st floor, Tender Committee, Operation building, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Tel: +98-61-34148580 +98-61-34148569	
• Tender Guarantee			
Value of guarantee	1,902,000,000Rial / 13,203 Euro Regarding Tender No FP/11-99/023-3 323,000,000Rial / 2,591 Euro Regarding Tender No FP/11-99/022-3		
Type of guarantee	✓ Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtain activity license from the central bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. ✓ Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 4001114006376636 (Shaba No. IR 350100004001114006376636) in name of "NIDC saving account" by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran.		
Duration of credit & quotation	Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.		
(Foreign Procurement Dept.)			
More of this & other tenders are accessible by click on: www.nidc.ir http://sapp.ir/nidc_pr			
تهران تایمز نوبت دوم ۹۹/۳/۱۹			

George Floyd's slaying: A clarion call to topple the U.S. regime

1 → So I can fully understand that these so-called riots and looting are in truth popular uprisings expressing peoples' outrage over more than four centuries of indescribable injustice and unfathomable oppression. After all, Americans are forced to live in a society held together by structural violence, which is distributed more heavily against Blacks and minorities.

In 1968 when Blacks rose up with irreproachable outrage in the aftermath of the assassination of the renowned Black leader, Dr. Martin Luther King that April, I was in Washington, DC in the U.S. Army assigned to the White House Communications Agency. As a driver transporting personnel and interagency mail to various locations in Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia, I fully empathized with the Black people's righteous indignation and witnessed the blazing fires light up the night skies. But Washington, DC was only one U.S. city out of 125 convulsing in unrest, which resulted in forty-six deaths and required a total of 54,000 federal and National Guard troops to suppress what white elites undoubtedly viewed as a modern-day slave rebellion.



I also witnessed the paranoia of the white power structure on full display. The agency to which I was assigned was located at M Street and Wisconsin Avenue in an old DC Transit bus facility. By April the commanding officer had directed that an armory consisting of M-14 rifles be located within the building and all of us were sent to Fort Meade, Maryland to requalify on these weapons. While the anticipated assault by people of color never materialized, still the paranoia of the ruling elites has never subsided. The concerned white electorate voted for "law and order" candidate Richard Nixon in the 1968 election in what was termed as "a turn to the right."

In those days, presidents Lyndon Baines Johnson and Richard Milhous Nixon both spoke with protestors and oversaw the passage of legislation. Nixon, incidentally, was forced to resign the presidency to avoid being impeached for refusing to honor one single subpoena. Today, we have a white supremacist in power who has thumbled his nose egregiously at numerous congressional subpoenas and has been impeached, yet his popularity with a disturbingly large portion of Americans, who apparently approve of this repugnant behavior, seems undiminished. Instead of speaking with demonstrators, Trump has declared a harsh, militaristic crackdown on legitimate dissent. "I am your President of law and order," he declared, borrowing a phrase from Nixon.

Despite the civil rights and voting rights legislation that came out of the 1960s, and the sacrifices made by so many people, especially those leaders like Brother Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King, both of whom the U.S. government assassinated, racial justice in the U.S. for Blacks has not only failed to materialize, but living conditions have actually worsened. Discrimination now is worse than the 1960s, employment opportunities have shrunk. Chattel enslavement of Blacks has been replaced by mass incarceration in the highly profitable privatized prison system, which detains over 2.2 million Blacks today as compared to only some 200,000 in 1970. Nevertheless, whites in increasing numbers fail to acknowledge these discriminatory racial barriers that America places before Blacks and other minorities.

The white power structure always reacts in a manner to perpetuate itself. It is no different this time. The mantra of "peaceful demonstrations" and the tropes of "outside agitators" and "unlawful opportunists" are the same as used in the 1960s. Lip service will be paid to quell the uprising, and I fear that once again the masses will be duped into submission. Worse yet are the quiescent Black leaders that we have today like former president Obama, advisor Susan Rice, St. Paul mayor Melvin Carter, Atlanta mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, and New Orleans mayor Marc Morial who have sold out to the white elites and are parroting the "peaceful demonstration" narrative to their outraged citizenry. Ms. Bottoms went so far as to denounce demonstrators for defacing the CNN building in Atlanta, as if the communications conglomerate were a sentinel of support for Blacks. "They [CNN] are telling our stories, and you are disgracing their building," she ranted, "Go home."

There are many differences between then and now. In the 1960s, the Blacks had leaders: Dr. Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael. The U.S. had presidents who, despite their shortcomings, at least listened to and spoke with the people. The U.S. congress was not entirely ruled by money from corporate lobbyists. After all the protests in the 1960s, the Blacks gained virtually nothing but an all-too-brief moment of hope. By October 12, 1970, the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, was already reporting a "major breakdown" in the enforcement of civil rights legislation.

Today racism is rampant, perhaps more so than in the 1960s, and police brutality against Blacks and other people of color is well documented. It is a systemic problem that is embedded in the white supremacist ideology upon which the United States was founded. After all the blood, sweat and tears from the activists of the 1960s, instead of change, what they really got was legislative window dressing framed in bureaucratic niceties. For example, the hamstrung Civil Rights Commission has noted that under the Trump regime, "the U.S. Department of Justice has taken the public position to significantly curtail policing investigations, and followed through in that reduction." For its part, the so-called U.S. Department of Justice, in an apparent abdication of its duties to enforce the law, has emphasized, "It is not the responsibility of the federal government to manage non-federal law enforcement agencies."

There is no solution to this quagmire of injustices short of toppling the corrupt, racist U.S. regime and building a more just and equitable edifice upon its ruins. Regrettably, without Black leaders like Brother Malcolm X and Dr. King to guide the people, I fear this will not be happening any time soon. There are no visionary American presidents like John Kennedy, only spineless political opportunists like Bush II and Obama, both with only a slightly less vulgar veneer than the neofascist currently in the Oval Office. I can only hope and pray that those of us engaged in this struggle remain steadfast until all traces of American injustices are eradicated.

355 historical relics to be restored in Ilam

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — A total of 355 historical relics are up for restoration by teams of cultural heritage experts and restorers in the western province of Ilam, CHTN reported.

Photography, identification and documentation of the relics are also parts of the restoration project, which will be done under the supervision of archaeologists and cultural heritage experts, Abdolmalek Shanbehzadeh said on Sunday.



He also noted that preserving the historical relics and monuments shows the important role of the culture in each society.

Home to almost half of Iran's UNESCO sites, western Iran is a land of hospitable people, wild extremes and wilder history. The region also witnessed the rise and fall of many great empires once bordering Mesopotamia, Ottoman Turkey, and Czarist Russia.

The name "Ilam" comes from "Elam", the pre-historic civilization that ruled the area in modern southwest Iran from 2700 BC to 539 BC. Archaeological findings dates human settlement of the area to around 5000 BC.

IKIA to set up new fire station

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Another fire station will be added to the vast Imam Khomeini International Airport to keep up with world's highest standards both in high-tech and skilled manpower arenas.

Covering nearly 14,000 ha and located in southern Tehran, Imam Khomeini Airport City (IKAC), which comprises Imam Khomeini International Airport, is one of the biggest airports in the world.



"The fire station at IKAC Airport will be run by part-time and full-time firefighters," IKAC News quoted IKAC CEO Mohammad Mahdi Karbalaee as saying on Sunday.

"Our firefighters have proved to perform effectively. They are fully familiar with different aircrafts, the local situation, technical equipment and facilities at the airport."

"The full-time firefighters have extensive firefighting experience and a variety of special training. This combination of professional firefighters and the part-time firefighting team, combined with a new department and high-standard training, ensures that the airport fire service will be more effective and efficient," the official explained.

"IKIA has not stopped development programs and development of a new modern fire station as it, similar to other airports worldwide, is in difficult situation due to the outbreak of the coronavirus," the CEO noted.

