



**IRGC says ready to help Judiciary in corruption fight** **3**



**Certainly anti-racism protests are driven by “sense of quest for truth”** **7**



**Tough task ahead of Iran to qualify for World Cup: Dragan Skocic** **11**



**Photographer Heidarifar’s work on faith wins award at HIPA competition** **12**

# Iran ‘has earned plaudits’ to ease COVID impact on tourism

See page 8

File photo

United Nations World Tourism Organization Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili



**ARTICLE**  
**Ivo Freijesen**  
UNHCR representative to Iran

## World Refugee Day: time for rally around Iran on humanitarian purposes

As I read the new Global Trends report issued last week from UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, I cannot help but feel worried. 1 in 97 people worldwide has been forced to flee their homes. This represents 79.5 million people forcibly displaced in and out of their countries at the end of 2019 – an unprecedented number.

Since December 1979, almost unending waves of conflict, violence and ensuing social and economic hardships have forced Afghan men, women and children to seek safety in other countries, including in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Iran is the 8th largest hosting country for displaced people, counting close to one million refugees – most of whom are Afghans.

The humanitarian needs of refugees in Iran are high, but numbers alone cannot convey the scope and scale of the situation; rather, is better measured in the lives and fates of real people.

Real people like Parisa, who arrived in Iran as a 6-year-old child when her parents fled Afghanistan following threats to their lives. For years, Parisa could not go to school like other children her age; her family barely had enough to live on, let alone cover school fees. Parisa’s brother dropped out of school at age 15 to start working as a construction worker, but even that was not enough.

This is the reality for many refugee families around the world.

In the last years, Iran more and more included refugees, undocumented or passport-holders in their national systems. All children, for example, can attend public schools and follow the national curriculum, without additional fees. Thanks to these progressive and inclusive policies, Parisa got her first chance of a proper education.

For more than 40 years, the Government and people of Iran have shown incredible hospitality and generosity to Afghans like Parisa – seen in very few refugee-hosting countries around the world. **→9**

## Some \$280m spent annually on rare diseases treatment

**TEHRAN** – The Iranian government spends a total of 12 trillion rials (nearly \$280 million at an official rate of 42,000 rials) to provide medical treatment and pharmaceutical services to the patients suffering from rare diseases, Mehdi Shadnough, head of the Health Ministry’s center for transplantation and disease management, has announced.

Currently, 11 groups of rare diseases patients are under the special support of the Ministry of Health, including thalassemia, hemophilia, dialysis (blood and peritoneal), multiple sclerosis (MS), epidermolysis bullosa (EB), mucopolysaccharidosis (MPS), spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), autism, cystic fibrosis, transplantation, and cancers, he explained.

**■ 300 rare diseases diagnosed in Iran**

Hamidreza Adraki, the Rare Diseases Foundation of Iran director said in June 2019 that 300

types of rare diseases have been diagnosed in Iran.

Rare disease or disorder is defined as rare when it affects 2 in 10,000 people.

Genetic disorder is the most important reason for rare diseases in Iran, which is caused by cousin marriage.

Rare diseases are often serious, chronic, and life-threatening. At present, more than 6000 rare diseases are known; around 80% of them are genetic disorders and half of them occur during childhood.

Rare diseases are associated with a high psychological burden for the patient but they can also have a major impact on a patient’s family. In addition to the health burden on patients, few of these diseases have an effective drug treatment available. This is because the drugs to treat rare diseases (called orphan drugs) are not commercially viable for pharmaceutical companies, due to the small number of patients per disease. **→9**

## U.S. anti-racist protests: Trump promises to arrest anyone pulling down statues

By staff & agencies

U.S. President Donald Trump has promised to arrest anyone caught trying to tear down monuments or statues, threatening they could be jailed for 10 years.

Trump added the new order applies “retroactively” so those who previously participated in bringing down memorials could be arrested.

“I have authorized the federal government to arrest anyone who vandalizes or destroys any monument, statue or other such federal property in the U.S. with up to 10 years in prison, per the Veteran’s Memorial Preservation Act,” the president said in a tweet on Tuesday.

A wave of nationwide rallies calling for racial justice has swept across the United States since May 25 when George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, was killed by a white police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Since then, monuments from the civil war era

or associated with slavery and the colonization of Native Americans by Europeans have been targeted for destruction.

Trump’s order on Tuesday follows a statement by Republican Senator Tom Cotton, from the state of Arkansas, who demanded the federal government take action against the pulling down of statues of historical American figures.

“Violent mobs have, in recent weeks, defaced and torn down statues, memorials, and monuments around our country,” Cotton said in a letter to Attorney General William Barr.

“These criminals masquerade as protesters exercising their lawful right to peaceably assemble, but there can be no right to destroy public or private property.”

Cotton has taken a hard line against the anti-racism demonstrations that have gripped the U.S. after the police killings of Floyd and Rayshard Brooks in Atlanta. **→10**

## UNHRC condemns Israeli annexation plans, calls for report on its impact

The United Nations Human Rights Council condemned pending Israeli annexation plans, even as it approved the annual settlements resolution with a 36-2 vote and nine abstentions, as it wrapped up its 43rd session in Geneva on Monday.

It also called on UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet to compile a report on the impact of annexation, to be delivered at the UNHRC’s 46th session next March, J post reported.

“We have to stand firm and say ‘no’ to what

Israel and America are doing in this area. It is flagrantly denying rights and flying in the face of international law,” PLO Ambassador Ibrahim Khraishi told the council.

The controversial settlements resolution, which has been used in past years to call for the creation of a database of businesses operating in Jewish areas located over the pre-1967 lines, continued to call for a boycott of such businesses and to warn that those who engaged in such activity were liable to be penalized under international law.

The controversial settlements resolution, which has been used in past years to call for the creation of a database of businesses operating in Jewish areas located over the pre-1967 lines, continued to call for a boycott of such businesses and to warn that those who engaged in such activity were liable to be penalized under international law.

The text also expressed its concern over settler violence and called for the confiscation of settlers’ arms. **→10**



© IRNA / Ahmad Moeiniham

## Iran Hall of Fame inaugurated

**TEHRAN** – Iran’s Hall of Fame was inaugurated on Tuesday in the presence of Sports and Youths Minister Masoud Soltanifar in Tehran.

The memorial bust of Iranian sports champions will be installed in the hall in the coming weeks.

On Tuesday, the busts of six Olympic and Paralympic champions were unveiled in Tehran’s Hall of Fame. **→11**

## Iran will not forget China’s stance on IAEA resolution: diplomat

**TEHRAN** – Tehran’s Ambassador to China, Mohammad Keshavarzadeh, has said that Iran will not forget China’s stance on a resolution by the International Atomic Energy Agency’s Board of Governors.

“China wants the United States to return to the JCPOA [the 2015 nuclear deal] and the UNSC resolution. The recent stance of China on resolution of the agency [the IAEA] was firm and memorable. We will not forget that,” he tweeted on Monday.

He also posted a tweet by a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman who said, “E3 Foreign Ministers released a joint statement on Iran and upholding JCPOA commitments. Having quit JCPOA, the US has no right to ask the UNSC to trigger sanctions snapback. We urge the US to return to JCPOA and the UNSC resolution.”

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian has said that Beijing does not support a resolution by the IAEA which just increases tension.

In a press conference, Zhao urged the IAEA to act unbiasedly, IRNA reported on Monday.

The IAEA is expected to adopt a professional position and support Iran’s peaceful nuclear activities, he noted.

The 35-member IAEA board passed the resolution on Friday, demanding access to two old places they claim nuclear work may have been done there.

Nine countries out 35 members to the board did not vote for the resolution. China and Russia voted against the resolution and Thailand, Mongolia, Niger, South Africa, India, Pakistan and the Republic of Azerbaijan abstained to vote. **→2**



## Death of Iran's fugitive judge is violence-related: report

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The Bucharest prosecutor's office released a report on Tuesday according to which the fugitive Iranian judge Gholamreza Mansouri has died from violence and also in haste.



The prosecutor's office said the cause of the death become clear after an autopsy.

It said Mansouri's death was due to a blow by a hard object which did not occur in a natural state, the report said, according to the Mizan online.

Tehran on Friday confirmed the death of Mansouri, who was accused of corruption and taking more than \$500,000 in bribes, in Romania.

It was reported on Friday that Mansouri has been found dead at a hotel in Romania where he had been staying. It was claimed that he had apparently committed suicide.

Iran's Prosecutor General Mohammad Jafar Montazeri has asked his Romanian counterpart to launch a serious investigation into the death of the fugitive judge.

## Iranian students voice solidarity with American people's protest against U.S. govt. systematic oppression

**TEHRAN (FNA)** — Iranian students in a letter underlined support and solidarity with the American people who are suppressed by the cruelties and racism of the hegemonic system in Washington.

"It's been a few days since another old wound in American society has opened, while the people of the United States are calling for an end to the systematic racism of the U.S. government. The violent machine of this system is destroying human beings and has started oppressing its people," the letter addressed to the freedom-seeking young American people said on Tuesday.

"Today, the performance of this system must be questioned; A system that claims to defend human rights and condemns other countries for violating human rights; But they haven't even slightly figured it out themselves. We should ask the government, which claims to respect human rights, dictates human rights for others and intervenes in other countries under this alibi, whether the right to live and survive is a human right or not. This system, which claims to promote human equality in all aspects, oppresses other countries under the pretext of discrimination between individuals, while racism is its prominent property," it added.

"A government that claims to fight for freedom in the world; relentlessly suppresses its protesters, the number of detainees in recent events has exceeded 10,000 and the number of casualties hasn't been announced yet. The U.S. president considers the repression of his country's protesters in the most horrific way possible as a natural right of the country to restore peace; however, he has always tried to provoke protests in other countries and has condemned the slightest conflicts with protesters."

"Now, we must clarify the vague spots in this government, the regime, born out of the bloodshed of the native Americans, grew up with the exploitation and slavery of African-Americans, and years of invading other countries under false pretenses, violating their independence and human rights, and killing millions of people," the letter said.

"Today it must get clear, what do those who suffocate their citizens inflict upon the poor people of other parts of the world, from Vietnam to Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan, which has resulted in nothing but insecurity in these countries," it added.

The letter noted that the footages of the U.S. police's brutality is being broadcasted in different parts of the world, and the unjust knee of these oppressors is choking the throats of thousands of poor children, women and men, and is suffocating them, adding, "The roots of this nasty violence are that these oppressors show their own advantages and disadvantages as the criterion of good and evil, and human rights and moral values are ignored."

"Today, we are facing a system and an intellectual foundation that wants to own the future of the world; while he does not give his own people the right to equally live."

"Today, we are witnessing the inefficiency of Western civilization and the capitalist system to meet human needs, a civilization that, contrary to its claims, has not been able to meet human worldly needs; and it measures human beings like goods based on profit and loss. The inability and the way they're dealing with the coronavirus testifies it," the letter said.

"Today we are witnessing an identity crisis that stems from the inability to meet human needs. The bitterness of these events will be twofold; if the need to change these views and principles isn't felt. Undoubtedly, we need to find a notion that evaluates human beings based on their virtues; Not the color of their skin."

"Whenever the right-seeking people have joined the protests and fought instead of accepting oppression, oppression has always been doomed to failure. This struggle will continue as long as there is the slightest oppression in the world, and we believe that no government will survive with oppression," the letter said.

"Who can deny the power of the youth for change and progress? Changing today and building a bright future is at their hands. We, the Iranian students, declare our solidarity with the Americans' Movement. Isn't it time to free ourselves from the ropes of these Humanoids, to break the walls, and to return to our origins together. With Hopes for the day of the final victory of the right and reign of the poor on the earth," the letter concluded.

Massive protests erupted across the United States — and beyond — after the police killing of George Floyd. Demonstrators are denouncing police violence in minority communities and demanding that officers who abuse their power be held accountable.

# Iran-China 25-year comprehensive plan for co-op proves failure of efforts to isolate Iran: government

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Government spokesman Ali Rabiei said on Tuesday that Iran and China have drafted a 25-year comprehensive plan for economic cooperation which proves a failure by the United States to isolate the Islamic Republic.

"This plan proves failure of the United States' policies to isolate Iran, sever Iran's relations with the international community and also to harm Iran's will to expand relations with other countries," Rabiei said during a press conference.

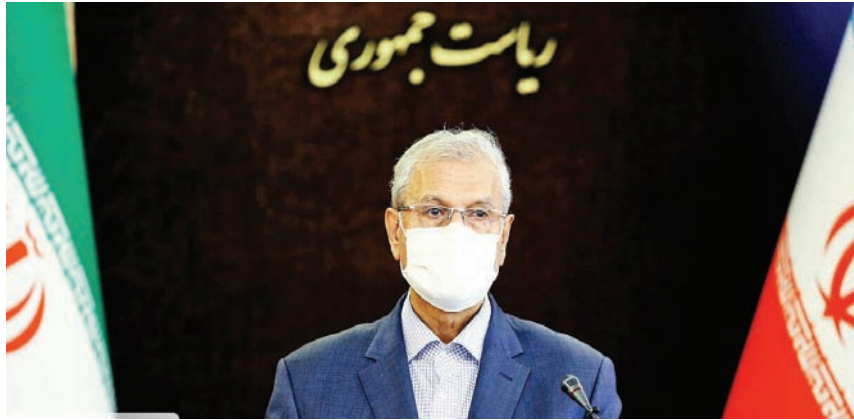
He said that the 25-year plan is based on a win-win approach which "heralds long term cooperation".

"Recognizing cultural commonalities, encouraging multilateralism, supporting equal rights of the nations and insisting on domestic development are parts of this plan," the government spokesman explained.

In a meeting on Sunday, the cabinet of ministers approved the final draft of the 25-year comprehensive cooperation plan between Iran and China.

Rouhani said the strategic partnership between the two countries is based on a win-win approach.

"This cooperation is a ground for Iran and China's participation in basic projects



and development of infrastructure, including the large 'Belt and Road' initiative, and an opportunity to attract investment in various economic fields, including industry, tourism, information technology and communication," the presidential website quoted Rouhani as saying.

**'Anti-Iran resolution of IAEA shows weakness of Europeans'**

Rabiei also said that an anti-Iran resolution by the Board of Governors at the International Atomic Energy Agency shows the Europeans' weakness in the face of

the U.S. bullying.

He added that Europe is giving in to the U.S. pressure which will affect its future in the world.

The 35-member IAEA board passed a resolution on Friday demanding access to two old places it claimed nuclear work may have been done there.

China and Russia opposed the resolution and seven countries including South Africa, Niger, Mongolia, Thailand, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Pakistan and India also abstained to vote.

## Economy is parliament's priority, Ghalibaf says

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Majlis Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said on Tuesday that solving economic problems and reforming budget structure are parliament's priorities.

"We assure our dear people that economy and the people's livelihood are priorities in the 11th parliament," he said at an open session of the parliament.

In a message to Iran's new parliament in May,

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei emphasized that attention must be paid to economy.

"In the area of economy, we have not got a favorable grade in achieving justice in the 'decade of progress and justice'.... This unwanted reality must make all prioritize livelihood of the poor classes of the society," the Leader said in his message to the parliament.

The Leader noted that economy and culture are the top priorities of the country. "Currently, economy and culture are on the top list of the country's priorities."

To solve economic problems, the Leader suggested, it is necessary to revise policies to boost employment, production, increase value of national currency and tame the inflation. He added that the general policies of the resistance economy must also be given priority.

## Iran will not forget China's stance on IAEA resolution: diplomat

**1 →** Iran's new parliament has issued a statement strongly condemning the resolution, asking the government to stop implementing the Additional Protocol to the NPT.

"The Islamic Consultative Assembly strongly condemns resolution of the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors which was proposed by three European countries of England, France and Germany under the pressure of the ruling regime in the United States and the fake Zionist regime. It [the parliament] considers the resolution another example of structural discrimination by the international agency," the statement read.

The statement was signed by 240 MPs in the 290-seat parliament.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Friday that the resolution is "unacceptable" and "counter-productive".

"Issuance of the board of governors' resolution is totally counterproductive and disappointing when the Islamic Republic of Iran has had cooperation with the agency at the highest level," Mousavi said in a statement.

He added, "Exaggerating the agency's requests by certain governments with the United States at top of them while

the basis of such requests can be questioned, is attempt to cause a new crisis on the path of Iran and the agency's cooperation."

He urged the members of the board of governors to be vigilant about the U.S. and Zionist regime of Israel's attempts to reopen fake old dossiers whose incredibility had been proven.

Mousavi strongly condemned the UK, France and Germany's move in drafting the resolution.

"These three governments, who have been unable to implement their obligations under the JCPOA, took this action to escape forward and evade their responsibilities under the JCPOA," he said.

Elsewhere, Mousavi said the resolution is an excessive demand by the U.S. and the three European countries which will not be accepted by Iran.

Supporters of the resolution will be responsible for consequences of the tension in Iran-IAEA relations, he warned.

Immediately after the ratification of the resolution, Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's ambassador to the IAEA, said, "Iran categorically deplores this resolution and will take appropriate action in response, the repercussions of which



would be upon the sponsors of this resolution."

Gharibabadi also said, "Considering the extensive level of constructive cooperation between Iran and the Agency and simply overlooking this level of cooperation, adoption of this resolution aimed at requesting Iran to cooperate with the Agency is deeply disappointing."

## Syrian FM calls fuel delivery to Venezuela a great step

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Mualllem said on Tuesday that Iran's action in sending fuel to Venezuela was a very "great step".

Five Iranian oil tankers by the names of Petunia, Forest, Faxon, Clavel, and Fortune carried fuel to Venezuela despite the United States' sanctions. The last of them entered Venezuelan waters on June 1.

The tankers carried 1,520,000 barrels of gasoline and diesel fuel to Venezuela. There was also a team of Iranian engineers and specialists from the oil industry on board heading for the country.

In a message on June 8, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei praised the crew of the Iranian tankers that shipped fuel to Venezuela, saying, "You did a great job. Your move was jihadi. You brought glory to the country."

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has said that Russia, China, Iran, and Cuba are real friends of Venezuela as they provide all-round help to Caracas.

"Humanitarian aid is coming from China, Russia, Iran, and Cuba. They are [Venezuela's] true friends," TASS quoted him as saying in a speech broadcast by the state TV on June 7.

Conn Hallinan, a columnist for Foreign Policy In Focus, has said that arrival of Iranian fuel tankers in Venezuelan waters was a crack in wall of the United States' illegal sanctions against Caracas.

This action is a step in reducing "pressure" on Venezuela, Hallinan said, adding the Venezuelan people were in dire need of fuel.

This shipment brought revenue for Iran and from this point of view it was "a crack in wall of the United States' illegal sanctions," he told IRNA in an interview published on June 1.

Iranian Ambassador to Venezuela Hojat Soltani has also said that the United States' unilateral sanctions have lost their efficiency.

"The United States' unilateral sanctions against Venezuela, Iran and a number of other countries have lost efficiency," IRNA quoted him as saying in an interview with



the Al-Alam news network.

He also said that arrival of Iranian oil tankers in the Venezuelan waters was an "international victory".

Venezuela's envoy to the UN Jorge Vale-ro has said that Iran and Venezuela will continue fighting U.S. President Donald Trump's hostile policies.

"The people of Iran and Venezuela are

two brotherly nations and will continue their war against Trump's hostile policies," ISNA quoted him as saying on June 9 in an interview with Al Mayadeen TV channel.

**'Iran's fuel delivery to Venezuela makes Trump surrender'**

In an article published by the Raialyoum newspaper on Tuesday, it is said that fuel and food delivery to Venezuela by Iran has made Trump surrender.

Tehran challenged Trump and his threats by this action, the newspaper said, according to ISNA.

A sixth Iranian vessel has entered Venezuela's territorial waters, carrying a cargo of food after the Islamic Republic supplied massive cargos of fuel to the Latin American nation in defiance of the United States' sanctions targeting both nations, Press TV reported.

"The Golsan will arrive carrying food to open the first Iranian supermarket in Venezuela," the Iranian embassy in Caracas wrote on its Twitter account, referring to the vessel by its name.

## Iran not to send pilgrims to Hajj

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Representative of the Leader in Hajj and Pilgrimage Affairs and the Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization issued a joint statement on Tuesday announcing Iran will not send pilgrims to Hajj in the current year.

It came as Saudi Arabia announced the annual pilgrimage would be restricted to a very limited numbers of pilgrims of all nationalities who are already residing in the country.

A statement from the ministry said that as Covid-19 cases continue to grow globally, and because of the risks of coronavirus spreading in crowded spaces and from other countries, the Hajj will "take place this year with a limited number of pilgrims from all nationalities residing in Saudi Arabia only, who are willing to perform Hajj," CNN reported.

"This decision is taken to ensure Hajj is safely performed while committing to all preventive measures to protect Muslims and adhere strictly to the teachings of Islam



in preserving our health and safety," according to the statement.

The ministry statement cited the Saudi Ministry of

Health as saying that the risks from coronavirus "are expected to grow further, but there is no vaccine available yet for those infected by the disease. Global health security needs to be preserved."

The ministry said it would be challenging to maintain a proper distance in crowded areas and prevent the spread of the virus.

Based on these concerns, the Hajj Ministry statement said, "the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whose top priority is to always provide care to enable Muslims to perform Hajj or Umrah rites safely and securely, has taken severe precautionary measures to protect pilgrims since the beginning of Covid-19."

Saudi Arabia has recorded more than 160,000 cases and 1,307 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.

More than two million Muslims performed Hajj last year, and of those, more than 1.8 million pilgrims traveled to Saudi Arabia from abroad to take part.



# Russia rebukes Europe for escalating tensions against Iran

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova has rebuked the UK, France, and Germany for introducing an anti-Iran resolution, saying such measures are rooted in “destructive” measures adopted by the United States against the Iran nuclear deal.

According to Press TV, Zakharova said on Monday that the European trio’s actions fueling tensions around Iran’s nuclear activities at the UN atomic watchdog contradicted their claims of commitment to the nuclear agreement – officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

“Reassurances of the British, German and French colleagues that they are committed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear program and are looking for ways to minimize negative effects of American sanctions against Iran run counter to their actions to heighten tensions surrounding the Iranian nuclear program in the IAEA,” she said, referring to the anti-Iran resolution, which was passed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors on Friday.

The Russian diplomat blamed Washington’s “destructive” measures for impeding the implementation of the JCPOA.

“The root cause of all difficulties and faults in the process of implementation of the Iranian nuclear deal has been and remains the destructive actions of the United States who unilaterally quit the JCPOA and to this day continues to systematically violate demands of UN Security Council Resolution 2231,” she pointed out.

The 35-member IAEA board demanded access to two old places they claim nuclear



work may have been done there.

Nine countries out of 35 members to the IAEA board did not vote for the resolution. China and Russia voted against the resolution and Thailand, Mongolia, Niger, South Africa, India, Pakistan and the Republic of Azerbaijan abstained to vote.

Zakharova pointed out that the IAEA representatives’ access to Iranian nuclear facilities is possible within the framework of existing standard procedures.

“We are certain that all questions arising, including the agreement of access to facilities that the agency is interested in, could be resolved in the framework of standard procedures of cooperation between states and the IAEA Secretariat.”

“It is not coincidental that the resolu-

tion, in the end, was not supported by states representing more than half of the world’s population, including two UN Security Council permanent members,” she added.

The Russian diplomat maintained that Moscow and Beijing had previously warned the resolution’s sponsors that it would be counterproductive.

“We repeatedly urged against playing up to backers of the policy of maximum pressure on Iran,” she said.

**■ China says does not approve of incendiary actions**

Also on Monday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian voiced his country’s opposition to the resolution, saying China does not approve of actions that escalate the situation.

“China supports the IAEA in playing its role in an objective, professional and neutral manner in verifying Iran’s compliance with its safeguards obligations,” he said during a press conference. “We are against politicizing its work.”

“The IAEA explicitly states that the safeguards issue is neither urgent nor poses a proliferation risk,” he explained, adding, “The Iranian side also expressed its clear wish to resolve issues through dialogue with the agency. Under such circumstances, China does not approve of actions that artificially exacerbate tensions and escalate the situation.”

The Chinese diplomat expressed the hope that relevant parties will remain calm, exercise restraint, and support Iran and the IAEA in resolving differences through dialogue and cooperation.

He added, “China’s unwavering aim is to uphold the JCPOA, multilateralism, peace, and stability in the Middle East, and the international order based on international law. We stand ready to work closely with relevant sides for the political and diplomatic settlement of the Iranian nuclear issues.”

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

Iran remained fully compliant with the JCPOA for an entire year. However, in May 2019, Iran began to reduce its JCPOA commitments under Articles 26 and 36 of the deal covering Tehran’s legal rights, citing the other parties’ failure to compensate for the U.S. sanctions.

## Iran, Afghanistan agree to strengthen regional co-op, border security

### Tehran, Kabul determined to prevent fatal incidents

**1→** and the Iranian side informed the Afghan side of progress in investigations, and both sides agreed to adopt measures to prevent the occurrence of such incidents,” read part of the statement.

The following is the full transcript of the statement:

In the Name of God  
Joint Statement from the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran

Tehran

Monday, June 22, 2020

Mohammad Hanif Atmar, the honorable caretaker of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, visited Tehran at the head of a high-ranking delegation on June 21, 2020, for an official two-day visit. During the trip, Mr. Atmar and the accompanying delegation held meetings with the Islamic Republic of Iran’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Minister of Interior, Minister of Energy, and Minister of Cooperatives, Labour, and Social Welfare.

In the meetings, the two sides discussed the expansion of relations between the two countries in various fields within the framework of eight working committees, including the committees on the comprehensive document, legalization of residence of nationals, border cooperation, labor, water, cultural cooperation, energy, and health.

The two sides reached the following conclusions:

1. In order to institutionalize and organize the bilateral relations, the two sides agreed on the necessity of proceeding with the negotiations to finalize the comprehensive document on strategic cooperation between the two countries and preparing the document for signature by the Presidents within three months.

2. The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomed the process of peace under the ownership and guidance of the Afghan government and people, and expressed readiness to employ its capacity and capabilities to facilitate the process of intra-Afghan negotiations and to host the negotiations at the request of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

3. The two sides emphasized the need to reduce violence in Afghanistan with the purpose of building trust and creating a positive atmosphere in order to launch the intra-Afghan negotiations as soon as possible, achieve a lasting ceasefire, and establish sustainable peace.

4. Considering the significance of regional and international consensus on the establishment of peace and security in Afghanistan, the two sides stressed the need to strengthen the regional and international cooperation and consultations and activate the capacities available in the region with the purpose of facilitating the negotiations and supporting the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan’s establishment. As a result, they agreed about the necessity for the formation of a regional initiative pivoting on Afghanistan and participation of



**“Considering the significance of regional and international consensus on the establishment of peace and security in Afghanistan, the two sides stressed the need to strengthen the regional and international cooperation and consultations and activate the capacities available in the region with the purpose of facilitating the negotiations and supporting the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan’s establishment.”**

the neighboring countries and partnership of the other influential countries and the role of the United Nations in supporting the intra-Afghan peace process.

5. The two sides touched on the good cooperation and coordination between the two countries in the international circles, the issues of mutual interest, and the common concerns, including human rights and protecting the rights of nationals, and stressed the need to proceed with the cooperation in future.

6. The two sides stressed the necessity of strengthening cooperation in the media sectors in order to provide information and increase the level of mutual understanding between public opinion in the two countries. In this regard, media cooperation between the two countries will grow in the future.

7. Considering the abundant commonalities between the two countries in the historical-civilizational sphere, it was decided that the Islamic Republic of Iran’s Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and the Islamic Republic of

Afghanistan’s Ministry of Information and Culture, and also the Islamic Republic of Iran’s Ministry of Education and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan’s Ministry of Education should take the necessary measures to carry out joint programs in the area of the common heritage of language, religion and culture, as well as educational cooperation, and to devise and exchange the documents on these programs and cooperation.

8. The two sides held detailed discussions about the recent incidents that have caused human fatalities, and the Iranian side informed the Afghan side of progress in investigations, and both sides agreed to adopt measures to prevent the occurrence of such incidents.

9. The security-frontier committee and the committee on legalization of residence of nationals of the two countries on each other’s soil were assigned to adopt the necessary measures to ensure the security of the common frontier in order to prevent illegal travels, human trafficking, and smuggling. In this regard, the two sides highlighted the need for the Afghan security forces to be present in the border outposts emptied in Afghanistan, and for the Islamic Republic of Iran to facilitate issuing visas.

10. In order to facilitate the travels of nationals, means of transport, and commodities between the two countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran’s Ministry of Health and Medical Education and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan’s Ministry of Public Health signed a memorandum of understanding during Mr. Atmar’s visit for mutual cooperation in observing the international health regulations at the border crossings (road, rail, air, and sea routes).

11. The two sides declared that, within the framework of the comprehensive document on strategic cooperation, they would sign a bilateral agreement to organize the legal presence of Afghan labor force in the Islamic Republic of Iran and issue the necessary permits for the presence of economic activists and expert forces of the two countries in Iran and Afghanistan.

12. The two sides stressed the need for the border guards of the two countries to monitor and control the common borders strictly and effectively and undertook to prevent illegal border-crossing, human trafficking, and smuggling of drugs and any other items into the territory of each other.

13. The two sides agreed on regional and multilateral economic-business cooperation, including in the sphere of transit and transportation, and highlighted the role of Chabahar Port as the driving engine of trade-transit cooperation in the region.

14. The two sides also stressed the necessity of providing welfare facilities at the border ports/terminals, and, specifically, agreed to take joint action as soon as possible to repair the infrastructure and the asphalt road for motor vehicles at the Dogharoun border crossing.

15. The two sides agreed to proceed with cooperation in the energy sector, particularly the renewable energies.

## New sanctions on Syria shows defeat of enemies in military war: Ghalibaf

**TEHRAN (MNA)** — Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf has said that imposition of new sanctions against Damascus is indicator of enemies’ defeat in the military war against Syria.

He made the remarks in his meeting with Syrian Ambassador to Iran Adnan Hassan Mahmoud in Tehran on Monday.

Ghalibaf considered the reason behind imposition of economic sanctions against Syrian people [under the so-called Caesar Act] as failure of enemies in the military and security war.