Awe-inspiring ancient sites of wild western Iran: Armenian churches

(Lonely Planet) — St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew are thought to have brought Christianity to Armenia and northern Persia in the 1st century CE, and their legacy is three exquisite and remote churches spread across the wild mountainous borderlands of what is now western Iran.



The Church of St. Stephanos is sheltered in a canyon above the Aras River (Steve Waters / Lonely Planet)

Dating from 700 CE, these still-important pilgrimage sites have survived earthquakes, wars, capricious dictators and dodgy renovations. The most approachable, St. Stephanos, sits in a crumbling red canyon high above the Aras River. While the ornate stone cupolas, exterior engravings and attached cloisters have been restored, the main interior is still a work in progress.

The oldest church, Qareh Kalisa, is also the most complete, and it lies alone on a windswept knoll near the historic battle plain of Chaldoran. Twin turrets tower over intricately carved stonework depicting saints and religious icons, and a summer festival is held here once a year. The intrepid will relish the trip to unearth the third church, tiny Dzor Dzor Chapel, relocated above rising waters of the dammed Zangmar River, some 40 middle-of-nowhere switch-backed kilometers from the fortress town of Maku. Bring a good guide.

‘Most extensive’ field research in central Iranian plateau yields 21 historical sites



→ Elsewhere in his remarks, Baqershahi emphasized that the archaeological region is on a par with the Tapeh Sialk ("Sialk hills", which is one of the oldest and richest archaeological sites in central Iran.)

Situated halfway between Kashan and Fin in Isfahan province, Tapeh Sialk has yielded interesting pottery pieces, metal tools, and domestic implements made from stone, clay, and bone that date from

as early as the 4th millennium BC. Experts say Sialk is a treasure trove of information about diverse subjects such as palaeobotany, palaeozoology, palaeoanatomy, diet, climate change and ancient metallurgy.

Baqershahi voiced hope that subsequent archaeological seasons would shed more light on the sites that encircling Sadrabad village, saying "There are sites in the central Iranian plateau, which are remained untouched so far, and we hope that in the next chapters



and by exploring this area, the various archeological questions to be answered to some extent."

The first well-documented evidence of human habitation in the Iranian plateau is in deposits from several excavated cave and rock-shelter sites, located mainly in the Zagros Mountains of western Iran and dated to Middle Paleolithic or Mousterian times (c. 100,000 BC).

From the Caspian in the northwest to

Baluchistan in the south-east, the Iranian Plateau extends for close to 2,000 km. It encompasses the greater part of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan west of the Indus River containing some 3,700,000 square kilometres. In spite of being called a "plateau", it is far from flat but contains several mountain ranges, the highest peak being Damavand in the Alborz mountain range at 5610 m, and the Dasht-e Loot east of Kerman in Central Iran falling below 300 m.

Six Iranian handicrafts receive National Seal of Excellence

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — Some six high-quality works by artisans in north-central Semnan province have been awarded with the National Seal of Excellence, ISNA reported.

Broadcloth by Khadijeh Ghoncheh, Phoenix pottery utensils by Puria Hajiparvaneh, pottery and ceramic collection by Nilufar Lotfi-Moqadam and embroidered coat by Kheironesa Samadian are among the works awarded with the National Seal of Excellence, provincial tourism chief Ali Akbar Zarei announced on Sunday.

Currently, 42 fields of handicraft are being practiced in the province by over 5,000 craftspeople, he added.



The National Seal of Excellence is given to high-quality, selected works with the aim



of supporting handicrafts, improving the quality and preserving the originality of this

industry as well as creating sustainable employment for craftspeople.

The country exported \$427 million worth of handicrafts during the first eleven months of the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19). Of the figure, some \$190 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through 20 provinces, according to deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian.

"Some 295 fields of handicraft are currently practiced across Iran with more than two million people engaging, majority of whom are women... Handicrafts also play an important role in the economy in our rural villages," he said.

Qajar-era mansion in Semnan to turn into museum

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — Qajar-era Danai mansion in north-central Semnan province will be turned into a museum, a Semnan municipality official has said.

The mansion, measuring 520 square meters in area, is one of the valuable historical monuments of the province, which was built in Qajar era (1789–1925), Saied Porsa said on Sunday, ISNA reported.

The mansion is being restored and the museum is expected to be inaugurated by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), he added.

Turning this historical monument into a museum can promote Semnan as a historical city and tourist destination, he stated.

The main population centers of Semnan province lie along the ancient Silk Road (and modern-day Imam Reza

Expressway), linking Rey (Tehran) with Khorasan (Mashhad). While few visitors spend much time in the area, driving through you can easily seek out several well-preserved caravanserais (notably Dehnamak and Ahowan), cisterns (the Cafe Abenbar in Garmsar is a special treat) and ruined mud citadels (Padeh is lumpy but fascinating). The large, bustling cities of Semnan, Damghan and Shahrud (Bastam) all have a small selection of historic buildings and Semnan has a fine old covered bazaar.

Some three million historical objects are currently being kept in Iranian museums which are affiliated with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

"There are many historical relics that are owned by private collectors and entities and the government cannot act in order to preserve them in the museums; therefore, we made efforts that this [cultural] heritage to be conserved



and showcased in [their] private museums," according to Mohammadreza Kargar who presides over the ministry's museums and historical properties department.

Carpet museum to host online meeting on Tehran carpets

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — The Carpet Museum of Iran will host an online meeting on Tuesday on Tehran carpets, CHTN quoted the museum's director Parisa Beyzaee as saying on Sunday.

Carpet experts Nasrin Azadbakhsh and Yusef Samadi are scheduled to deliver speeches during the meeting, which will be streamed both on the museum's official website and on social media, she added.

Tehran carpets were woven during Qajar era (1789–1925) for wealthy families. It was one of the most important occupations of Iranian families in rural areas at the time. However, weaving Tehran carpets is not common these days and they can be only seen in museums and old photos.

The wool used in these carpets had a very high quality and the carpets had silky and velvety state. The patterns of the carpets were vary, of which medallion pattern was the most popular.



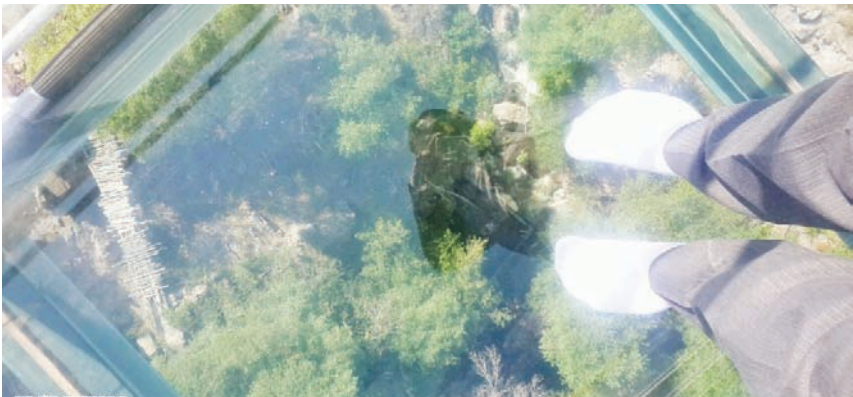
Medallion carpet is any floor covering on which the decoration is dominated by a single symmetrical

centerpiece, such as a star-shaped, circular, quatrefoiled, or octagonal figure. The name, however, is sometimes also given to a carpet on which the decoration consists of several forms of this kind or even of rows of medallion figures.

Among Persian carpets, particularly those of the classic period, the medallion may represent an open lotus blossom with 16 petals as seen from above, a complex star form, or a quatrefoil with pointed lobes.

Toward each end of the carpet, there may be added to this centerpiece a cartouche form (an oval or oblong ornate frame), placed transversely, and a finial or pendant that sometimes is very large. In each corner of the field, there may appear a quarter-medallion, which may or may not have the same contour and the same appendages as the central medallion. Such combinations are still used in the decoration of modern Persian carpets.