The history shows that Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria have always had a

deep and inseparable bond which stems from the beliefs of people of the two countries, he said, adding, “Iran has always considered Syria to be in the front line of the Resistance Front. This issue began with the glorious victory of the Islamic Revolution and has become stronger with the elapse of time.”

“Today, we are witnessing that enemies of Syria, Iran and Islamic Ummah are disappointed. If economic sanctions have been imposed against Syria, it is because that enemies have failed militarily,” Iranian Parliament speaker stressed.

Syrian Ambassador to Iran Adnan

Hassan Mahmoud in Tehran, for his part, pointed to the bravery and outstanding role of martyr Lt. Gen. Soleimani in the fight against terrorism and added, “all we know the key and constructive role of martyr Gen. Soleimani in Syria which was unique of its kind and we hope that his path will be continued by IRGC Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Ghaani.”

He endeared the name and memory of martyr Gen. Soleimani and said, “martyr Soleimani donated his pure blood for preserving the Axis of Resistance and we will continue his path with perseverance.”



## IRGC says ready to help Judiciary in corruption fight

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has voiced his forces’ readiness to help the Judiciary in ensuring security, fighting corruption, and punishing criminals.

In a message to Judiciary Chief Ebrahim Raisi on Monday, Major General Hossein Salami lauded the top judge for launching a battle against corruption and said such efforts have built public trust in the establishment’s resolve to defend the oppressed.



The IRGC is fully prepared for cooperation with the Judiciary in ensuring public health and security, promoting justice and fighting corruption, Tasnim quoted Salami as saying.

Salami made the remarks while marking the start of Judiciary Week. He called the Judiciary one of the most important pillars of the Islamic Republic in defending the Islamic Revolution’s ideals and values.

Since August 2018, the Judiciary has been holding public trials of individuals involved in major economic corruption cases.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has permitted the Judiciary to take special measures in order to confront economic corruption and called for “swift and just” legal action against financial crimes.

The Leader has described the “outright and unequivocal” approach toward economic corruption as one of the Judiciary’s major duties, stressing that confronting the corrupt must be decisive and effective.

In one of its high-profile cases, the Judiciary had Gholamreza Mansouri — a fugitive judge accused of corruption and taking more than \$500,000 in bribes — arrested in Romania earlier this month.

However, Mansouri was found dead of apparent suicide on Friday at a hotel in Romania where he had been staying.

He was a co-defendant in a major financial corruption trial involving several senior judges accused of embezzlement and bribery.

Iran has officially asked Romania to launch a serious investigation into Mansouri’s death.

“We are awaiting the official report of the cause of this incident and we ask Romanian authorities to officially inform us of the precise cause of this incident,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Friday.

## Cooperating with Trump ‘unconstructive’, Iran tells Australia

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian Parliament speaker, has said Australia’s cooperation with U.S. President Donald Trump’s “illogical policies” will not be conducive to regional security.

In a Tuesday meeting with Australia’s ambassador to Tehran, Lyndall Sachs, Amir Abdollahian said Iran is aware of U.S.-Australia ties but regards as “unconstructive” Australia’s cooperation with the U.S.-led military coalition in West Asia, Mehr reported.



On July 2019, the U.S. proposed a coalition plan to protect shipping in the Persian Gulf. Mike Pompeo, the U.S. secretary of state, invited U.S. allies such as Britain, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, and Australia to join the coalition. Australia and some other countries joined the coalition.

“The government has decided that it is in Australia’s national interest to work with our international partners to contribute. Our contribution will be limited in scope and it will be time-bound,” Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced on August 21.

In September 2019, Australian Ambassador to Russia Graeme Meehan said his country’s participation in the U.S.-led coalition does not mean that Australia agrees with the United States’ stand on Iran.

“We are quite careful to say that our participation in the maritime action to protect shipping in the Strait of Hormuz doesn’t mean that we agree with all the actions that United States are taking in relation to the nuclear deal. Of course, the two things are connected, but there are also differences, and I think that is the same for some of the European countries that are considering participating in the maritime act. The European countries don’t generally agree with the United States’ action of pulling out of the nuclear deal,” Meehan said.

Elsewhere in his Tuesday remarks, Amir Abdollahian described Iran-Australia ties as positive and constructive but added that the level of ties is not up to par.

He also said Iran is interested in holding talks with Saudi Arabia and other regional countries, emphasizing that Tehran has always believed that regional crises can be resolved through dialogue without foreign intervention.

Sachs, for her part, said Canberra understands Iran’s pivotal role in ensuring the security of the region and as a country that seeks international peace and stability.

“Australia does not interfere in internal affairs of other countries but plays its role through negotiating with different parties,” she said.

Ambassador Sachs also expressed a willingness for expansion of Iran-Australia parliamentary ties.



## Tehran, Baku discuss expansion of economic ties amid coronavirus outbreak

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — In a recent telephone conversation, Iran's Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejpasand and Azerbaijan's Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev have explored the ways for the expansion of bilateral economic relation between the two countries amid the coronavirus outbreak, Mehr news agency reported on Monday.



Dejpasand, who is also the Iranian chairman of the joint cooperation committee of the two counties, said, "I hope that with the help of bilateral cooperation, we will be able to witness the expansion and strengthening of economic relations between Iran and Azerbaijan."

The minister also expressed hope that through observing anti-coronavirus health protocols the two sides can hold the 14th meeting of Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Economic Committee in the near future.

He also referred to the building of a joint industrial park near the border of the two countries and joint projects of North-South Corridor which is a 7,200-km-long multi-mode network of ship, rail, and road routes for moving freight between India, Iran, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia and Europe.

A preliminary agreement on the establishment of a joint Iranian-Azerbaijani industrial park was reached in 2019. Along with a joint industrial park, the two countries will also set up a joint logistics center in Iran's Ardebil Province.

Dejpasand wanted Mustafayev to take measures to support Iranian transit drivers dealing with issues when entering Azerbaijan in the time of coronavirus.

Azerbaijani Deputy Prime Minister Mustafayev said his country has a comprehensive plan to limit the negative effects of the coronavirus outbreak and to support the employers and people active in trade and economy, and promised to pursue all the points mentioned by the Iranian side and try to finalize the projects with collaboration.

During an online meeting in late April, Iran and Azerbaijan had reviewed customs and transportation cooperation, and discussed the issues regarding the limitations and the lockdown applied by both countries due to the coronavirus outbreak.

As reported, the Azeri side of the meeting was headed by the country's Deputy Chairman of the State Customs Committee Cavad Mustafa Gasimov.

In the meeting, the two sides discussed the compliance of cargo transportation through the two countries' border crossings with the quarantine regime applied amid the pandemic, and they also explored the regulations regarding vehicle traffic and the transfer of goods across the border.

They also discussed the technical issues related to the transfer of cargos to their joint vehicle manufacturing plant AzKron which is operating in the Naftchala industrial zone in southern Baku.

As one of the biggest production units in Neftchala zone, AzKron is currently producing several models of passenger cars.

Having close cultural ties, Iran and Azerbaijan have broadened their relations in all areas in the past few years.

In addition to the automobile plant, establishing the North-South corridor, co-manufacturing heavy trucks, and establishing a joint pharmaceutical plant are some other projects in which the two neighbors are cooperating.

As recently reported, Iran has exported 41,535 tons of commodities to Azerbaijan from its northern Astara railway terminal during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-May 20), which was 178 percent more than the figure of the same period of time in the past year, according to a railway official.

The managing director of north railway Gholam-Hossein Valadi told IRNA that cement, clinker, chemical products, tiles, steel, and home appliances were among the goods exported to Azerbaijan.

Astara Port is the westernmost Iranian city on the southern coasts of the Caspian Sea with a population of 91,000 people. The city also borders the Azerbaijan Republic.

In early March 2017, Azerbaijan officially launched a rail link with Iran by sending a train across the border to Iran's northern city of Astara thus taking an ambitious multimodal transport project that connects northern Europe to India closer to reality, Press TV reported at the time.

The train arrived in Iran simultaneously with a visit to the Islamic Republic by Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev where he discussed the implementation of the North-South Transport Corridor (NSTC) with Iran's President Hassan Rouhani.

Aliyev told reporters after meeting Rouhani that the NSTC was an important project, stressing that it could have positive effects on the economies of its host countries.

## Iran keen on dairy and aquaculture exports to Russia

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Ambassador to Russian Federation Kazem Jalali said in a meeting with Head of the Russian Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Supervision Sergei Dankvert on Tuesday that Iran is keen on dairy and aquaculture exports to Russia, IRNA reported. Jalali and Dankvert discussed issues related to resolving existing obstacles and developing economic cooperation during the meeting.

Other topics discussed in the meeting were the issuance of licenses for Iranian companies which are interested in export of dairy and aquaculture products to Russia.

In this regard, they decided that the representative of the Russian party and the representative of the Iranian Veterinary Company get in touch for coordination and review the obstacles and take action to remove them as soon as possible.

In February, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov said that the trade turnover between Iran and Russia has followed an upward trend in the past two years despite the challenging external conditions.

"Despite the challenging external conditions, the Russian-Iranian trade turnover is rising. It increased to \$2 billion last year," he said.

Mentioning the preferential trade agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), Morgulov expressed hope that the agreement would facilitate the trade between the two sides and give an extra impetus to the expansion of ties.

# IDRO to invest \$6.3b in deprived regions

**1 →** In the year of "Surge in Production", IDRO has outlined an operational program for increasing productivity and efficiency to materialize this motto.

The eleven sections defined in the mentioned program will boost efficiency in the industry sector which is a prominent factor for surge in production.

Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran was established in 1967 to develop the industrial sector and to accelerate the industrialization process of the country.

In recent years and in accordance with the country's privatization policy, IDRO has made great efforts to privatize its affiliated companies.

While carrying on its privatization policies and lessening its role as a holding company, IDRO intends to concentrate on its prime missions and to turn into an



## Offering of shares through 2nd ETF to start this month



Deputy Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Abbas Memarnejad

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran's deputy finance and economic affairs minister said that offering of shares through the country's second exchange-traded fund (ETF) will be started during the current Iranian calendar month (June 21-July 21).

Abbas Memarnejad told ILNA that the first ETF has already witnessed a noticeable growth of value, as the value of each unit of this fund has increased from 100,000 rials (\$2.3) to 220,000 rials (\$5.2).

He also said that the units of the first ETF can be traded at the stock market as of Wednesday.

Last week, the finance and economic affairs minister announced that the value of shares that are offered by the first exchange-traded fund had doubled.

Referring to the offering of the shares via the first ETF in the past month, Farhad Dejpasand said, "The offering was our first experience in this field. About 3.6 million persons purchased the units of shares offered by the first fund."

On May 2, the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), which is the main stock exchange of Iran, listed the first exchange-traded fund (ETF) from a series of three ETFs, through them shares of some state-owned organizations and companies are planned to be offered.

An exchange-traded fund (ETF) is an investment fund traded on stock exchanges, much like stocks. An ETF holds assets such as stocks,

commodities, or bonds and generally operates with an arbitrage mechanism designed to keep it trading close to its net asset value, although deviations can occasionally occur.

As described by Investopedia, ETFs can contain many types of investments, including stocks, commodities, bonds, or a mixture of investment types. An exchange-traded fund is a marketable security, meaning it has an associated price that allows it to be easily bought and sold.

The shares to be offered via the above mentioned Iranian ETFs belong to those governmental bodies defined in Iran's privatization program, a comprehensive plan seriously followed up by the government to downsize and reduce its role in the economy.

The three ETFs are planned to offer 550 trillion rials (about \$13 billion) worth of the governmental stakes, of which 165 trillion rials (about \$3.9 billion) is to be offered via the first fund.

The first ETF, established by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, comprises government shares in three banks, including Bank Mellat, Tejarat Bank, and Bank Saderat, as well as the shares of two insurance companies, i.e. Iranian Reinsurance Company and Alborz Company.

The government has a 17-percent stake in Bank Mellat, a 17-percent stake in Tejarat Bank, and an 18-percent stake in Bank Saderat.

## Tehran to host intl. doors, windows exhibit next week



**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran's 12th Doors & Windows Technology International Exhibition will be held at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds during July 2-5, the head of the exhibition's organizing headquarters announced in an interview conducted by the Public Relations Department of Iran International Exhibitions Company.

Mentioning the four-month stop in holding the exhibitions due to the coronavirus outbreak, Farhad Aminian said that while holding exhibitions in the country was resumed through holding the exhibition of "Surge in Production and Corona Containment Achievements", that exhibition was just for the specialists, and the Doors & Windows Exhibition is the first exhibit to be officially held after resumption of exhibition holding."

He reiterated that the health protocols will be observed at the highest level during the 12th Doors & Windows Technology International Exhibition, in a way that the exhibitors and visitors will have the least concern about the coronavirus pandemic.

The industrialists and traders are highly welcoming the windows and doors exhibit, so this edition of the exhibit will be held in an area of over 21,000 square meters, Aminian further underscored.

He also stressed that this exhibition, which has a special focus on presence of the domestic producers and industrialists, highlights the domestically-made products and local technology.

He announced that Iran's Doors & Windows Technology International Exhibition

industrial development agency. IDRO has focused its activities on the following areas in order to materialize such strategy and to expedite the industrial development of Iran:

- \* Promotion of local and foreign investments with minority holdings owned by IDRO (less than 50% of the shares) with particular emphasis on new, Hi-tech and export-oriented industries.

- \* Restructuring the existing industries through the participation of reputable foreign companies in order to transfer new technologies and to enhance the non-oil exports of Iran.

- \* Development of general contracting activities with the participation of the Iranian private sector and credible foreign companies.

- \* Rendering consultancy and support services to foreign investors.

- \* Privatization of the existing subsidiaries.

is an "Approved Exhibition" by the Union of International Fairs (UFI), which is an honor for this event.

Union of International Fairs is the global association of the world's leading tradeshow organizers and fairground owners, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations, and selected partners of the exhibition industry.

An exhibition identified as an "Approved Exhibition" is a proof of high quality, thus providing exhibitors and visitors alike with the assurance of making a sound business investment.

On Sunday, the managing director of Iran International Exhibitions Company (IIEC) had said that all of the country's exhibitions will be held physically and based on the schedule as of July 2.

Mentioning the successful launch of the "Surge in Production and Corona Containment Achievements" exhibition earlier last month, Bahman Hosseinzadeh said since Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds has been equipped with disinfection devices and equipment, all exhibitions will be held on schedule and in compliance with health protocols.

According to Hosseinzadeh, specialized exhibitions can be held in accordance with four health protocols including protocols for exhibition centers, pavilion construction, participants, and visitors.

The official noted that the mentioned exhibitions are not going to be open for public visits and only expert groups and specialists can visit in compliance with the health protocols.

# TEDPIX rises over 28% in a month

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), has climbed 28.77 percent in the past Iranian calendar month (April 21-June 20) from its preceding month, IRIB reported.

The index gained 283,868 points to 1,270,627 during the past month.

As reported, the first market's index rose 31.58 percent and the second market's index went up 24.46 percent on a monthly basis.

Although, the value of trades at the TSE, which is Iran's major stock exchange, fell 31 percent in the past month.

Some 166.408 billion securities were traded through 22.416 million deals at this market, which shows 22 percent drop in the number of securities and 26 percent fall in the number of deals.

In a press conference on Monday, the head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) announced that the amount of liquidity absorbed by Iran's capital market has reached 500 trillion rials (about \$12 billion) during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20).

Hasan Qalibaf-Asl also said, "It is while



the total amount of liquidity entered into this market stood at 300 trillion rials (about \$7.14 billion) during the past year."

The official further noted that the high amount of liquidity that is entering the

capital market has provided some good opportunity for this market, as it's being developed and flourished; for the enterprises, as they're securing their required funds, and also for the government.

Mentioning the prosperous status of the capital market in the present year, Qalibaf-Asl underlined that the current status of this market is not at all comparable with that of the past three years and even the previous year.

He put the funding through the capital market at 2.6 quadrillion rials (about \$61.9 billion) in the past Iranian calendar year 1398 and said the figure was one quadrillion rials (about \$23.8 billion) just in the first quarter of the present year. Funding through this market stood at 1.2 quadrillion rials (about \$28.5 billion) in the calendar year 1397.

The SEO head also put the value of trades at Tehran Stock Exchange and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), at 8.3 quadrillion rials (about \$197.61 billion) in the previous year, while the figure was 7.8 quadrillion rials (about \$185.71 billion) in the first quarter of this year.

Qalibaf-Asl further said that the number of codes issued in the stock market in the past year was 820,000, adding that 1.6 million codes have been issued in the first three months of the current year.



# Mahshahr's butane chain project to realize 2nd leap in petchem sector

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** — The first project in the butane chain in Mahshahr will be ready for operation with the aim of commercial production of three important and new items, parallel with planning for realization of the second petrochemical leap in Iran, Shana reported.

According to the National Petrochemical Company (NPC), the countdown has started for the second leap in the petrochemical industry of Iran as the first project to complete the butane chain will be put into operation in Mahshahr, southwestern Iran.

Amirkabir Petrochemical Plant is one of the successful experiences of using butane as feedstock in the petrochemical industry of Iran. Given this, Ibn Sina Petrochemical Plant is to be launched to be fed by butane.

Iran has planned for the second petrochemical leap which will be realized by 2021 or early 2022 to bring its production capacity to 100 million tons per year from currently 66 mt/y.

Once operational, the plant will supply maleic anhydride, isobutane and normal butane in Mahshahr.

Ibn Sina Petrochemical Plant is fed by roughly 71,000 tons of butane from Bandar Imam Petrochemical Plant.

Mahshahr Petrochemical Special Economic Zone in Iran's southwestern Khuzestan Province is one of the major petrochemical zones of the country.

Last July, the managing director of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC) unveiled a plan for the construction of a new petrochemical hub in Mahshahr Petrochemical Special Economic Zone in order to add up to six million tons (mt) of new capacity to the zone.

Speaking in the annual general assembly of the Petrochemical Special Economic Zone at that time, Behzad Mohammadi noted that NPC is seeking two main goals in Mahshahr zone, one of which is maintaining the current output levels and the other, which is more important and of higher priority, is the development of the zone and attracting and facilitating investment.

"In Mahshahr's grand scheme, development of downstream and mid-stream industries is given great importance," he said adding that the zone's development plan is going through revision and preparation.

In last September, Mohammadi had said that by the realization of the second leap in the petrochemical industry, 62 million tons per year of feedstock (equal to 1.4 million bpd of crude oil) will be supplied to the sector by 2021.

Making the remarks on the last day of the Iran Plast 2019 international exhibition in Tehran, the official said, "This figure will reach 1.7 million bpd by 2025 when the third leap in the industry is realized."

Petrochemical industry plays a crucial role in Iran's non-oil economy, as the petrochemical export is the second-largest source of revenue for the country after crude oil. Petrochemical exports already constitute nearly 33 percent of the country's non-oil exports.



Iran has been highly developing this sector over the recent years as the development of the giant South Pars gas field (Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf) has been supplying more feedstock to the petrochemical units.

Also, the U.S. sanctioning Iran's oil exports has encouraged more development of the petrochemical industry to boost exports from this sector.

While the leap in the petrochemical output is a big measure to boost Iran's non-oil exports, it also plays a very significant role in the realization of the current Iranian calendar year's motto, which is "Surge in Production".

The already released data and reports indicate that the petrochemical sector has been moving in the way of growth since the year start (March 20), as the output of petrochemical units in the first 50 days of the current year increased by six percent compared to the previous year's same period.

According to Jalal Mirhashemi, National Petrochemical Company's production control manager, the country's petrochemical complexes are producing with a desired capacity, and many complexes have shown production growth since the beginning of the current year.

He said that Iran's petrochemical industry is ready to realize the surge in production intended for the current year, adding that in addition to launching and operating new projects, the existing idle capacity of some complexes

will also be used with the measures taken.

Meanwhile, Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh has announced that 17 new petrochemical plants are planned to be inaugurated across the country during the current year.

The new projects worth about \$12 billion are aimed at increasing Iran's annual petrochemical production by 35 percent in the present year, according to the NPC managing director.

With several new projects going operational, the country's petrochemical production capacity is going to increase significantly this year, as said by the NPC project director.

"In the year of 'Surge in Production', the petrochemical industry is trying to benefit from the most of the domestic capabilities and with the new petrochemical projects being inaugurated, the production capacity in this industry will increase significantly," Ali-Mohammad Bosaqzadeh has said.

Noting that the balanced development of the petrochemical industry is of particular interest among the NPC strategies for the current year, the official said: "In this regard, the development of downstream petrochemical industries is going to prevent the sale of raw materials and will result in the production of products with higher added value."

He further noted that most of the underway projects in this industry are currently using domestic equipment, licenses, and technological knowledge of the Iranian experts.

## U.S. LNG braces for more cargo cancellations

The U.S. LNG industry expects to see buyers cancel as many as 45 LNG cargoes for August loading as natural gas demand in the Asian market and bloated European LNG inventories sap enthusiasm for U.S. LNG, Reuters sources said.

That's similar to the number of U.S. LNG cargoes that were canceled for July loading as well. For June loading, the cancellations were fewer but still substantial—anywhere from 20 to 30.

Part of the problem is the narrow profit margin for U.S. LNG, with Henry Hub prices sitting too close to European gas prices. Just 10 cents per million British thermal units separate the two. At that price, it's impossible to turn a profit when factoring in shipping costs.

It's less expensive to pay the cancellation fee.

The cancellations in July and August will mean that U.S. LNG exports will fall by one-third compared to how much the

U.S. was shipping back in January.

So far, the cargo cancellations have hit Cheniere's production the hardest, according to S&P Global Platts.

The canceled cargoes go to support the notion that the U.S. has become the industry's swing producer, flailing when times are tough and booming when times are good. The cargo cancellations will soon—if they haven't already—spill over into chartered vessel demand, pipeline transport volumes, and eventually shale gas drillers in the United States, as demand for LNG at U.S. export terminals remains subdued.

IHS Markit analyst Matthew Shruhan forecast in May that more cancellations would follow.

Sustained low prices for LNG have already caused companies to cut capex and to delay LNG projects going forward, which will, in the long run, help to deplete the inventory overhang. Morgan Stanley sees this overhang dissipating sometime in 2022.

## China aims to boost its oil and gas production in 2020

China looks to raise its crude oil production by 1 percent to 3.85 million barrels per day (bpd) and natural gas output by 4.3 percent this year, the National Energy Administration's (NEA) annual production plan showed, as carried by Reuters.

In order to increase its domestic oil and gas production, as imports of both commodities account for most of its supply, China will boost efforts to develop oil- and gas-rich areas in the Bohai Bay offshore northern China in the Sichuan province, Erdos Basin, and far western region of Xinjiang.

China will also aim to have some 900 gigawatts (GW) of installed non-fossil fuel power generation capacity in 2020, up from 820 GW at the end of 2019, and reduce the share of coal in its primary energy mix to 57.5 percent from 57.7 percent last year, according to the plan.

Last year, China's crude oil production rose for the first time in four years after the government started to urge local state

oil majors to boost the development and production of local resources to increase the energy security of the world's top oil importer.

According to data from China's National Bureau of Statistics cited by Caixin Global, China's domestic crude oil production increased by 0.8 percent year on year in 2019 – a small rise, but the first annual increase in production since 2015.

At the same time, rising refinery capacity, strategic inventory filling, and nearly flat domestic production resulted in China importing record volumes of crude oil last year, an average of 10.1 million bpd, up by 900,000 bpd from the 2018 average.

Growth in China's natural gas production accelerated in 2019 from 2018. Last year, China's natural gas output jumped by 11.5 percent on the year, compared to 7.5 percent annual growth in 2018, official data reported by the Xinhua news agency showed.

## COVID-19 could cause a boom in coal power

The global energy industry downturn at the hands of Covid-19 has not only hurt immediate revenues, but is also affecting national infrastructure and energy policy planning. A Rystad Energy analysis shows that gas resources around the world will see development delays, with the construction of planned regasification facilities also at risk. Coal may benefit as a result.

The case of Vietnam is a good example of how a country with its own rich gas resources will fail to meet domestic production expectations, requiring an increase in liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports instead. Planned regasification facilities also risk delays due to the downturn, leaving the use of coal as the only financially viable option to meet growing power demand.

Vietnam's strong GDP growth – about 6 percent to 7 percent per year – demands a growing amount of energy resources. With a hunger to satisfy the country's stable growth, Vietnam expects its power generation capacity to reach 125 to 130 GW by 2030 from the current 54 GW of capacity. In 2019, 33 percent of the country's power mix was met with gas and the rest was fueled by renewables and coal.

Even if non-gas sources meet their respective targets, there will still be significant gas demand as gas-fired power generation capacity is expected to grow from 7.2 GW at present, to 15 GW by 2025 and 19 GW by 2030.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, Rystad Energy had forecasted that Vietnam's domestic gas output would reach 10 billion cubic meters (Bcm) by 2025. Of this, around 60 percent of total gas produced was expected to come from new developments. Our updated outlook shows a much different picture, with the pandemic crisis and low



oil prices postponing more than 200 Bcm of Vietnam's undeveloped natural gas resources.

Regardless of the present environment, the country is already facing declining domestic gas production. Nam Con Son Gas accounted for approximately 30 percent of the country's total gas production in 2019, and has seen an average year-over-year decline of 8 percent since 2010. Similarly, gas production from other gas projects has seen 11 percent to 40 percent y/y decline between 2011 and 2019.

Of the 180 Bcm of gas resources discovered in the last 10 years only the Sao Vang and Dai Nguyet fields have approved field development plans, as the FID process has proven a long and arduous road. In the past decade only 11 percent of projects have been able to secure funding and the right to proceed with drilling and the development of new resources.

"Although Vietnam greenfield spending was expected

to triple in 2021, with investments surpassing \$1.8 billion, the present dual-crisis of low oil prices and Covid-19 has affected the capital spend ability of major stakeholders, creating a huge obstacle for monetizing existing available resources," says Rystad Energy's senior analyst Debika Chakraborty.

As a result, Vietnam will only produce 7 Bcm of gas in 2025, rather than the expected 10 Bcm, creating a 9 Bcm gap between domestic production and the 16 Bcm of expected domestic demand. Vietnam's goal to produce 80 percent of power generation with gas in the next 15 years now seems even less likely.

In order to avoid reverting back to heavy coal imports, Vietnam will likely begin increasing its LNG imports as early as 2022. Even so, importing sufficient LNG volumes will be difficult.

There are currently four LNG terminals in the project pipeline – Thi Vai LNG, Son My LNG, Tien Giang LNG Projects, and South West LNG – which together will have a combined capacity of 10 million tons per annum by 2025. However, the terminals, which are being constructed primarily in southern Vietnam, will only reach 1 million tpa import capacity by 2023 with the start-up of Phase 1 of the Thi Vai terminal. This will only marginally fulfill the demand-supply gap.

Given this, any delays in the other planned regasification projects will put Vietnam's goal at risk, a potential outcome that seems realistic in today's volatile market conditions.

Thus, to ensure a stable and affordable power supply, Vietnam will likely have to increase coal imports, making it nearly impossible for the country to meet its goal and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20-30 percent by 2030.

## Projects worth over \$2b inaugurated in 2nd phase of A-B-Iran program

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian announced that projects worth 90 trillion rials (about \$2.14 billion) have been already inaugurated in the water and electricity sectors of the country in the second phase of the A-B-Iran program, IRNA reported.

Making the remarks during the inaugural ceremony of an electricity monitoring center at the place of MAPNA Group (a group of Iranian companies involved in the development and execution of industrial projects) on Tuesday, the minister said that through implementing the A-B-Iran program, 19 large water and electricity projects were put into operation during eight weeks.

He put the total number of the projects inaugurated during the first phase of the mentioned program at 227 and the amount of investment made on these projects at 330 trillion rials (about \$7.85 billion).

The minister said that the program will be developed in the second phase, in a way that 250 projects are planned to be implemented in this phase.

According to Ardakanian, three big dams and 22,000 drainage networks have been already inaugurated in the second phase.

Four wastewater treatment plants and four power plants have been also inaugurated and water has been supplied to 15 villages during the second phase.



Based on the A-B-Iran scheme [the acronyms A and B stand for water, electricity in Persian], the Energy Ministry plans to inaugurate some water and electricity projects across the country every week.

Following this scheme, the ministry is going to inaugurate 250 major projects worth 500 trillion rials (about \$11.9 billion) during the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021).

The mentioned program was also conducted by the ministry in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), during which 227 major projects with a total investment of 335.6 trillion rials (about \$7.99 billion) went operational across the country.

According to the energy minister, during the 20 weeks of the mentioned program in the previous year, the minister made 31 trips to various provinces for inaugurating energy projects.

## Is BP finally moving beyond petroleum?

Kneeling in prayer for a sin he doesn't regret, Shakespeare's Claudius, Hamlet's fratricidal uncle, ruefully admits: "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below. / Words without thoughts never to heaven go."

Claudius knew that empty rhetoric is entirely unpersuasive — a lesson many corporate executives have since learned.

In 2000, BP hired the advertisers Ogilvy & Mather to help the company construct an empty prayer. A colorful new logo was created and, with its bank balance no doubt many millions lighter, BP declared it was moving "Beyond Petroleum".

If you want to discover what a business really thinks, you are better off looking at its actions. Shortly before "Beyond Petroleum" was launched, BP made some instructive acquisitions.

For \$26.5bn, it acquired the oil-drillers ARCO. This was set against a piddling \$45m investment in 50 percent of Solarex, a solar company it already part-owned.

Weigh the two and you can make your own mind up about whether this was a company moving beyond black gold or drilling deeper into its wells.

What remained of the goodwill towards the Beyond Petroleum project went up in flames most spectacularly in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. A drilling rig exploded and one of the worst environmental disasters in human history ensued.

If you couldn't see BP's pursuit of more petroleum when it was mostly underground, you could hardly miss it now. Over the course of 87 uninterrupted days, 200 million gallons of the stuff spilled into the sea.

With this history, any announcement of grand environmental ambitions from BP comes with a health warning. So it was with some skepticism that the world responded to new chief executive Bernard Looney's announcement in February that the company would be net-zero by 2050.