Scary but worth visiting: don't miss glass bridge in Ardebil



TOURISM **TEHRAN** — During your travel to Iran's Ardebil province, make sure to include a visit to its "scary" glass bridge in the timeline if you like to discover a fascinating place in a budget way.

Made of curved sheets of glass, the newly-constructed bridge measures 220 meters in length and connects two hills in Hir district of the northwestern province,

which is well-known for having lush natural beauties, cultural heritage sites, and hospitable people.

Inaugurated by Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan in January, the suspension bridge is said to be the first of its kind in the world.

Ardebil is home to many cultural and historical sites as well as natural tourist attractions with breathtaking views in a



way it attracts hundreds of thousands of tourists from both inside and outside the country every year.

The province is situated in a mountainous region whose altitude averages 3,000 meters above sea level. It is very cold in winter and mild in summer.

Persian historians have ascribed a founding date to the province's capital (also named Ardebil) in the Sassanid period, but its known

history does not begin until the Islamic period. It was at that time the residence of the Sasanian governor. The Umayyad governor made Ardebil his capital, but the Arab hold on the region did not last. Local rulers fought continuously in the area until the Mongol conquest in 1220, when the town was destroyed. It lost all importance until the Sufi mystic Sheikh Safi al-Din made it the center of his Safavid order in the 13th century.

Iran's first comprehensive center for cancer treatment set up

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The first comprehensive cancer treatment center equipped with various diagnostic, treatment and counseling facilities was launched in the country.

In this center, treatment of breast, gastrointestinal, blood, and gastric cancers is performed without harming other tissues of the body, and in fact, a complete chain of diagnosis, treatment and resuscitation is performed in it.

In addition to cancer treatment at the center, diets, pain control, counseling services, etc. are also provided to the clients.

Over the past decade, the rate of mortality as a result of cancer has been declining in Iran, Mohammad Esmail Akbari, a senior advisor to the Iranian health minister has said in December 2019.

A study conducted over the past ten years on 840,000 patients suffering from cancer in the country shows that the rate of mortality has decreased.

Fortunately, the quality of cancer care in Iran is high and is comparable with other countries in the world, he stressed.

In August, Ali Qanbari-Motlaq, head of the Health Ministry's cancer control department, said a total of 75 centers for early cancer detection were established



across the country during the past Iranian calendar year (March 2018-March 2019).

The Health Ministry plans to increase the operating early cancer detection

centers to 137 as soon as possible, he added.

Protected areas to be added by 1m ha



ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — One million hectares of natural lands will be added to the country's protected areas by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 2021), deputy chief of the Department of Environment (DOE) for natural resources and biodiversity has stated.

Currently, about 18.5 million hectares of the country's lands are under the management of the DOE, IRNA quoted Kioumars Kalantari as saying on Saturday.

Four types of areas have been designated for protection, including 31 national parks, 46 wildlife refuges, 169 protected areas, and 38 natural national monuments.

IRCS to reopen hospital in Yemeni capital



SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iran's Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is going to reopen a 70-bed hospital in Sanaa, the capital of Yemen, in the near future.

The hospital was built in Yemen in 2004, but was shut down in 2009 after five years of humanitarian work

due to security concerns, IRNA quoted IRCS spokesman Mohammad Nasiri as saying.

Through coordinating between the Yemeni health officials and the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the hospital will soon start working again, IRNA news agency reported.

Wildfire arsonists to face at least 10 years of imprisonment

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — People who deliberately set fire to forests and pastures are sentenced to at least 10 years in prison, Reza Aflatoon, the deputy director of the Forests, Rangelands and Watershed Management Organization for legal affairs, has announced.

Farmers, ranchers and gardeners must obtain permission from natural resources officials for burning of their garden plant residues, he said, IRIB reported.

Regarding the people's role in wildfires and the lack of law in this field, Jamshid Mahbbat Khani, the commander of the Department of Environment's protection unit, said that fires have two human and natural origins. Lightning or heat are among the reasons for



anthropogenic forest fires.

Last year (ended on March 19), 12 percent of fires were naturally set, on the other hand, 18 percent of fires were an act of arson.

A wildfire broke out across several forests and protected areas in four western and southwestern provinces of Khuzestan, Bushehr, Lorestan, Kohgiluyeh, and Boyer-Ahmad on May 28.

The fire also swept through Khaeez protected area, measuring 28,000 hectares is one of the main habitats for wild goats in Zagros forests and was burning for almost 6 days.

Issa Kalantari the DOE chief told ISNA that some 27,000 hectares of Khaeez protected area was burnt in the fire.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → E

11m ha of plains require aquifer, watershed management

Some 11 million hectares of the country's plains need watershed and aquifer management plans, so they must be prepared in this regard, director of watershed management at Forests, Rangelands, and Watershed Management Organization has said.

Over the past 10 years, the country experienced 11 millimeters of rainfall decline while evaporation rate increased by 54 millimeters, ISNA quoted Khoshroo Shahbazi as saying on Thursday.

یازده میلیون هکتار از دشت‌های کشور نیازمند آبخوانداری است

معاون آبخیزداری، مراتع و بیابان سازمان جنگلها و مراتع و آبخیزداری، گفت: یازده میلیون هکتار از دشت‌های کشور نیازمند اجرای طرح‌های آبخیزداری و آبخوانداری است.

به گزارش ایسنا، خسرو شهبازی گفت: طی ۱۰ سال گذشته به طور متوسط در کشور ۱۱ میلیمتر کاهش بارندگی و ۵۴ میلیمتر افزایش تبخیر و تعریق را شاهد بودیم.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“bi-, bin-, bis-”

■ **Meaning:** two or twice

■ **For example:** *Biscuit* comes from the French meaning twice-cooked.

PHRASAL VERB

Opt in

■ **Explanation:** to decide to join a group or system

■ **For example:** Employees have the choice to opt in to the scheme.

IDIOM

Cross your mind

■ **Explanation:** If an idea or thought crosses your mind, you suddenly think of it

■ **For example:** It just crossed my mind that the shops are closed today.

Iran ranks higher in environmental performance

1 → This year, the theme was biodiversity – a concern that is both urgent and existential. Recent events, from bushfires in Brazil, the United States, and Australia to locust infestations across East Africa – and now, a global disease pandemic – demonstrate the interdependence of humans and the webs of life, in which they exist.

World Environment Day has grown to become a global platform for public outreach, with participation from over 143 countries annually.

More than a third of NSW rainforests found to have been hit by Australian bushfires

More than a third of New South Wales rainforest was among 5.4m hectares hit by last season's catastrophic bushfires, according to new state government data.

The report, an updated assessment of the effect of the fires on wildlife and landscapes, said 293 threatened animal species and 680 threatened plant species have habitat in the state's fire ground. The affected area includes more than 3.5m hectares of the state's best koala habitat.

Almost six months on from the crisis, the impact of the fire season is only beginning to be understood.

Recovery work has begun in some areas, while in others, the Covid-19 pandemic shut down early assessment work.

The fire ground includes 245 of the state's 878 national parks and 208 out of 522 state forests.

The report maps the relative severity of the fires based on how much of the tree canopy appears to have burnt.

The maps were produced using geospatial data and will be refined over time with more on ground assessment, a NSW environment department spokesperson said.

Of the national parks in the fire ground, the analysis found 23% have had their canopy fully affected and 36% partially affected. In state forests, those figures are 17% and 32% respectively.

The report rated the ecological condition of forests in the fire ground, which is a measure of the quality and the intactness of habitat compared to its original condition.

Within the NSW RFS fire ground, 72% of the original ecological was estimated as remaining in 2013. In 2020, that figure has decreased to 44% the report states.

The analysis also looked at the ability of these locations to support native species and ecosystems, what is known as “ecological carrying capacity”.

It estimated that within the fire ground 62% of the original carrying capacity remained in 2013. That had now fallen to 38%.

As well as 37% of rainforests being affected, other findings included:

* 52% of all heathlands in NSW has been affected by fire.

* 50% of wet sclerophyll forests has been affected.

* 25% of the most suitable koala habitat in eastern NSW is in the RFS fire ground. That includes 68% of the best koala habitat on the south coast, 34% of the best koala habitat in the northern tablelands and 30% of the best koala habitat on the north coast.

The report builds on earlier work which found vast areas of the Blue Mountains world heritage area and the Gondwana rainforests world heritage area were within the fire ground.

John Merson, the executive director of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, said although more than 80% of the world heritage area had burnt, it had not burnt uniformly or at the same intensity.

He said there were areas of refuges, and recovery was occurring, but some critical ecosystems, including swamp communities that are important water resources had been affected on a large scale.

Merson said surveys were occurring to examine not just the short term effects of the fires but what the longer term effect of climate change would be on the recovery, noting concern about fires returning with greater frequency.

“I think we need a better understanding of how to protect this environment,” he said.

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Zimbabwe leaves Commonwealth

(December 08, 2003)

Commonwealth countries at their meeting in Nigeria have been considering the consequences of Zimbabwe's decision to leave the organisation. Zimbabwe had been suspended from the Commonwealth because of concerns over democracy and human rights abuses. This report from Barnaby Mason:

The dispute over Zimbabwe has **dominated the summit**. Many countries resent the amount of time it's taken up, but others stressed the vital importance of insisting on **Commonwealth** standards of democracy. The New Zealand Prime Minister, Helen Clark, denied that Zimbabwe's withdrawal was a disaster for the Commonwealth. The disaster would have been to **lift the suspension**, she said; that would have shown the Commonwealth to be a joke.

On the other side of the argument, President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique said the Commonwealth decision had pushed Zimbabwe to leave and could have been avoided. He also complained that the organisation had acted undemocratically itself last March, when the suspension was left in place beyond the original twelve months. But Mr Chissano said he respected the views of others in the Commonwealth and didn't think the **episode** should **bring about enmity** between member states. In the end, the Southern Africa supporters of the Zimbabwe government **under-estimated the opposition** across the Commonwealth, including that of some other African states, to letting Zimbabwe back without progress on democracy and human rights.

■ **Words**

the dispute: the disagreement, the argument

dominated: was the most important subject

the summit: a summit is an official meeting between leaders of two or more governments

resent the amount of time it's taken up: are angry that so much time has been used on this subject

Commonwealth: an organisation including the United Kingdom and countries that were part of the British Empire

to lift the suspension: to allow Zimbabwe back into the organisation

the episode: what happened at the summit

bring about enmity: cause bad feeling

under-estimated the opposition: didn't realise the opposition was so strong

(Source: BBC)

Palestinian resistance leader Ramadan Shallah passes away

Former leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement Ramadan Shallah has passed away after battling a long illness.

Shallah, who served as secretary general of the resistance group from 1995 to 2018, died at the age of 62 on Saturday night, according to Lebanon's al-Manar television network.



The Gaza-based movement said in a statement that Shallah had been in a coma for more than three years. It didn't say where he died, but he is believed to have been in Lebanon.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas offered his condolences over the death of Shallah.

"By losing Shallah we lost a great national man," he said in a statement carried by the Palestinian WAFA news agency.

In April 2018, Shallah suffered several heart attacks and was transferred from the Syrian capital, Damascus, where he was based, to Beirut for surgery. He failed to regain consciousness.

The Palestinian embassy in Beirut said at the time that he may have been poisoned by Israel.

Shallah was born in Gaza in 1958 and studied in Egypt before earning a PhD in economics in the United Kingdom.

He led the Islamic Jihad movement for more than 20 years, after its founder, Fathi Shiqaqi, was assassinated in Malta in 1995 in an attack widely attributed to Israel.

In 2018, Shallah's deputy Ziad al-Nakhalah was named as a new leader of the movement, which was founded in 1981 to realize the Palestinian cause in establishing an independent state.

Alongside the Palestinian Hamas resistance movement, a Gaza-based ally, the Islamic Jihad has defended the Palestinians against the Israeli regime during three deadly imposed wars since 2008.

The Tel Aviv regime carries out regular attacks on Gaza inhabitants under the pretext of hitting positions belonging to Hamas, which administers the territory.

Israel has launched several wars on the Palestinian coastal sliver of land, the last of which began in early July 2014. The military aggression, which ended on August 26, 2014, killed nearly 2,200 Palestinians. Over 11,100 others were also wounded in the invasion.

The Gaza Strip has been under an Israeli siege since June 2007. The blockade has caused a decline in the standards of living as well as unprecedented levels of unemployment and unrelenting poverty.

The Israeli regime denies about 1.8 million people in Gaza their basic rights, such as freedom of movement, jobs with proper wages as well as adequate healthcare and education.

Iraqi parliament completes 22-member new government

Iraq's parliament has given its vote of confidence to seven cabinet ministers, including the key oil and foreign affairs posts, completing the 22-member government of Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi.

Ihsan Ismaeel, the former head of the Basra Oil Company (BOC), was appointed minister of oil of OPEC's second-largest producing country.

He will inherit a challenging portfolio, as Iraq is struggling to cope with a collapse in crude prices and a decision by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to cut production.

Low revenues have been catastrophic for Iraq, which relies on oil sales to fund more than 90 percent of its budget.

Fuad Hussein, who served as finance minister in the previous government, returns to the cabinet but this time to head the ministry of foreign affairs.

According to Press TV, a Kurdish veteran politician known to be close to Kurdish leader Masoud Barzani, Hussein is the only member of the old government to join the new line-up.

MPs also approved Kadhimi's picks for ministers of trade, agriculture, culture, justice and migration.

"My cabinet is now complete with today's vote. This is vital in implementing our program and delivering on our commitments to our people -- who are waiting for actions, not words," Kadhimi said in a tweet on Saturday.

Provocations seek 'assassination of country': Berri

Lebanon Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri on Sunday condemned the sectarian aggravation and violence that took place the previous day during heated protests.

According to Anadolu, thousands of protesters took to the streets in Lebanon's capital on Saturday against the government's inaction to the worsening economic crisis in the country.

The protesters, who gathered in Martyr's Square in Beirut, called for snap elections before marching to the parliament building to demand a change in sectarian political parties that were running the administration.

According to the Lebanese Red Cross, 48 people were injured in clashes with security forces during the demonstrations.

The army warned against "the consequences of being drawn into sedition" and stressed "the necessity of dealing responsibly, consciously and with wisdom in order to maintain civil peace and preserve national unity."

Greece: 'We are ready for military confrontation with Turkey'

Greek Defense Minister Nikos Panagiotopoulos has confirmed that his country is ready for all eventualities, including military confrontation with Turkey if it continued to provoke Athens, news agencies reported on Friday.

In a television interview, Panagiotopoulos revealed that his ministry had noted increasing Turkish provocations.

"Turkey's behaviour has been very aggressive in the recent period," according to Panagiotopoulos, "I believe that the only way for Greece to deal with this behavior, which has been generally aggressive, is on the one hand to exhaust all its diplomatic choices, and on the other hand to ensure an increase in the deterrence of our military."

When asked if Greece was ready for a military confrontation with Turkey, Panagiotopoulos replied: "Exactly so".

A couple of days ago, the Turkish government newspaper published a request for a Turkish state oil company to obtain a license to explore oil and gas in an area near the Greek islands.

Protests worldwide embrace Black Lives Matter movement

→ 1 In Berlin, demonstrators filled the central Alexanderplatz square, while there was also a protest in Warsaw.

■ Placards and flags

In Brisbane, one of several Australian cities where rallies were held, police estimated 10,000 people joined a peaceful protest, wearing masks and holding "Black Lives Matter" placards. Many wrapped themselves in indigenous flags, calling for an end to police mistreatment of indigenous Australians.