Last week, however, those who watch actions and not announcements would have noted that BP might indeed have changed its thinking.

On Monday, the company wrote down the value of its assets by around £14bn. Even for a business of BP's size, this is significant, equal to a fifth of the company's market capitalization.

The cause was the recent plunge in oil prices and the suggestion that BP does not expect them to rise by much in the years to come. Most significantly of all, this means that oilfields which BP owns the rights to will now be left unexplored. Oil that might once have been burned will stay in the ground.

After a lifetime at BP, Looney credits his Damascene conversion to environmentalism to the persuasive powers of "a woman who probably has influenced me more than anyone who is an activist". But there is a financial imperative here too, and that is what counts.

The price of oil has crashed so dramatically since the Covid-19 pandemic began that at one point it reached an extraordinary nadir: the U.S. oil futures market fell for the first time ever into the negative. In layman's terms, that meant that if you were able to store oil, a seller would pay you to do so.

This negative pricing was only a blip, but Looney clearly believes that low prices are here to stay. As the world recovers from coronavirus, there are signs across the world that the economic recovery might well be greener.

Green New Deals are being touted across the Atlantic, from the European Commission to the Democratic National Convention. Climate activists have been talking for some time about "stranded assets": the fossil-fuel heavy assets that will never be realized if the world is to move to net-zero.

While BP might not use the language, the logic appears very similar. Looney has said that it is possible we have already passed "peak oil", and he is clearly determined that his business is prepared for that eventuality.



تکمیل طرح  
شهید خرازی (نورده گم ۲)  
هدیه ای برای آیندگان

Advertising Dept:  
times1979@gmail.com

TEHRANTIMES  
Iran's Leading International Daily

+9821 430 51 430

TEHRAN TIMES

Iran's Leading  
International Daily

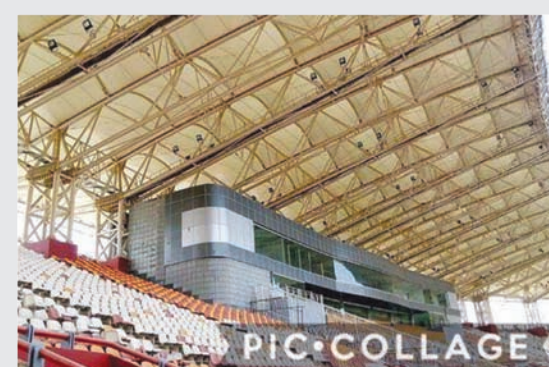
Advertising Dept



Tel:

021 - 430 51 430

## Modern Stadium of Martyrs of Khuzestan Football Club (KSC)



PIC-COLLAGE

English page of Mehr News provides you  
with great opportunity to advertise.

Get in touch  
[www.mehrnews.com](http://www.mehrnews.com)

en.mehrnews.com  
@Mehrnewscom

Catch up with the latest news in Iran and beyond with  
**Mehr News English**



# Certainly anti-racisms protests are driven by “sense of quest for truth”, justice campaigner says of Ayatollah Khamenei’s 2015 letter

‘No people will accept oppression forever’

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

**TEHRAN** – Phil Wilayto, editor of The Virginia Defender, tells the Tehran Times that as Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had said more than five years ago the anti-racism and anti-justice protests gripping the U.S. are driven by a “sense of quest for truth” by the youth.

Protests in the U.S. have continued for weeks after the killing on May 25 of George Floyd, an African-American man, by a white police officer in Minneapolis. Video showed the policeman kneeling on his neck for almost nine minutes while he is pinned to the floor.

Wilayto, who is a founding member of the Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality, says the United States is a “country that proclaims high ideals while being rooted in the worst injustices.”

The text of the interview with Phil Wilayto is as follows:

■ In his letter to the youth in Europe and North America on January 21, 2015, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had said “I find that the sense of quest for truth is more vigorous and attentive in your hearts”. What was or is the importance of the letter?

Answer: History teaches us that social progress does not always advance in an even, straight line. Sometimes it moves forward, sometimes it moves backwards, and then there are times when it leaps forward with lightning speed. What is happening today in the West, especially in the United States, is an example of such a leap.

Protests in the U.S. against police murders of African-American people have now taken place in some 2,000 U.S. cities and towns, as well as in at least 60 other countries. While the protests have involved people of every race, gender and age, they have largely been led by youth, especially youth from the Black community. Certainly they are driven by a “sense of quest for truth” - and the question, “How much longer must we live with the knee of racist oppression on our necks?”

■ The Leader had said he was writing to the youth because politicians and statesmen in the West “have consciously separated the route of politics from the path of righteousness and truth”. How do you analyze this statement?

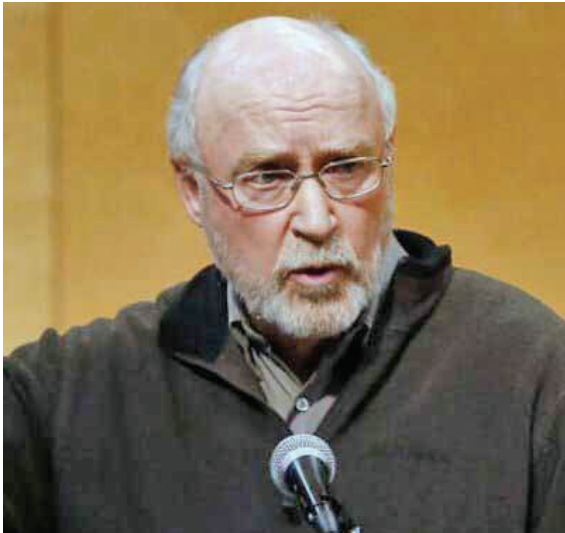
A: Our country has a history of imposing a social order that is legal, but at the same time morally wrong. Slavery existed here for 246 years. It was a hideous, inhumane, profit-driven system that was perfectly legal. After the Civil War, there was a brief, 11-year period of social progress called Reconstruction, which was then followed by 90 years of “Jim Crow” racial apartheid, all perfectly legal and all enforced by official and unofficial violence. And since the social upheavals of the 1960s, we have seen progress, then setbacks, then more progress, and then more setbacks.

Today we have a president who hardly qualifies for the title “human being,” let alone the leader of a country. He is a man who cares only for himself, utterly devoid of any moral sense or even simple human compassion. There is no connection between the laws he pursues and any “path of righteousness and truth.”

■ In his letter at the time, Leader had said the histories of the U.S. and Europe “are ashamed of slavery.... and chagrined at the oppression of ‘people of color.’” This approach that people of color are treated badly is demonstrated in the behavior of some supremacists. What do you think the West or the youth in general should do to end such discriminations?

A: The ruling class here in America is teaching us what is needed. For decades, politicians of both major political parties have ignored the demands for justice - justice in the areas of the police, in access to decent jobs, quality education, health care,

**The campaigner for Freedom, justice and equality says even “if Islam didn’t exist, Western leaders would have come up with another outside threat.”**



**Phil Wilayto says “powerful but numerically few wealthy people need an ‘outside’ threat to divert people’s attention away from themselves” and now Islam is a “convenient enemy” for them.**

housing and more. The protests - rebellions, really, because that is what they are - over the past three weeks have been the most widespread and sustained since the rebellions that took place in 1968 after the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Now the ruling class, in the form of local, state and national governments, is paying attention. They are making concessions. They are desperate to declare their support for “peaceful, legitimate” protests, while attempting to demonize the youth who are risking their lives in the streets. Now is the time to sustain and expand the protests, press for more fundamental change, and especially to defend all protesters by demanding amnesty for anyone who has been arrested for standing up for Justice for the oppressed.

■ Don’t you think that the Leader had predicted such rifts and racism would open wounds in the Western societies in the years to come?

A: I love my country and the ideals of Freedom, Justice and Equality that it claims to stand for. But I also understand that America was founded by European conquerors who stole the land from the indigenous people and then made it profitable by subjugating and cruelly exploiting African labor. The U.S. comedian George Carlin once wryly observed that, “This country was founded by a bunch of slave owners who wanted to be free.” This has been the fundamental contradiction of the United States: A country that proclaims high ideals while being rooted in the worst injustices.

And yet, we have been taught to believe in these ideals, and when we begin to see that the country is so far from practicing them, many people are moved to fight to make these ideals a reality. This has also been the history of America: The struggle for the Good in the middle of the Bad. So along with slavery, there was the struggle against slavery, by enslaved people and by their supporters. There was Jim Crow apartheid, but also the great Civil Rights Movement. There have been many imperialist wars, but also an antiwar movement. There have been unrelenting murders of Black and other people of color, but there has also been the Black Lives Matter movement and the present rebellions. No people will accept oppression forever, and the current protests are the latest manifestation of that.

■ And how the West, especially the youth should heal the wounds of division and racism in their societies?

A: Laws against racist practices are good and necessary. Conversations and dialogue between people of different races

and religions is important. But I believe that the most effective way to end racism and racial divisions is for people of different races to join together in actual struggles against racism, as well as their shared economic oppression, which is what is happening today on the streets of America.

Last night (Sunday night) I was with about 150 young people of all races who were being threatened by armed police officers. Blacks and whites stood together in solidarity in a common defense. I don’t know how the protests here are being seen around the world, but they are very multi-racial. The leadership is often mostly Black, but the young whites are also willing to stand up to the police. Of course, problems come up and have to be dealt with, but that is how we learn. My own experiences in labor and community struggles have taught me that this kind of common struggle is what helps white people recognize their prejudices and learn to overcome them. They really can’t do that in isolation from people of color. I don’t mean that it’s the responsibility of Black people to teach white people about racism, but rather that whites cannot recognize and overcome their racism on their own.

■ Discrimination or hatred toward non-Christians is ripe among certain groups of society and politicians in the West. This feeling of hatred, as mentioned in the Leader’s letter, is mostly directed against Islam. Why certain groups or politicians try to demonize Islam and present a distorted image of Islam?

A: Western societies have their own contradictions in terms of people from different classes and races. The poor, who are often people of color, are exploited by the wealthy, who are usually white. If the poor and working people of different races and religions were to recognize that they all have the same common enemy, they might unite and fundamentally change society. So the powerful but numerically few wealthy people need an “outside” threat to divert people’s attention away from themselves.

For generations, the outside threat was presented as “the Communists,” who were responsible for all evil in the world. But after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a vacuum, and so there was a need to find a new outside threat. Then came the attacks of 9/11, and the new enemy became “the Terrorists.”

But there aren’t enough terrorists to frighten everyone, so it was necessary to find a broader threat. Muslims, who make up one quarter of the world’s population, became the new enemy. It doesn’t matter that Islam is a religion of peace. Most Muslims are not white, do not speak English and so, to many Americans, are “different.” And it helps that many of the countries that have the most valuable commodity in the world - oil - are Muslim. What a convenient enemy! But if Islam didn’t exist, Western leaders would have come up with another outside threat. The point is that they need something to unite their societies, in fear and hatred, in order to keep their own oppressed from rebelling against their oppression.

■ What is your suggestion about the Leader’s advice that the youth in the West should fight disinformation campaigns by certain media outlets against Islam?

A: The attacks of 9/11 did make many people in America afraid of Muslims, and the very vicious attacks by President Trump have built on this fear. But it’s also true many other people here have fought back against that anti-Islam campaign. When Trump ordered a ban on Muslims entering the United States, people from many different backgrounds and religions spontaneously went to their local airports to defend Muslims. It was a very impressive display of solidarity. Whenever Muslims are threatened now, it is very common to see churches and synagogues invite Muslims for solidarity meetings. The point here is that the U.S. is a very divided society, which means that the attacks on Islam are increasing, but so is the defense of Muslims. And that defense is often coming from the youth.

**“Today we have a president (Trump) who hardly qualifies for the title ‘human being,’ let alone the leader of a country.”**

## ‘Iran generalizing its political authority to intl. economic transactions’

By Haniyeh Sadat Jafariyeh

In the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, oil is losing its significance as a strategic good in the international market as well as its pivotal role in determining the economic and political status quo and international relations of both oil producers and consumers.

As a major oil producer, Iran used to have an oil-reliant economy. But thanks to U.S. sanctions, the country learned much earlier than Covid-19 outburst how to shift into applying non-oil economic policies.

Less shocked and influenced by the lethal virus’ outbreak on the global oil market, Iran has started to try alternative financial foreign income to compensate for its sanctioned oil revenues.

Recently, the country commenced the swap of goods for gold with Venezuela, as a practical method to open a new gateway for developing its foreign trade under both U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak. Iran could successfully deliver five fuel cargoes to Venezuela, the act which questioned the U.S. hegemony and transmitted the message that the U.S. can no longer see other nations as its subordinates.

The Islamic Republic continued its international transactions by dispatching its sixth ship, ‘Golsan’ to Venezuela despite Washington’s threats against both nations.

Thran Times conducted an interview with Mohammad Ali Khatibi, Iran’s former ambassador to the OPEC, elaborated on various aspects of Iran-Venezuela’s recent economic transactions.

Khatibi, in his earlier remarks, suggested all countries sanctioned by the U.S. to get united and establish a club of sanctioned countries to ease international trade among themselves. “The increase in the number of countries sanctioned by the United States has provided a better capacity to create alternative solutions to supply demands,” he said, “sanctioned countries can get united to establish an organized cooperation system against the U.S. sanctions to supply a great number of their requirements.”

In his latest interview with the Mehr news on June 21, Khatibi was asked about the geopolitical results of Iran-Venezuela’s recent swap on international relations and the en-



ergy market.

The energy expert said, “As you know the main cause of imposing sanctions on a country is forcing it to act upon some specific desires. The U.S. imposes embargoes to gain some interests, as well.”

“However, the sanctioned countries can get united to meet each other’s demands under the sanctions. It is their right to take advantage of their legal rights of having their favorite economic transactions with other countries and a third country, i.e. the one who imposes sanctions, cannot prevent them. This is a legal measure for the sanctioned countries to take. The U.S. is a country but not an international body and there is no right for it to bully other countries.”

“All countries act upon their own interests. There are some countries that have tight relations with the U.S. and cannot put their interests at risk by having economic transactions with countries under U.S. sanctions. But since the number of countries sanctioned by America are increasing, it seems practical for them to initiate their own network of financial transactions to foil the sanctions,” he added.

Elaborating on his view over the taken steps by Tehran and Caracas as an anti-U.S. unilateralist approach, he referred back to President Obama’s view over the practicality of sanctions.

Being asked about the causes for Iran-U.S. talks and endorsement of the JCPOA, the U.S. former President Barack Obama admitted that sanctions usually lose their effect in-

crementally and there will be a point that they collapse. As he said, there is a ‘practicality period’ for sanctions and the sanctioned country can find ways to circumvent them after a while. Experience shows that U.S. sanctions have lost their effectiveness on Iran and the Islamic Republic has learned how to survive the toughest U.S. pressures,” he said.

“In case of any probable more sanctions for Iran, the country can handle the situation,” Khatibi underlined.

He went on to say that “in the past talks with the U.S. and hammering the JPOA, the Rouhani administration used to apply a cooperative approach. I do believe that the Rouhani administration should make a shift in its approach in the future talks if there will be any.”