Banners and slogans have focused not just on George Floyd but on a string of other controversies in different countries as well as mistreatment of minorities in general.

In Sydney, a last-minute court decision overruling a ban imposed because of the coronavirus allowed several thousand people to march, with a heavy police presence.

In Tokyo, marchers protested against what they said was police mistreatment of a Kurdish man who says he was stopped while driving and shoved to the ground. Organisers said they were also marching in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.

In Seoul, dozens of South Korean activists and foreign residents gathered, some wearing black masks with "Can't breathe" in Korean, echoing George Floyd's final words as he lay on the ground.

In Bangkok, activists avoided coronavirus restrictions by going online, asking for video and photos of people wearing black, raising their fists and holding signs, and explaining why they supported the Black Lives Matter movement.

Protesters were expected to gather in Washington for a huge demonstration on



Saturday as demonstrations across the United States entered a 12th day.

■ Protesters pour into U.S. cities for another huge mobilization

Meanwhile, in U.S. thousands of protesters streamed into the nation's capital and other major cities Saturday in another huge mobilization against police brutality while George Floyd was remembered in his North Carolina hometown by mourners who waited hours for a glimpse of his golden coffin.

Military vehicles and officers in fatigues closed off much of downtown Washington to traffic ahead of the planned march, which authorities estimated would attract up to 200,000 people. Large protests also took

place across the U.S. and overseas, including in London, Paris, Berlin and Sydney, collectively producing perhaps the largest one-day mobilization since Floyd's death 12 days ago at the hands of police in Minneapolis, AP reported.

In Philadelphia and Chicago, marchers chanted, carried signs and occasionally knelt silently. Both protests unfolded peacefully in their early stages.

On a hot, humid day in Washington, throngs of protesters gathered at the Capitol, on the National Mall and in residential neighborhoods. Many groups headed toward the White House, where President Donald Trump was.

Russia to U.S.: Leave Syria, deal with your own crisis

Russia has called on the United States to end its illegal occupation of Syria and instead deal with its own internal crises amid social unrest that has gripped the country over the murder of another black man by a white police officer.

Russia's Foreign Ministry condemned as "crazy" recent remarks by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State David Schenker about the Russian military's presence in Syria.

Schenker said on Thursday that Russia should "go out" of Syria as it had played a "destructive" role there.

"It seems that he [Schenker] does not know what he was speaking about. His remarks went beyond good and evil. They are stupid remarks," a source in the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

"The professional level in the U.S. Department of State became very low. The U.S. should leave Syria and deal with its internal crisis."

The Russian embassy in Washington also responded to "Schenker's blatant call for Russia to 'go out of the West Asia'".

"We would like to remind: Russian military is stationed in Syria at the invitation of its government," it said.

Russian troops were formally invited to the Arab country by the Syrian government in 2015 and - alongside Iranian military advisers - helped Damascus gradually push back foreign-backed terrorists which had ravaged



the country since 2011.

"The real question here: what are the grounds for the USA to occupy several swaths of this sovereign country? As far as we know none of them are legal. Neither the legitimate authorities nor the UN Security Council sanctioned American troops deployment," said the embassy.

Since September 2014, the United States has been leading a military coalition conducting airstrikes against

purported targets of the Daesh terrorist group inside Syria without any authorization from the Damascus government or a UN mandate.

The military alliance has repeatedly been accused of targeting Syrian infrastructure and killing civilians. It has also been largely incapable of fulfilling its declared aim of destroying Daesh.

U.S. forces have until recently been airlifting Daesh terrorists from one place in Syria to another, under the cover of darkness, in order to save them in the face of advancement and territorial gains by Syrian government forces, and prevent revelation of their alliance with the Takfiri extremists.

Political observers warn that the U.S. is using Daesh to create chaos in the West Asia and pursue Israel's plan to change the West Asia map by disintegrating the regional countries.

According to Press TV, the U.S. is currently facing angry anti-racism protests which have continued for almost two weeks since the killing of George Floyd, an unarmed black man, by police officers in Minneapolis, Minnesota on May 25.

Tens of thousands of people in dozens of cities across the U.S. held demonstrations on Saturday against the police brutality, racial profiling and the killing of Floyd.

Israelis protest Netanyahu's annexation plan

By staff & agencies

Several thousand Israelis demonstrated on Saturday against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plan to extend sovereignty over parts of the occupied West Bank, de-facto annexation of land that the Palestinians seek for a state.

Protesters gathered under the banner "No to annexation, no to occupation, yes to peace and democracy". Some waved Palestinian flags, Reuters reported.

The protest was organized by left-wing groups and did not appear to be the start of a popular mass movement. Around half of Israelis support annexation, according to a recent opinion poll.

The organizers screened a video address by U.S. Democratic Senator Bernie Sanders.

"It has never been more important to stand up for justice, and to fight for the future we all deserve," Sanders said. "It's up to all of us to stand up to authoritarian leaders and to build a peaceful future for every Palestinian and every Israeli."

The Palestinians want an independent state in the West Bank, east Jerusalem and

the Gaza Strip, territories Israel captured in a 1967 Middle East war.

Netanyahu has set July 1 as the date to begin advancing his plan to annex Israel's settlements and the Jordan Valley in the West Bank, hoping for a green light from Washington.

U.S. President Donald Trump has unveiled a peace plan that includes Israel keeping its settlements and the Palestinians establishing a state under stringent conditions.

■ Arab League

Meanwhile, the Arab League has reaffirmed its opposition to the Israeli regime's looming controversial plan to annex parts of the occupied West Bank, saying the "reprehensible and illegal" move amounts to a war crime against Palestinians.

The establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem al-Quds as its capital is the primary goal of the entire Arab world, and the region would never enjoy stability if such an ideal is not achieved, the 22-member regional organization said

in a statement on the 53rd anniversary of Naksa (Setback) Day, which is commemorated every year on June 5 and marks the displacement of Palestinian people after Israel prevailed in the 1967 Six-Day War.

The Arab League also lambasted the US administration of President Donald Trump for providing unprecedented support to the Tel Aviv regime, and allowing it to press ahead with its settlement expansion policies and acts of aggression in the occupied Palestinian land.

It warned that Israel's annexation plan poses a threat to international peace and security, stressing the need for effective measures to force the Tel Aviv regime to abide by the international law.

■ 'All peace-loving states call for end of Israeli occupation'

Separately, the secretary general of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Saeb Erekat, said peace-loving countries all agree on the need for an end to Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories, describing the cessation of



such aggression as an "international responsibility."

"We talked about the urgency to stop annexation to save the peace prospects. Respect for international law and ending the occupation remain a consensus among peace-loving countries," Erekat wrote in a series of posts published on his official Twitter page following separate meetings with UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process Nickolay Mladenov, EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process Susanna Terstal and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Vershinin.

Inside the America

Webinars commemorating the death anniversary of Imam Khomeini

By Tehran Times correspondent in Washington

While tens of thousands of people of all races marched on Washington DC on Saturday June 6th in the largest #BlackLivesMatter gathering to date, how fitting that several thousand more that same day participated as online warriors.

Despite the limitations of Covid19-induced social distancing and the further social upheaval brought about by the police murder of George Floyd, many American Muslim communities organized webinars dedicated to commemorating the death anniversary of Imam Khomeini.

During the four decades that have passed since the Imam's demise, there have been years where participation in memorials was lukewarm, but the current environment seems to shine new light on the truth of Imam's message

of revolution rooted in justice.

The ugliness of racism is not a new problem, and a shameful number of innocent African American men, women and yes, children have lost their lives due to excessive, unnecessary and unconstitutional police force in recent years, but every aspect of the video footage which captured George Floyd's murder at the hands of Minneapolis police indicates without a doubt that there was absolutely no reason for him to have been killed, and this might have generated enough momentum to be the straw that breaks the camel's back. Into this perfect, but tragic, storm, calculate the 40 million unemployed Americans stuck at home, watching depressing news updates all day long.