“Now, Iran should not be as optimistic as before since the situation is totally different. The incumbent Iranian administration should hold future talks more prudently than before, with a higher level of self-confidence in a bid to guarantee Iran’s interests.”

Iran’s former ambassador to the OPEC, elsewhere discussed a new aspect of Iran’s international activities; i.e. how the country is improving its international political authority to international economic transactions.

“Today, the world is aware of Iran’s political authority,” he said, “The Islamic Republic has proven its authority to the world and the world believes in it.”

“About the case of dispatching oil tanker to Caracas, as we saw, no country could stand against Iran’s legal right of having international transactions,” Khatibi added.

He further explained that “Iran proved its authority to the world when it hit U.S. airbase in Iraq or when it seized the British-flagged tanker Stena Impero, too.”

Iran’s enemies have look for some interests in the Persian Gulf and Iran’s readiness for deterring probable foreign threats makes them retreat.”

“Why shouldn’t Iran have the chance to use its political authority in its foreign trade to provide its own interests?” he asked.

“Iran could successfully use its authority in its recent transactions with Venezuela and that was a new gateway for the Islamic Republic,” he added.

## Principles of slavery still at core of U.S.’ socio-economic order: Prof. Ball

By Mohammad Ali Haqshenas

A new wave of anti-racism protests began in the U.S. and across the world as a white police officer killed African American George Floyd by putting knee on victims’ neck for more than eight minutes.

To shed more light on the issue, Mehr News Agency reached out to Jared A. Ball, a professor of communication studies at Morgan State University.

“Slavery has never been abolished and its principles (if not practice) remain at the core of this country’s social and economic order,” he highlighted

Here is the full text of the interview:

■ Where do you think these protests across the U.S. will eventually lead to? Do you see any hope for a change of behavior towards African Americans?



It is always hard to say where protests like these might go. However, historical precedent would suggest that due to insufficient organization in preparation for protracted struggle and without an electoral political outlet to develop public policy solutions which will truly satisfy the underlying conditions of these protests that the outcomes will be largely symbolic. Already there have been more killings by police of Black people since the uprisings occurred and no politician has voiced a plan to redistribute national resources to Black communities, instead the leading “opponent” to Trump, Joe Biden, says he wants to increase funding to police by at least \$300 million. So no, there is no evidence of meaningful changes in behavior to African America.

■ Why do you think the United States has failed to abolish the culture that has grown out of long years of slavery?

The first reason, of course, is that slavery has never been abolished and its principles (if not practice) remain at the core of this country’s social and economic order. The 13th Amendment only requires that conviction of a crime precede legal enslavement, and as many have pointed out since, capitalism is contemporary enslavement of working people with Black people most exploited still. More Black people are imprisoned or in various stages of parole and probation than were held in bondage at the height of slavery and produce more wealth for the owners of this economy than ever under previous forms of enslavement.

■ What do you believe the world can do to help African-Americans and eliminate the structural racism in the U.S.?

The best way to help with structural racism in the U.S. would be for those around the world to be honest about and to address their own anti-Black/anti-African attitudes. The U.S. is far from alone and we know that throughout the European, Asian, Arab and Persian worlds there is plenty of often-denied anti-Blackness and histories which look to distort, omit or diminish the role of African people in the development of world civilization and ideas. We certainly do not want focus on the U.S. to provide cover for the gross and rampant racism currently existing elsewhere. Of even greater help would be if countries around the world made this attack on structural racism substantive and material by finding ways to redistribute resources of their countries to address legacies of anti-Blackness; erase debt, provide housing, lands, healthcare, education, etc. Show the U.S. what real change looks like, beyond symbol. That would be help the struggle here.

■ European countries have kept silent on recent developments in the U.S. despite the fact they are among the first to express worry for human rights issues in other regions, such as West Asia. What is your take on this?

Little different from what I said above. Everyone has been silent and hypocritical on this and related issues. Everyone is happy to point to another to say, “shame!” But I have been all over the world myself and even were this not true I can easily follow a wide array of news in the world to see that nowhere on the planet are African people, Black people safe, equal or in power over the resources and labor they provide others. The world is guilty.

■ How do you assess Trump’s response to what goes on in the U.S. as records show his tendency towards white supremacy and many believe his tweets are fueling the protests?

The president’s response is consistent in their disregard for Black people and the poor but I do not think his tweets are fueling the protests. White supremacy, anti-Blackness, capitalism and state/police violence are what drives the protests.

■ How can these developments affect the upcoming presidential election in the U.S.?

The worst impact on the election created by pandemics of viruses and economic realities is that people here will be encouraged to see the Democratic Party and Joe Biden as a solution, as change, as the only option which will, unfortunately, lead us in many ways right back to where we were and were heading before. Biden and his party presided over and supported the rise of a militarized police, of expansion of war, even with Iran, the destruction of universal healthcare, an advance in surveillance and erasures of civil liberties. And yet they and he (Biden) are being re(presented) as progress and hope. Our ability to raise new questions, develop new approaches to electoral politics and how we arrange our society for the better is all going to continue to suffer as our imagination is, again, being suffocated beneath calls for “pragmatism” in the face of a nightmare second term of Trump.

Jared A. Ball is a father and husband. After that, he is a Professor of Communication Studies at Morgan State University in Baltimore, MD, and is founder/curator of ‘imixwhatilike.org’ a multimedia hub of emancipatory journalism and revolutionary beat reporting. Ball is also author of ‘The Myth and Propaganda of Black Buying Power’ (Palgrave, 2020).



## New items added to intangible cultural heritage list

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** – Eleven new items from the southern Fars province have been registered on the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list, CHTN reported on Tuesday.

Performing style of traditional music in Jahrom, the skill of making seven-color tiles in Shiraz, the skill of making halva - a kind of traditional sweet dessert - in Meydeh and the ceremony of the first Saturday of the year in Neyriz are among the items inscribed on the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

The inscriptions were announced on Tuesday in a letter to the governor-general of the province, the report added.



The ancient region of Fars, also spelled Pars or Persis, was the heart of the Achaemenian Empire (550–330 BC), which was founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC.

The capital city of Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking into this provincial capital which was the literary capital of Persia during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

Hafezieh (mausoleum of Hafez, an illustrious 14th-century Persian poet), the UNESCO-registered Persepolis, and Sadi mausoleum are some of the most-visited sites in the province.

## Iran's World Heritage sites to host music concerts

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts plans to organize music concerts at the country's UNESCO World Heritage sites as well as museums, CHTN reported on Tuesday.



The ministry aims to introduce cultural heritage sites more to the public with carefully meeting UNESCO standards, said the head of the ministry's public relations and information center Alireza Bai.

He also noted that the ministry needs innovative and creative ideas in this field to organize popular programs.

"Arg-e Bam" (Bam Citadel) that represents an outstanding example of an ancient fortified settlement, "Bisotun" in western Kermanshah province, which is notable for its Achaemenid-era inscription carved on a limestone cliff, lavish "Golestan Palace" in downtown Tehran which is a masterpiece of the Qajar era (1789 to 1925), and millennium-old "Gonbad-e Qabus" which is a mudbrick tomb tower for Qabus ibn Wushmagir, are among the 24 UNESCO-designated sites in Iran.

## Iran, one of the friendliest countries

By Rita Alves

(Part: 2/4)

Going to the teahouses (sometimes with some tourists) and trying to mix with locals; I would end up with a conversation about football; Portugal is in the same group as Iran for the world cup; but also with love advices for a very confused Iranian girl, while we smoked a water pipe together.



One of the best afternoons was probably in Isfahan. After a late lunch, I decided to go and see the life along the big square and what a surprise I had. A lot was happening: teams playing basketball on roller skates, guys showing off with figure skating; and they were damn good; also hockey and bikes; and music was playing.

As the sun came down, things changed, no roller skates, now people were gathering together for a picnic or an ice cream, and having good time with their families and /or friends. Other ones, around 10 pm, would gather on the riverside to have picnics or just for a chat.

# Iran 'has earned plaudits' to ease COVID impact on tourism

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – The United Nations World Tourism Organization has praised efforts made by Iran's tourism ministry to manage the travel industry during the coronavirus pandemic.

UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said in a letter to Iran's tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan that the country's measures have truly earned plaudits to mitigate the impact on tourism.

"A series of measures that the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Iran has taken, in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of UNWTO, has truly earned plaudits as an effective practice to mitigate the impact on tourism."

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, Iran's tourism ministry in cooperation with the health ministry has announced a series of guidelines and instructions to ramp up the safety of travels across the country. In an early stage, its procedures formulated for "emergency or work travels" implemented in hotels, guest houses, eco-lodge unites, tourist destinations, transport facilities, recreational centers, and restaurants as a prerequisite for gradually preparations for starting wider travels amid the outbreak.

"I particularly appreciate your outstanding leadership which is vital in this challenging time," Pololikashvili wrote to Mounesan on June 16.

"I thank you for your letter received on 13 June with regards to your government's constructive recovery effort from the unprecedented global health emergency related to the COVID-19 outbreak."

Tourism has been among the hardest hit of all the major economic sectors, and its devastating impact has already taken a heavy toll on global economics, people's livelihoods, and on our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the secretary-general said.

"In this regard, I am pleased to learn from you that UNWTO's work, led by the Global



A family wear protective face masks and gloves, amid fear of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), as they walk by the iconic Azadi Square, in Tehran. (PHOTO: Reuters)

Tourism Crisis Committee, was beneficial for your administration to reopen tourism in a safe, seamless, and responsible manner."

In May, deputy tourism minister Vali Teymouri elaborated on the measures taken to lessen the impact of coronavirus on the tourism sector and future measures to restore the situation, saying: "A smart travel protocol, which is aimed to reassure healthy travels, has been developed to be implemented across the country."

"Smart travel means traveling along with strict observance of health and wellness protocols... The smart travel protocol states what considerations a hotel, agency, or tour guide should follow. It's as if accommodation units need to focus more on renting one-bedroom than two-bedroom. Or if the hotel has been closed until now, with what considerations will it start working and under what conditions will it accept passengers. These cases are detailed in the present protocol we should revise

its articles using the opinion of the relevant organizations," the official noted.

Some experts expect Iran to achieve a tourism boom after coronavirus contained, believing its impact would be temporary and short-lived for a country that ranked the third fastest-growing tourism destination in 2019.

The latest available data show eight million tourists visited the Islamic Republic during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2019).

## Tabas Geopark moves closer to possible UNESCO registration

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – An extensive dossier, which is an essential prerequisite for possible UNESCO inscription of a site, has almost been completed for the gigantic Tabas Geopark, which is situated in east-central Iran.

Tabas Geopark, which is situated in a vast county of the same name, has enormous potential to be registered as "the biggest geopark" [in West Asia region] and its trustees are ready to submit the dossier to the UN body till autumn, Mehr quoted Alireza Amri Kazemi, who is a UNESCO assessor, as saying on Tuesday.

"This geopark is home to 50 geosites, but since the [tourism] infrastructure of only 25 geosites are ready so far, we asked the trustees to just include those in the dossier and gradually add five geosites each year,"

"Tabas Geopark can be the largest geopark in terms of the area because the whole county of Tabas is the largest county



in the Middle East (West Asia). Given the [historical, natural and geological] values of this county, we decided to consider the whole county as the geopark."

Sprawled in the eastern province of

South Khorasan, Tabas Geopark includes a variety of scenic landscapes and untouched terrains with the mysterious Kal-e Jeni (canyon of Jinn) located in Azmighan village, amongst them.

## Archaeological survey yields 145 relics in southeastern Iran

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** – A total of 145 ancient and prehistorical relics have so far been identified during an archaeological survey being conducted in the central core of the Qalehganj county, southeastern Kerman province.

"So far, 145 historical works have been identified and registered over the past 15 working days, and in very harsh weather conditions and temperatures above 50 degrees," ILNA quoted Fatemeh Alizadeh, the survey supervisor, as saying on Sunday.

"Extensive parts of the county have been surveyed yet and very significant results have been obtained," she said.

The archaeologist said "It is a semi-intensive survey, so that in addition to obtaining information from elders, villagers and local people, the areas that are suspected to bear cultural artifacts and evidence, are carefully examined. This manner has let us to recognize many areas with historical values."

"To date, 145 ancient artifacts have been identified and documented, including a variety of ancient hills, archaeological sites, cemeteries, subterranean aqueducts, shrines, lithographs, kilns, caravanserais, and castles."

Earlier this year, teams of German archaeologists and experts along with Iranian fellows commenced a joint survey in Kerman province, southeastern Iran. Senior Iranian archaeologist Nader Alidad-Soleymani and German Professor Peter Pfalzner co-led the survey, which is aimed to record evidence about previously excavated sites in the counties of Jiroft, Kahnuj, Anbarabad, Faryab, Rudbar, Qalehganj, and Manujan.

Back in 2008, Piotr Steinkeller, professor of Assyriology in Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations of Harvard University, announced that Jiroft is the lost ancient city of Marhashi. Steinkeller presented his theory during the first round of an international conference on Jiroft civilization, held in Tehran on May 5 and 6, 2008. Marhashi, (known in earlier sources as



Warahshe) was a 3rd millennium BC polity, which was formed east of Elam on the Iranian plateau.

Big and sprawling Kerman Province is something of a cultural melting pot, blending various regional cultures over the course of time. It is also home to rich tourist spots and historical sites including bazaars, mosques, caravanserais, and ruins of ancient urban areas.

## Annual handicraft exports fetch Khuzestan over \$5 million

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** – Handicrafts exports from the southwestern province of Khuzestan reached \$5.1 million during the previous Iranian calendar year 1398 (ended March 19), provincial tourism chief has said.

The lion's share of handicrafts was exported to Persian Gulf littoral states as well as Pakistan, China and Iraq, CHTN quoted Shokrollah Qasemi as saying on Tuesday.

Traditional glassware, kilim carpets, zilou floor coverings, wicker works, pottery, traditional jewelry and copper products composed the major share of exports, the official added.

Some 17 high-quality works by artisans in the province were also awarded the National Seal of Excellence during the last year, he added.

Khuzestan province is home to three UNESCO World Heritage sites of Susa, Tchogha Zanbil and Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System yet it is a region of raw beauty where its visitors could spend weeks exploring. The province is also



a cradle for handicrafts and arts whose crafters inherited from their preceding generations.

Dozens of Iranian handicrafts have gained the UNESCO Seal of Excellence during the past couple of years.

Iran exported \$523 million worth of handicrafts during the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19). Of the figure, some \$273 million worth of handicrafts were exported officially through customs, and about \$250 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through various provinces.

Back in May, deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian noted that due to the outbreak of coronavirus, suitcase exports of handicrafts were completely stopped since the month of Esfand (the last month of the year), and official exports of handicrafts experienced a steep decline."

"Some 295 fields of handicrafts 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," she said.



# Social indicators for girls improving: vice president

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Statistics show that the situation of girls in the Iranian society is improving in different areas, including health and education, said Masoumeh Ebtekar, the vice president for women's and family affairs.

In this regard, the Vice Presidency for Women's and Family Affairs has taken several measures in policymaking and has been able to achieve significant success, she said.

In order to increase vitality and freshness among girls, with the cooperation of the Education Ministry, the physical education programs for girls that had been eliminated in the primary school, are being conducted again, she noted.