All the usual distractions—sporting events, concerts and almost all forms of entertainment—are temporarily

suspended. These justice struggles that are unfolding on the streets of America have been integrated into the discussions revolving around the justice efforts of Imam Khomeini, calling on American Muslims to look into their own practices and recognize any prejudices or racist behaviors that can be cleaned up to put us in greater alignment with Imam's focus on implementing Quranic justice.

Just as the creation of the International Day of Quds made the world aware of the illegal and unjust occupation of Palestine by the Zionist entity, present day webinars are drawing the connection between the increasing severity of police brutality and wide spread police trainings that now take place in Israel.

Slogans from past years reminded us From Ferguson to Palestine, Occupation is a Crime. Today's webinar further warns us I Can't Breathe: From Karbala to Minnesota.

Ali Asghar Ravasi named Iran powerlifting coach

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Ali Asghar Ravasi has been named as new head coach of Iran powerlifting team on Sunday.

In a session was held with presence of Hossein Rezazadeh, head of Iran Powerlifting Association, and Mohammad Shervin Asbaghian, president of Iran Sports Federation for the Disabled, Ravasi was appointed as the team's coach.

Ravasi had already worked as head coach of the Iranian powerlifting team in the 2012 Paralympic Games. He also served as head coach of Iran at the 2018 Asian Para Games.

Now, he has been appointed as head coach of the team once again as replacement for Hossein Tavakoli.

Tavakoli, Sydney 2000 Olympic Games gold medal winner, was supposed to lead the team in the 2020 Paralympic Games but the competitions were postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Siamand Rahman, dubbed as the world's strongest Paralympian, was one of the Iranian powerlifters who was expected to win his third gold at the Paralympic Games in a row but died due to heart attack on March 2.

"We need to inject fresh blood into their ageing squad, because the team's average age is 34 and it's not good for a team who wants to compete at the highest level," Ravasi said.

"Also, we have a difficult task ahead since we have lost Siamand in the super heavy-weight division. From now on, we have to find new talented lifters to strengthen our



team," he added.

Paralympic powerlifting is an adaptation of the sport of powerlifting for athletes with disabilities. The only discipline in Paralympic

powerlifting is the bench press.

The sport is governed by the International Paralympic Committee and is open to anyone with a minimum level of disability

who can extend their arms within 20° of full extension during a lift.

Powerlifting has been competed at the Summer Paralympics since 1984.

Government interference in football not legal: Soltanifar

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran's Minister of Sport and Youth Minister Masoud Soltanifar has insisted that the government interference in football affairs is not legal.

Speaking about the amendment of the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) Statutes, Soltanifar said: "We tried to make some substantial changes in FFIRI's Statutes to avoid any further problem in this regard in the future."

Last week, in a threatening letter, FIFA ordered the Iranian federation to revise its statutes. FIFA called on the FFIRI to address some issues, including the reduction of the role of the Iranian sport minister in the internal FFIRI affairs.

Consequently, FFIRI removed the Sports and Youth Minister in the general assembly of the federation and sent the amended version of the statutes to FIFA.



"Keeping in mind the suspension of the Iranian football federation in 2006 by FIFA, we decided to amend the statutes of the federation with expertise and careful consideration," the sport and youth minister said.

"With the outstanding efforts of the secretary general of the football federation, amendments were made to the statutes and sent to FIFA. The international governing body asked that the Ministry of Sport and Youth of Iran not to have any representative in the FFIRI's assembly. They consider it illegal, and so did we," he added.

"We agreed on the removal of the role of any government official in the FFIRI statutes for the sake of the country's sports and to respect football fans in Iran. Our plan was not to put pressure on the football federation on the issue of the amendment of the statutes," Soltanifar concluded.

Alireza Jahanbakhsh is still top of the supersub strikes

Albion's pre-pandemic goal of the season was scored by a substitute.

It will take something special to beat it when the action resumes.

Alireza Jahanbakhsh's overhead kick to secure a point against Chelsea has put the Seagulls in credit in terms of goals scored by subs.

But with up to 45 substitutions yet to come for both Albion and their opponents, that might change in the nine matches to come.

Premier League clubs voted by a large majority, though not unanimously, to allow five changes per team per match for the rest of the season.

Four teams near the wrong end of the table reportedly voted against the change but it is understood that Albion were not among them.

Teams further up the table tend to be those with bigger budgets and bigger squads so, in theory, could make more use of extra changes available.

But Albion have made good use of tactical changes — both in terms of personnel and formation — under Graham Potter this season.

And that will offer hope they can make the most of the situation with which they are

now faced as a result of the latest Premier League meeting yesterday.

Goals scored by subs is far from the only way to judge the success of tactical changes but Albion are in credit as far as it goes.

Jahanbakhsh's special on New Year's Day was the Seagulls' fifth scored by a substitute in the league this season. They have conceded four.

Potter made an early impression with his subs — at Watford on the opening day.

With Albion 1-0 up thanks to an own goal, Potter added pace in attack as he sent on Florin Andone and Neal Maupay for Glenn Murray and Jurgen Locadia on 64 minutes.

Both subs scored inside the next 15 minutes to settle a 3-0 win.

Even more decisive was the contribution of the subs when Norwich City visited the Amex.

Albion had failed to make the breakthrough when Leandro Trossard went on for Pascal Gross just before the hour.

Trossard opened the scoring and then provided the free-kick from which fellow sub Shane Duffy added the second.

Those are the five goals by subs recorded by Albion this season.



What the stats do not show so readily is how Trossard, as sub, helped force the Lucas Digne own goal which secured the last-gasp 3-2 win over Everton.

Had Digne not intervened, Glenn Murray would have turned the ball home — having come off the bench in place of Aaron Connolly.

Other than that, perhaps the most impressive use of subs by Potter was to salvage a 3-3 draw at West Ham from 3-1 down — and they should probably have gone on to win.

That was when he sent on Ezequiel Schelotto to offer more attacking potency down the right and Solly March as a double

switch which also saw the team change shape.

Trossard was supersub for a while and Steven Alzate has done well coming off the bench at times, helping offer a more confident retention of possession.

Those two have come on seven times apiece in the Premier League so far this season.

Connolly has eight appearances as sub but Murray leads the way with 13.

Potter's men have conceded important goals at the Amex to players who did not start the match.

Moussa Djenebo put Southampton ahead when they went 2-0 early in the season following Andone's red card.

Then Jeff Hendrick fired Burnley's late equaliser.

Dominic Calvert-Lewin put Everton ahead two minutes after replacing Alex Iwobi before the hosts came back to win that five-goal thriller.

The other goal conceded by Albion to a sub was at the Etihad and of no great consequence.

That was when Bernardo Silva wasted very little time in adding the final goal in Manchester City's 4-0 win.

(Source: The Argus)

Arat Hosseini, a footballer in the making

It never occurred to Mohamed Hosseini that his son, Arat, who was born on 13 October 2013, would one day become a social media sensation. But that is precisely what he is now, as more than four million followers on Instagram can attest.

Still only six, Arat has become the talk of football fans everywhere thanks to the incredible skills that have prompted a host of football stars, including Lionel Messi, to praise his talent and signal a very promising future.

FIFA.com caught up with Arat's father, who discussed his son's talent, his expectations for him and his son's dream of becoming the best footballer in the world.

From gymnastics to football

Arat's talent is not limited to football. Anyone who sees his diminutive physique cannot fail to notice his toned stomach muscles and firm hands. Mohamed discovered that his son had unusually strong hands when he was three months old, which encouraged him to enroll Arat in gymnastics classes.

"When Arat was a little boy he was constantly moving and was always active. He started doing gymnastics even before I brought him to a small club. He was very enthusiastic. He was five at that time and I encouraged him and sought better opportunities for him. He's been always passionate about sports," Mohamed revealed.

Asked about the global fame his son achieved, he said: "Arat became well-known in Asia as a gymnast when he was very young. When he started playing football, more

people around the world started to watch him, and we got a chance to talk to many people including celebrities like DJ Khaled and Novak Djokovic. Arat is now considered a role model for kids, which is great."

Mohamed recognizes the pros and cons of fame, especially on social media, something he advises his son on.

"I talk to Arat about the positive responses we get to his videos, and I use that to motivate him to achieve his goals. However, at the same time it's very important to protect children from the downsides of social media. After all, he's still a child who is growing up and learning as education is very important for us," he said.

Looking forward

It appears that the massive popularity that Arat has achieved through his distinctive social media videos is just a step towards a bigger goal for father and son.

Asked about this, Mohammed said: "Arat wants to be the best player in the world. At the same time, we'll provide him with the best education and training and will take concrete steps in that direction."

As for his expectations for his six-year-old son, Mohamed said: "I'm sure he'll become a great player. He's very talented and self-motivated. It's a long journey and we'll maintain our focus to achieve our goal. He'll be the youngest player to appear at the World Cup."

"We're thinking about the future and the steps we can



take. Nothing will stop us. Arat loves school and football. He's currently training with the Liverpool FC Academy and wants to be the best player in the world. So, I'm doing all I can to help him," he added.

No one knows what the future holds for Arat and if he will manage to realize these dreams. But what is certain is that Arat's special talents have caught the attention of football fans the world over.

(Source: FIFA)

Iran changes league resumption date

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) has changed the resumption date of Iran Professional League.

The league was originally scheduled to resume on June 18 but it will start six days later.

The federation released a statement on Sunday and announced that the league will start on June 24 with the match between Foolad and Esteghlal.

"After the Asian Football Confederation announced the proposed match dates for the remaining matches of Round 2 in the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Asian Qualifiers, the Iran League Organization decided to start the competition on June 24 to give the teams more time for preparation. The health of the players is the organization's top priority since they are the country's assets," the statement reads.

With nine matches remaining, Persepolis sit top of the table 10 points ahead of Sepahan.

Iranian expert to teach wushu techniques in IWUF's online class

MNA — The International Wushu Federation has invited Mohammad Reza Pourgholami-Nejad to teach some techniques through an online class to wushu practitioners across the world.

Pourgholami-Nejad will hold a live class on Sunday, June 14, at 8:00 AM Beijing time, to talk about 'Taiji Ball Techniques and Workout', as reported by IWUF's website.

He is a Member of the Technical and Event Sub-Committee of the IWUF Technical Committee and a Member of the IWUF Grading Commission.

His talks come in the third week of online classes organized by the international federation amid the pandemic.

"During the global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, and in response to the call of wushu enthusiasts, the International Wushu Federation launched an Online Wushu Classroom Project on May 15, 2020, free of charge to all global wushu practitioners and the general public," according to a report by IWUF's website.

The full schedule of the classes is available at the IWUF's website.

Zob Ahn coach Radulovic will not return to Iran

Tasnim — Zob Ahn Montenegrin coach Miodrag Radulovic will not return to Isfahan.

With nine matches remaining, the Iranian football league is scheduled to resume on June 24.

"The borders between Serbia and Turkey are closed and there is no air transport as well due to Covid-19 outbreak. I have to find a friendly way to part company with Zob Ahn. Honestly, I like to continue my job in Iran but I cannot leave my country due to coronavirus," Radulovic said.

Zob Ahn sit 11th in Iran Professional League table.

Dragan Skocic likens Sardar Azmoun to snake

Iran national football team head coach Dragan Skocic has likened Sardar Azmoun to snake.

In an interview with Italian site Europacalcio.it, the Croatian coach has lauded the Iran international forward.

"We are talking about an excellent striker and a great person. He is truly devastating in the penalty area. Sardar is very dangerous behind the defensive line. He is like a snake when the sun shines: you believe that he is not interested in that phase of the game and that you don't pay attention, but instead, he strikes shortly afterwards," Skocic said.

Azmoun has been strongly linked with a move to Italian side Napoli but Skocic doesn't comment on the rumors.

"Napoli? I train Iran and don't comment on these rumors. I hope he can go and play in a great European team, because he deserves it," he added.

(Source: Europacalcio.it)

Giba named amongst top 100 athletes of 21st century

Brazil volleyball legend Gilberto 'Giba' Amauri de Godoy Filho, a three-time Olympic medallist and three-time world champion, has been named amongst the 'Top 100 male athletes of the 21st Century' by Spanish daily sports newspaper Marca.



The 43-year-old outside hitter lifted Brazil to a gold medal at the Athens 2004 Olympic Games and followed up with silver medals at Beijing 2008 and London 2012. He also boasts gold medals from the 2002, 2006 and 2010 FIVB World Championships.

Since 2016 he has been president of the FIVB Athletes Commission.

Giba featured prominently in the fifth installment of the Madrid daily's ongoing countdown of the Top 100.

Marca editors have taken into account the athletes' achievements and sports merits as well as their media impact in compiling the list as viewers are being engaged for the ranking of the 'Top 25'.

(Source: FIVB)

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The weakest person is he who is unable to secure a friend for himself, and weaker than him is he who loses his friend.

Imam Ali (AS)

Actor Shahab Hosseini on Turkey's Intl. Migration Film Festival panel

→1 Turkish filmmaker Nuri Bilge Ceylan, American actor Daniel Glover, Chinese actor Zheyuan Chen, British costume designer Sandy Powell, Danish director Lone Scherfig and Bosnian actor Emir Hadžihafizbegovic are the other members of the jury of the International Migration Film Festival, which will be held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Iranian actor Shahab Hosseini poses with the best actor award for the movie "The Salesman" at the Palme d'Or Winner Photocall during the 69th annual Cannes Film Festival at the Palais des Festivals on May 22, 2016 in Cannes, France. (Getty Images Europe/ Andreas Rentz)

The members of the jury will also hold master classes and workshops during the festival, which is scheduled to screen over 50 films.

The event will bring together hundreds of filmmakers, press members, participants from non-governmental organizations and academics from Turkey and around the world.

Cinema Organization of Iran, Emergency Medical Services team up to reopen movie theaters

A R T **TEHRAN** — The Cinema Organization of Iran (COI) and Iran's Emergency Medical Services have teamed up to educate theater owners and personnel on health protocols as the movie theaters are ready to reopen after the COVID-19 shutdown.

COI director Hossein Entezami and the Emergency Medical Services director Pirhossein Kulivand discussed the issue in a meeting held on Sunday.

Kulivand said that the Emergency Medical Services is fully prepared to increase the health knowledge of people and to collaborate with movie theater owners.

Entezami also said that he appreciated the efforts made by nurses, doctors and the Emergency Medical Services in the battle against the new virus and said that Iran's cinema will gratefully accept any bilateral cooperation.

On Saturday, President Hassan Rouhani said that the movie theaters and concert halls will resume activities with 50 percent of their capacity on June 21 after an over three-month-long closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

He made the remarks in a meeting held at the Coronavirus Combat and Prevention Headquarters, adding that it is necessary to observe healthcare protocols.

Earlier last week, COI announced 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.

The cinema goers were told to observe social distancing, while the employees were asked to wear face masks and plastic gloves.

Fever tests 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 headquarters.

In a letter sent earlier to President Hassan Rouhani, the Association of Iranian Theater Owners asked to lift the coronavirus restriction on cinemas, calling for reopening of the theaters across the country based on the health protocols during the pandemic.

In addition, the Cinema Organization of Iran has recently announced that Iranian cineastes can resume their activities in the near future.