Supporting girls who have dropped out of school is another plan that has been implemented in 17 provinces across the country, with the cooperation of the Literacy Movement Organization, and the Education Ministry, she highlighted.

She went on to say that three schools in Sistan-Baluchestan province were specifically dedicated to girls who have dropped out of school, including those who have passed the school-age and are older.

Referring to the protection laws, she stated that another successful performance of the deputy is to support the final approval of the Law on the Protection of Children and Adolescents, which was approved by the Guardian Council, and the government has announced its readiness to implement the law.

The bill banning child marriage girls under the age of 13 is another piece of support that has now been submitted to the Bills Commission and is in its final stages, which we hope will be announced in the Majlis (Iranian parliament) soon, she emphasized.

Pointing to the family dialogue program, she said that the main goals of the program



are to develop skills for children and parents and strengthen systematic dialogue regarding family issues, which has been done in 3,200 schools across the country.

She noted that the family dialogue program has been implemented in 31 provinces so far.

"In order to familiarize the girl students with civic activities to promote social participation, we have trained 11,000 female students, she said, adding, moreover, we have provided suitable sports facilities for girls so that they can easily exercise in places where schools allow."

"So far, we have held regional exhibitions at three universities to introduce the artistic activities of female students," she added.

She went on to say that in the field of employment and entrepreneurship for girls, "we tried to provide good opportunities for startups with both the Vice Presiden-

cy for Science and Technology and other related agencies."

Several research projects have been conducted to double the effectiveness of activities for girls, she also said. "We hope to strengthen the abilities, life skills, self-confidence, and self-esteem of the girls during the year, with specific goals," she highlighted.

Since three years ago, the Presidency has supported emergency social services as the most effective mechanism for intervening in family and social harms, which includes meetings, rehabilitation, and self-care courses for experts for over 40 social emergency centers.

As per the Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021), emergency social services centers set up in the cities having over 50,000 residents in the first

year of the plan, and in the second year, these centers have been launched in the cities requiring social interventions and reduced social harms.

These centers are working in order to control and reduce divorce, child and elderly abuse and protect the deprived; emergency social services forces include psychologists, social workers, and sociologists.

According to a research conducted in [the Iranian calendar year], 1395 (March 2016-March 2017) and 1396 (March 2017-March 2018), the emergency social services centers have shown to reduce suicidal attempts and with effective interventions have saved 4,000 and 5,000 of those who have committed suicide.

The judiciary cooperates with social emergency forces so that a judge will be dispatched to the place wherever needed.

## World Refugee Day: time for rally around Iran on humanitarian purposes

**1 →** Iran has led by example; refugee and undocumented children can go to school, acquire skills and can one day hope to get a job that will enable them to become self-reliant and self-sufficient.

And we have seen what refugees can do when they are given the opportunity.

Take the example of Fezzeh Hosseini, who was just one month old when her family fled Afghanistan in 1979. Arriving in Mashhad, their first thought was to survive and for that, they needed only the basics - shelter, food and health.

But young Fezzeh was able to go to school - something she would not have been able to do in Afghanistan. Encouraged by her family and buoyed by Iran's inclusive policies, she eventually enrolled in medical school. Today, she is known as Dr. Hosseini and she is the only registered Afghan doctor in Esfahan, caring for Iranian and refugee patients alike.

During the COVID health crisis, she has been of indispensable help - taking on additional shifts in the health clinic and raising awareness about health and hygiene measures in her community. In the past months, we have seen countless examples of refugees who have contributed to the COVID response; Moheyman, an Iraqi refugee, works tirelessly as a nurse to test and treat patients, others have turned their sewing skills to making masks and hospitals gowns for health workers, and yet others have collected and donated essential items to the most vulnerable families.

Their many successes are testimony not just to their resilience and abilities, but to the very real benefits of supporting refugees. By allowing them to thrive, not just survive, refugees are able to give back to their communities, including during emergencies.

While UNHCR continues to work hand in hand with the Government of Iran to help refugees, our efforts are not enough in the face of the increasing needs. Around the world, millions have lost their jobs due to the COVID pandemic.

In Iran, refugees, who often rely on informal work, have been particularly affected and for many it is a struggle to make ends meet. More and more of them are approaching UNHCR for help.

Talking to my UNHCR colleagues in Esfahan with her six-year-old daughter by her side, Dr. Hosseini told us that while she is very grateful for the opportunities she received in Iran, she asks herself what will happen to her children when they grow up.

Collectively, Afghans represent one of the longest-displaced, longest-dispossessed populations worldwide. And after four decades, their future prospects remain very uncertain at best.

The Government of Afghanistan and its international partners continues to strive to build a stable future for its citizens. Nevertheless, in 2019 it was ranked as the world's least peaceful country. This shows that, ultimately, lasting peace, stability and security are needed to create a conducive environment for Afghan refugees to return in larger numbers and durably rebuild their lives at home. UNHCR and other organizations continue to work with Afghan authorities to strengthen basic infrastructure and support returnees, in order to make repatriation stable and lasting.

While this is underway, the international community needs to come together with concrete and enhanced solutions to help alleviate the responsibility of caring for refugees that is being shouldered almost exclusively by Iran; this includes more funding for humanitarian programmes that benefit refugees and host communities, offering more resettlement places for Afghans in Iran and also supporting access to scholarships, internships and vocational training that can help refugees acquire skills useful for when they are able to return home to Afghanistan.

This is becoming more and more urgent, as the Coronavirus is increasingly straining the global economy and

severely impacting countries like Iran, which was already facing hardship due to economic sanctions.

With the decreasing opportunities in Iran and with the situation still uncertain in Afghanistan, refugees are finding it harder to cope. Refugees have shown incredible resilience, but we, the international community, need to step up and make sure the most vulnerable are not left behind during these trying times. Without our support, Afghans, who have already fled their homes once, may find themselves needing to risk their lives and flee again - sometimes even by undertaking the dangerous journey across the Mediterranean sea or land routes.

As we commemorate World Refugee Day this week, it is sobering to realise that things cannot go on as they have. The 'new normal' does not only refer to a world changed by COVID, but one where we fervently hope lasting solutions for Afghans will be further prioritized and found.

Realising the SSAR, the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, is the key to turning this vision into reality. Since its launch in 2012, the Government of Iran has continued to operate and collaborate within this framework to find ways to end the plight of Afghans. But it is time for the international community to rally around Iran for humanitarian purposes anew, and to be even more forthcoming with its support.

In a few weeks, UNHCR's High Commissioner, Mr. Filippo Grandi, will convene a meeting with the Governments of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, to together appeal for enhanced support and solutions for refugees. from the international community. Pending a lasting solution to the Afghan crisis, it is also imperative that host communities who have kept their doors and hearts open for decades also continue to receive generous support.

The future of Afghans depends on solidarity and action today, and collectively staying the course.

Everyone can make a difference. Every action counts.

## 'School-building ambassadors' coming to aid education system

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — In line with the document of the fundamental transformation of education, people who have a popular reputation are being invited as ambassadors to attract public participation for school construction, director of the organization for renovation, development, and equipment of schools has said.

School-building ambassadors have been selected in four provinces of the country so far, and we are going to have one school ambassador from each province, IRNA quoted Mehroollah Rakhshanimehr as saying on Tuesday.

It has always been thought that only a certain number of people who can afford to build a school, but all the people can participate even by buying a brick, he highlighted.

He further explained that a system is set up in which under-construction projects are introduced and users can select each project and pay as much as they can to build the school.

A total budget of 48 trillion rials (nearly \$1.1 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) has been earmarked to renovate schools nationwide in the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21), an increase of 65 percent year on year, Rakhshanimehr said in April.

The organization for renovation, development, and equipment of schools started operating since the Iranian calendar year 1396 (March 2017-March 2018), which received a budget of 8.5 trillion rials (about \$200 million).

However, last year, the renovation budget increased to 29 trillion rials (around \$690 million), and this year, we will be provided with a budge 65 percent more than the previous year, he highlighted, stating, the growth is considerable and can cause major developments.

There are some 107,000 schools nationwide with 530,000 classes, 160,000 of which are dilapidated, not meeting safety standards.

He went on to explain that 30 percent of the schools nationwide are old, of which some 12 percent must be completely rebuilt and 18 percent must be retrofitted.

Renovation of schools and meeting the necessary standards requires a considerable amount of budget, however, current government funding and annual budgets are by no means enough.

## Some \$280m spent annually on rare diseases treatment

### 1 → U.S. sanctions exacerbate conditions

According to official statistics, about 120,000 people in the country are suffering from rare diseases. With the onset of COVID-19 in Iran, the situation has been worsened.

At the same time, the issue of social and welfare support for these patients remains strong, although oppressive U.S. sanctions have further increased concerns about these patients.



Although food and medicine were claimed to be exempted from the U.S. sanctions, financial and banking sanctions have limited the life-saving medicine trade which harshly targeted the patients suffering from rare diseases.

Moreover, fears of falling afoul of Washington have restricted exports to Iran.

Exemptions for humanitarian trade (such as food, medicine, and medical equipment) have not been effective in protecting Iranian patients from access to imported medicine, such as the bandages used for patients suffering Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB), a rare genetic disease that causes painful blistering of the skin.

With the return of sanctions, over a year (May 2018-May 2019), 15 patients covered by EB Health House lost their lives, including Ava, a two-year-old girl in Ahvaz city, who died of infection and lack of skincare.

## WORDS IN THE NEWS

### Taleban drugs control

(January 19, 2004)

New research suggests that the Taleban regime which was removed from power in Afghanistan in 2001 was better at stopping the production of drugs than any other government in modern times. It reduced the amount of heroin being supplied around the world by almost two thirds. The country's drugs trade has revived since the regime lost power. This report from Danny Shaw: During the 1990s Afghanistan was the main source of the world's **illicit** heroin supply, but from July 2000 until its **downfall** over a year later the Taleban regime **enforced a ban** on cultivating opium poppy, from which heroin is manufactured. Farmers who refused to **comply** had their faces blackened and were jailed; in extreme cases they were **paraded** through the streets. The study said the result was that poppy growing in Taleban controlled areas almost **ceased** and that globally, the heroin supply fell by 65%.

But since the Taleban was **deposed** poppy cultivation has increased sharply. The report's author, Professor Graham Farrell, says the success of the strategy **raised important questions** about drug policy and **policing**, but he said it would not be desirable, nor possible, to take such **draconian measures** elsewhere.

### Words

**illicit**: illegal  
**downfall**: loss of power  
**enforced a ban**: made sure that the ban was obeyed  
**comply**: do something as required  
**paraded**: driven around or forced to walk around in public, where other people could see them  
**ceased**: stopped happening  
**deposed**: removed from power by force  
**raised important questions**: made people think again  
**policing**: the use of police or army to make sure that people obey the law  
**draconian measures**: extremely harsh action

(Source: BBC)

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → E

## \$1.2m donated to provide the underprivileged with warm clothing

Iran's Welfare Organization has managed to collect a contribution of 50 billion rials (nearly \$1.2 million) to provide the underprivileged with warm clothing, Tasnim news agency reported on Thursday.

Within the framework of a campaign dubbed "kindness smile" from December 10, 2018 to January 9 some \$1.2 million was solicited from the public for procuring warm clothing for the financially struggling children in underprivileged areas, an official with the Organization has said.

Mohammad Ali Kozeahgar explained that some 50,000 packages of warm clothing were obtained by the money and distributed among the children.

### PREFIX/SUFFIX

#### “-oid”

■ **Meaning**: a word ending that indicates resembling  
■ **For example**: The robot was **humanoid** in appearance.

### PHRASAL VERB

#### Tear at somebody/something

■ **Meaning**: to pull violently at someone or something  
■ **For example**: The children were screaming and tearing at each other's hair.

### IDIOM

#### See eye to eye

■ **Explanation**: if two people see eye to eye, they agree with each other  
■ **For example**: I don't always see eye to eye with my father.

## کمک ۵ میلیاردی برای تامین لباس زمستانی کودکان در مناطق کم برخوردار

به گزارش خبرگزاری تسنیم سازمان بهزیستی کشور با هدف تهیه لباس گرم برای کودکان مناطق کم برخوردار مبلغ ۵ میلیارد تومان جمع آوری کرده است.

رئیس مرکز مشارکتهای مردمی و توانمندسازی سازمان بهزیستی کشور با اشاره به اتمام پویش لبخند مهربانی با هدف تامین تهیه لباس گرم برای کودکان مناطق کم برخوردار اظهار کرد: این پویش از ۱۹ آذر با مشارکت خیرین و نیکوکاران آغاز شد و تا ۱۹ دی ماه ادامه داشت و در این طرح یک ماه ۵ میلیارد تومان جمع آوری شده است.

محمد علی کوزه گر گفت: ۵۰ هزار بسته لباس گرم به ارزش ۵ میلیارد تومان تهیه شده است و در اختیار کودکان قرار گرفت.



## Maduro ‘prepared’ to talk to Trump

Venezuela President Nicolas Maduro has said he is “prepared” to talk to US counterpart Donald Trump, who earlier claimed he was open to meeting the socialist leader to discuss his exit from power.

“When the time comes I’m prepared to speak respectfully with President Donald Trump,” Maduro told the state news agency AVN on Monday.

Trump said he “would maybe think about” meeting Maduro in an interview with Axios published on Sunday, but he changed track in a tweet on Monday.

“My Admin has always stood on the side of FREEDOM and LIBERTY and against the oppressive Maduro regime! I would only meet with Maduro to discuss one thing: a peaceful exit from power!” said Trump.

Maduro made no specific mention of Trump’s quotes but said that “in the same way I spoke with (Joe) Biden, I could speak with Trump.”

Democratic nominee Biden is running against Trump for president in November’s US elections.

Maduro met Biden in 2015 when the latter was vice-president to Barack Obama.

Washington has been one of the chief allies to Venezuela’s opposition leader Juan Guaido but that support has waned as the National Assembly president’s challenge to Maduro’s authority has lost impetus.

Guaido caused a stir 18 months ago declaring himself acting president after the opposition-controlled parliament decreed Maduro a usurper over his 2018 re-election in a poll widely viewed as rigged.

The US was one of the first of more than 50 countries to recognise his claims and the Trump administration ramped up sanctions on Maduro and his inner circle in an effort to starve him of revenue and force his resignation.

After initially drawing huge crowds in anti-Maduro rallies, Guaido’s star has dimmed over the last year.

In January he even faced a challenge to his position as National Assembly leader from an opposition legislator and former ally – an issue that has never been resolved.

## Japan gives UK six weeks to strike a post-Brexit trade deal

Japan has given the UK just six weeks to strike a post-Brexit deal, putting Boris Johnson’s government under pressure to agree one of the fastest trade negotiations in history, the Financial Times reported.



“To avoid a gap in January, we must pass this in the autumn session of the Diet [the Japanese parliament],” Hiroshi Matsuura, Tokyo’s chief negotiator, told the Financial Times. “That means we must complete negotiations by the end of July.”

## Taliban killed 291 Afghan security personnel in past week: Gov’t

The Taliban has killed at least 291 Afghan security personnel over the past week, a top government official said, accusing the armed group of unleashing a wave of violence ahead of potential peace talks.