DEFC to produce doc on Qajar businessman Amin al-Zarb

A R T **TEHRAN** — The **d e s k** Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC) plans to produce a documentary on the Qajar-era businessman Hajj Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavi (1872-1932) known as Amin al-Zarb.

Director Jamshid Bayat-Tork will direct the documentary, which explores the adventurous life of the businessman in addition to portraying the economic changes within Iranian society during the Qajar era.

Amir Kabir and Mirza Hossein Khan Sepahsalar, the prime ministers of Qajar king Nasser ad-Din Shah as well as the political activist Seyyed Jama'eddin Afghani were the three main characters who made great efforts in the development of the government, and Amin al-Zarb was the first businessman who became the first Iranian industrial investor, promoting entrepreneurship.

"The screenplay has been written by me in collaboration with Hoda Yusefi and we are planning to begin the shooting process provided that the health protocols permit," Bayat-Tork Said.

"The documents, images and paintings of the Qajar era will be our major sources, while we are also planning to reproduce the atmosphere of those years in our documentary," he added.

He said that he would like the film to be screened at the 14th Cinema Verite, Iran's major international festival for documentary cinema.

Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries,



This picture shows Persian businessman Hajj Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavi – Amin al-Zarb sitting in the center.

Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) will also collaborate with the DEFC in the production of this documentary.

Amin al-Zarb was educated in Tehran and France, and after his father's death in 1898, he inherited the title Amin al-Zarb. But he never played much of a role in the

administration of the mint, which from 1899 was supervised by English, and then Belgian advisers.

For almost a decade, however, he managed the business left to him by his father and added Tehran's first electrical generating plant and a small modern brick-making

factory to its assets.

During the Constitutional Revolution, he led a group of merchants to mediate between the court and the people taking sanctuary in the British Legation. Later he was elected to the first, seventh, and eight sessions of Majles.

Officials at UN meeting test positive for COVID-20 in "The World of Silence"

A R T **TEHRAN** — Qorban Mohammadpur, the **d e s k** Iranian director of the love story "Salam Mumbai", plans to make a comedy named "The World of Silence" in which officials attending a UN meeting test positive for COVID-20, which impairs the hearing of its victims.

He said on Saturday that he is writing the screenplay that mostly focuses on Iranian officials.

In "The World of Silence" a new viral disease named "COVID-20" is detected. The virus, which has been transferred from snakes to man, does not kill its victims; rather, they lose their hearing instead as a result. The virus spreads from New York during the General Assembly of the United Nations. Members of an Iranian delegation attending the meeting test positive for the virus and are no longer able to hear people. Finally, Ahmad Aslani, a top Iranian microbiologist, is assigned the task of researching the virus to make a vaccine for the disease.

The production of Mohammadpur's latest movie "Falling in

Love in Hanoi", a project between Iran and Vietnam, remained unfinished in March as members of the Iranian crew failed to get visas to Vietnam due to the new virus outbreak in the world.

He said that his crew is ready to resume their activities as soon as Vietnam lifts the travel restrictions.

He reached an agreement with several Vietnamese actors to join the cast. However, Mohammadpur said that it is not clear if they will be able to keep to the agreement due to the changes in the conditions.

"Falling in Love in Hanoi" is about a man named Ali who is suffering from depression ever since his fiancé was killed in an accident. Ali's parents decide to send him to Vietnam to visit a friend named Ahmad in order to change his mood but several events are waiting to happen for Ali when he arrives in Hanoi.

Mohammadpur made his previous films "Salam Mumbai" and "The Devil's Daughter" in India with casts of Iranian and Bollywood actors.



Director Qorban Mohammadpur in an undated photo. (Mehr/Ashraf Tabatabai)

Kurdsat to broadcast Iranian TV series "Accomplice"



Parviz Parastui (R) and Habib Rezai act in a scene from Iranian TV series "Accomplice" by director Mostafa Kiai.

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian **d e s k** TV series "Accomplice" by director Mostafa Kiai will be broadcasted on Kurdsat, the Kurdish-language satellite television station in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Starring Parviz Parastui, Hedyeh Tehrani, Mohsen Kiai and Habib Rezai, the series centers on the big Saburi family with their life stories filled with secrets and mysteries.

The TV series came exclusively on the home video network in Iran last year, 13 episodes of which have so far been distributed.

"Accomplice" is the second Iranian TV series after "Shahzad" to have had the worldwide recognition of being aired on

international channels.

The popular romantic and historical Iranian series "Shahzad" by filmmaker Hassan Fat'hi was broadcasted in 2019 on Russia-K, a Russian television network that is also known as Russia-Cultura.

Written by Fat'hi and Naghmeh Samini, "Shahzad" tells the story of a beautiful young woman, Shahzad, who is getting married to Farhad during the coup d'état against Mohammad Mossadeq's government in 1953.

During the coup chaos, Farhad gets arrested and sentenced to death, while Shahzad is willing to accept any conditions to set him free.

New Persian translation of Slavoj Zizek "Pandemic!" to appear soon

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — A new Persian translation of Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Zizek's book "Pandemic! COVID-19 Shakes the World" will be published in Tehran in the near future.

Shahriar Paknia is the translator of the book, which is due to be published by the Naqde Farhang Publications in Tehran.

One of the major themes of the book is to recognize the seriousness of the situation and its possible outcomes.

Written with his love of analogies in popular culture, Zizek provides a concise and provocative snapshot of the crisis as it widens, engulfing the world.

He informs the readers that the only possible way to face the challenge is to realize that world leaders must unite and

develop a global health care system presided over by the World Health Organization.

Zizek is a cultural philosopher. He is a senior researcher at the Institute for Sociology and Philosophy at the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia, and the Global Distinguished Professor of German at New York University.

Kamran Baradaran has also rendered the book into Persian in collaboration with Mohsen Esfahanizadeh and Milad Ravanbakhsh, and this translation is scheduled to be published soon.

In addition, another Persian translation of "Pandemic! COVID-19 Shakes the World" by Hushmand Dehqan is due to be published by the Sedaye Moaser Publications in Tehran.

Heinz Janisch's story from "The Clever Cat" republished in Persian



A copy of the Persian translation of Austrian children's writer Heinz Janisch's "The Story of the Red Lamb and the Sad Princess".

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — The **d e s k** fourth edition of the Persian translation of a story from Austrian children's writer Heinz Janisch's book "The Clever Cat" ("Die Kluge Katze") has been published in Tehran.

The Persian translation of the story under the title of "The Story of the Red Lamb and the Sad Princess" was published for the first time in 2008, the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, which is the publisher of the book, announced on Sunday.

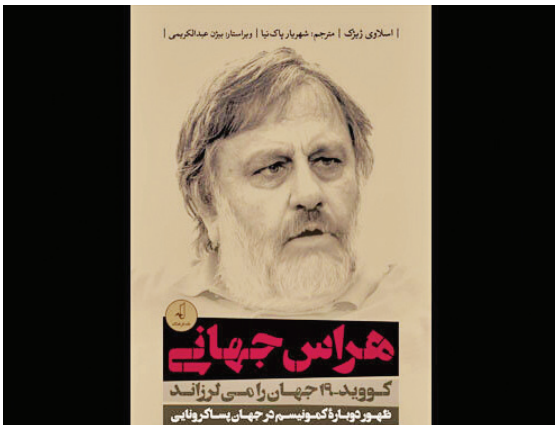
Siamak Golshiri is the translator of

the book that tells the story of a princess who has lost her mother long ago. She really feels sad until she meets a shepherd and with his red lamb.

The book has been illustrated by Iranian artists Narges Mohammadi.

"The Clever Cat" also carries other stories from a wide variety of countries and cultures.

Janisch studied German and journalism in Vienna. He is a journalist for radio and has published numerous stories, poems and picture books. His works are characterized by a lyrical tone and have been translated into many languages.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Slavoj Zizek's "Pandemic! COVID-19 Shakes the World" by Shahriar Paknia.