The previous week was the “deadliest” in the country’s 19 years of conflict, Javid Faisal, spokesman for the National Security Council, said on Monday.

The Taliban group carried out 422 attacks in 32 provinces during the past week, killing 291 security personnel and wounding 550 others, Faisal said on Twitter.

“Taliban’s commitment to reduce violence is meaningless, and their actions inconsistent with their rhetoric on peace,” he said.

The Taliban rejected the latest government figures. “The enemy aims to hurt the peace process and intra-Afghan talks by releasing such false reports,” Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban’s spokesman in Afghanistan, told the AFP news agency.

“We did have some attacks last week, but they were mostly in defense.”

## Resistance News

## IOA destroys home in Silwan, displaces Jerusalemite family

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The Israeli occupation authority (IOA) on Tuesday displaced a Jerusalemite family after demolishing their home in Silwan district, south of the Aqsa Mosque, at the pretext of unlicensed construction.

According to the Wadi Hilweh Information Center in Silwan, Israeli municipal crews escorted by police forces stormed al-Bustan neighborhood in Silwan, cordoned off the area and then embarked on manually knocking down the house.

The family of Mohamed al-Rajabi said that Israeli municipal workers carried out the demolition using manual demolition equipment because it was not possible for bulldozers to reach the location of the house.

# Yemeni armed forces target strategic sites deep in Saudi Arabia

The Yemeni army says it has carried out large-scale attacks on a number of strategic sites deep in Saudi Arabia in retaliation for the Riyadh regime’s bloody military campaign against the impoverished nation.

In a statement released by the al-Masirah TV channel on Tuesday, Brigadier General Yahya Saree, spokesman for Yemen’s Armed Forces, said a barrage of ballistic and winged missiles as well as drones were used in the operation.

The attack targeted the headquarters of the Saudi Defense Ministry and general intelligence agency as well as King Salman Air Base, among other military targets in the capital Riyadh and the southern regions of Najran and Jizan, he added.

Saree also stressed that the military operation came in response to the “unjust embargo and brutal aggression” against Yemen, vowing to conduct more such raids against the kingdom until the siege is lifted and its offensive comes to an end.

■ **Saudis warned to take Yemeni raid seriously**

In a post on his Twitter account, Mohammed Abdulsalam, spokesman of the Houthi Ansarullah movement, warned the U.S.-Saudi coalition to take the latest Yemeni operation seriously.



“Stopping the aggression and lifting the siege are a humanitarian and national goal for oppressed Yemeni people,” he wrote, echoing the Yemeni army spokesman.

The operation, he added, signals that

the Yemeni army’s next moves will be “more severe.”

Earlier in the day, Saudi activists reported loud blasts north of the capital Riyadh.

The Saudi-led coalition has also claimed

## UNHRC condemns Israeli annexation plans, calls for report on its impact

→ **1** The settlements resolution was one of five pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli texts the 47-member body approved during its 43rd session.

Israel was the only country against which such a high number of resolutions were leveled. Four were approved Monday and one was passed on Friday with regard to accountability, which included a call for an arms embargo.

Only six other countries had resolutions in their name with respect to human rights issues, and in each case it was a singular resolution – and not all of those texts were condemnations. They included Iran, Syria, South Sudan, Myanmar, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and Nicaragua.

Khraishi called on the international community to take a strong stand against Israeli annexation plans. According to the U.S. peace plan, Israel can annex 30% of the West Bank including the Jordan Valley and the northern Dead Sea.

“It’s a circus that we are witnessing in the U.S. It seems as if the US is deciding the fate of the Palestinian people without referring to international resolutions,” Khraishi stated. “[U.S. President Donald] Trump is giving free rein to Israel and saying more or less, ‘you can annex these areas,’” he added.

“We have to, sooner or later, stop this situation,” the

ambassador said.

The Palestinian envoy linked the situation of the Palestinians with the Black Lives Matter movement in the U.S.

Khraishi accused Israel of crimes against humanity and of “exploiting” the Holocaust for its own political gain. He added that Israel had brought Jews from outside to displace Palestinians.

Australia and the Marshall Islands were the only two countries to reject all five of the resolutions. Countries that abstained from the settlements resolution were Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Slovenia, Togo and Ukraine. Of the 36 countries that approved the measures, five were European: Denmark, Germany, Italy, Poland and Spain.

The vote on the settlements resolution and three others that took place Monday occurred under Agenda Item 7. The UNHRC at every session is mandated to debate alleged Israeli human rights abuses under this agenda item. No other country has such a set mandate.

Australian Ambassador Sally Mansfield said that her country was opposed to “biased” and “one-sided resolutions.” She added that nowhere was this bias more apparent than in the existence of Item 7, which damages the credibility of the council.

“Our vote against these resolutions represents a vote against the disproportionate focus that holds Israel to a higher degree of scrutiny than any other state,” Mansfield said.

Czech Ambassador Petr Gajdusek called for the UNHRC to remove Item 7 from its agenda. It also opposed the council’s call for a report on annexation, noting that the body should seek a more appropriate response that would occur in real time.

The resolution on alleged Israeli human rights abuses in the Palestinian territories passed overwhelmingly at 42-2 with three abstentions. The three abstentions were Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Togo.

The resolution affirming the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination also passed overwhelmingly at 43-2 with two abstentions. Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo abstained here also.

The resolution condemning Israeli sovereignty on the Golan Heights passed 26-17, with four abstentions.

Those who opposed the measure were Australia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Japan, Marshall Islands, Netherlands, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Spain, Togo and Ukraine.

Those who abstained were Cameroon, Congo, Fiji and the Philippines.

## U.S. anti-racist protests:

## Trump promises to arrest anyone pulling down statues

‘End unlawful police violence against Black Lives Matter protests’

→ **1** In an opinion piece for The New York Times titled Send in The Military, the conservative senator encouraged an “overwhelming show of force to disperse, detain and ultimately deter lawbreakers”.

Trump has threatened to deploy the U.S. military on the streets - a move widely condemned by rights activists, politicians, and even American military leaders.

■ **‘Disgraceful vandalism’**

On Monday night, protesters tried to pull down a statue of former U.S. President Andrew Jackson near the White House before being dispersed by police with pepper-spray at Lafayette Square, where the Jackson statue is located.

Videos posted on social media showed demonstrators climbing on the statue, tying ropes around it, then unsuccessfully trying to pull it off its pedestal.

Trump tweeted late on Monday that “numerous people” had been arrested for “the disgraceful vandalism”.

The statue shows Jackson in a military uniform, riding a horse that is rearing on its hind legs. The 19th-century president’s ruthless treatment of Native Americans has made his statue a target of demonstrators protesting the U.S.’s legacy of racial injustice.



Interior Secretary David Bernhardt was at the scene on Monday and issued a statement. “Let me be clear: we will not bow to anarchists. Law and order will prevail, and justice will be served,” said Bernhardt.

On June 1, law enforcement officers forcefully cleared peaceful protesters from Lafayette Square so Trump could stage a photo opportunity at a nearby church.

■ **End unlawful police violence against protests**

Police forces across the USA committed widespread and egregious human rights violations against people protesting the unlawful killings of Black people and calling for police reform, Amnesty International said on Tuesday, as it launched an interactive map of incidents of police violence and a new campaign calling for systemic changes in policing.

Amnesty International has documented 125 separate examples of police violence against protesters in 40 states and the District of Columbia between 26 May and 5 June 2020, a period when hundreds of thousands of people in the USA and other countries protested against racism and police violence and to demand that Black lives matter. The analysis shows that law enforcement officers violated human rights daily out on the streets instead of fulfilling their obligations to respect and facilitate the right of people to peacefully protest.

This unlawful use of force included beatings, misuse of tear gas and pepper spray, and the inappropriate firing of less-lethal projectiles, such as sponge rounds and rubber bullets. Those abuses were committed by a range of security forces from state and local police departments, federal agencies, and the National Guard.

“The analysis is clear: when activists and supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement took to the streets in cities and towns across the USA to peacefully demand an end to systemic racism and police violence, they were overwhelmingly met with a militarized response and more police violence,” said Brian Castner, Senior Crisis Advisor on

Arms and Military Operations at Amnesty International.

“The time for applying band-aids and making excuses for a few ‘bad apples’ has passed. What’s needed now is systemic, root-and-branch reform of US policing that brings an end to the scourge of police use of excessive force and extrajudicial executions of Black people. Communities should not live in fear of being harmed by the very officers that have sworn an oath to protect them. Officers responsible for excessive force and unlawful killings must always be held accountable.”

■ **Open source investigation into U.S. protests**

To evaluate these incidents, Amnesty International’s Crisis Evidence Lab gathered almost 500 videos and photographs of protests from social media platforms.

This digital content was then verified, geolocated, and analyzed by investigators with expertise in weapons, police tactics, and international and US laws governing the use of force.

In some cases, researchers were also able to interview victims and confirm police conduct with local police departments.

## Syrian FM says U.S. sanctions seek to ‘starve the people’

Syria’s foreign minister accused the United States on Tuesday of allegedly “seeking to starve the people” of Syria by imposing new sanctions and opening the door for “terrorism” to return to the war-torn country.

Walid al-Moallem said the sanctions are a challenge but not impossible to overcome, and insisted that the government will be able to cope with the so-called Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act - with assistance from friends and allies.

Syrian President Bashar Assad’s government refers to armed opposition fighting it as “terrorism.” The legislation known as the Caesar Act was named after the pseudonym of a Syrian policeman who turned over photographs of thousands of victims of torture by the government.

“The challenges are not easy,” al-Moallem said. “We have already started taking measures to counter these sanctions.”

The latest U.S. sanctions are the most severe yet against Syria, set to target any individual or entity doing business with the Syrian government or supporting its military efforts, including reconstruction, fuel delivery and other sectors. Businessmen close to the Syrian government were added to the sanctions list under the new measures.



The U.S. State Department and Treasury also added the names of Assad, his wife and relatives to the sanctions list, tightening the noose around the inner circle of the ruling family. More names are expected to be announced this summer.

“What we need to do is turn this into an opportunity to develop our national economy, increase self-reliance and deepen the cooperation with friends and allies,” al-Moallem said and added that authorities are “not worried about the Caesar Act despite all the psychological warfare.”

According to AP, the act, which gained bipartisan support in Congress in December, went into effect this month.

Al-Moallem also said that the sanctions aim to influence the Syrian presidential elections, expected next year, to change Syria’s policy and force it to give up its current alliances with “the resistance” - a reference to Assad’s allies Iran, the Lebanon’s Hezbollah group and Palestinian factions.

He said that Assad would remain in power as long as the Syrian people want him to stay.

Al-Moallem dismissed the measures as an “act of the despairing” after the Syrian government forces’ success on the battlefield.

“The real goal of the so-called Caesar Act is to open the door for the return of terrorism as it was in 2011,” he added.



# Tough task ahead of Iran to qualify for World Cup: Dragan Skocic

**S P O R T S   T E H R A N** — National football team head coach Dragan Skocic says that they will have a difficult task ahead to advance to the 2022 World Cup but Iran have the potential to make it happen.

In an interview with live television program Football Bartar, the Croatian coach also talked about how he was appointed as Iran national football team head coach.

Skocic took the reins at Iran in February after parting company with Iranian top flight team Sanat Naft.

“I was forced to quit my job as Sanat Naft coach because of skin sensitivity and one day after I stepped down from my role in Abadan, the officials of Iran football federation called me and offered to lead the National Team,” Skocic said.

Iran are third in Group C, five points behind Iraq and must have to win their four matches to qualify for the 2022 World Cup qualification next stage.

“I know that the work ahead of us will be difficult, but our goal is clear. I am sure we have the potential to book a place at the 2022 World Cup. We want to make the Iranian people happy,” he added.

Skocic was widely criticized for being appointed as Iran coach since the Croat had said he would not work in Iran due to skin sensitivity.

“Honestly, I was hospitalized at hospital several times in Abadan but I feel pretty good about the city,” Skocic said.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC), in consultation with FIFA, has 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 after the competitions were canceled due to coronavirus.

Matchdays 7 and 8 are now scheduled

to take place on October 8 and 13, respectively while Matchdays 9 and 10 are due to kick off on November 12 and 17.

“We have a short time to prepare for the matches,” Skocic said. “We will invite the players who are well-prepared and

the door is open for all players. We will monitor the league and the best players have the chance to be called up to the national team. It doesn’t matter which team or league the players are playing,” Skocic concluded.

## Iran Hall of Fame inaugurated

**1 →** The busts of 1952 Olympic Games bronze medalist Mahmoud Mollaghasemi (wrestling), 1952 Olympic Games bronze medalist Ali Mirzaei (weightlifting), 1956 Olympic Games silver medalist Mehdi Yaghoubi (wrestling), 1956 Olympic Games gold medalist Emamali

Habibi (wrestling), Mohammad Ebrahim Seifpour 1960 Olympic Games bronze medalist (wrestling) and late Siamand Rahaman who won two Paralympic gold medals were unveiled in the ceremony.

Tehran Mayor Pirouz Hanachi, Minister of

Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Ali-Asghar Mounesan and former president of Iran’s physical education organization and national Olympic committee had been also invited to the ceremony.

## Gabriel Mohagheghi Appointed as Luxembourg Beach Soccer Coach

Iranian coach Gabriel Mohagheghi has been appointed as new head coach of Luxembourg national beach soccer team.

He has penned a two-year contract with the European team.

Mohagheghi told Beach Soccer Worldwide that he was extremely proud to be appointed as head coach, stating that he has “noticed that Luxembourg is a country with a lot of talent and I have set myself the goal of promoting many young players and talents in order to build the team to a very good level. I am very happy to accept the challenge and I believe in both the team and myself.”

There is no time to lose for the Iranian, who is already making big plans to get the team training and towards making their first appearance on the beach soccer pitch.



“Within the next two weeks we will organize a training camp in Münster and Luxembourg so that all players and teams can get to know each other. We will also use the opportunity to discuss the annual planning.”

He touched briefly on the challenging nature of becoming coach during the current pandemic. “Because of Covid-19, a lot is confused and difficult at the moment, but hopefully we can organize some friendly games and participation in tournaments.”

“I want to thank my team, all the players, contributors, friends, sponsors, the DFB, Beach Soccer Worldwide and many other for helping the beach soccer family and me I am very proud to be part of this family.”

(Source: Beach Soccer Worldwide)

## Djokovic tests positive for COVID-19 - statement

Novak Djokovic, the men’s world number one tennis player, has tested positive for COVID-19, the Serbian said in a statement on Tuesday.

Croatia’s Borna Coric, Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria and Viktor Troicki have previously tested positive after playing in Djokovic’s Adria Tour exhibition tournament in the Balkan region.

“The moment we arrived in Belgrade we went to be tested,” the 33-year-old said in a statement, adding that he was not showing any symptoms. “My result is positive, just as Jelena’s (wife), while the results of our children are negative.

“I am extremely sorry for each individual case of infection. I hope that it will not complicate anyone’s health situation and that everyone will be fine. I will remain in self-isolation for the

next 14 days, and repeat the test in five days.”

The tournament witnessed packed stands during the opening leg in Belgrade, players hugging at the net, playing basketball, posing for pictures and attending press conferences together.

Djokovic organized nights out in Belgrade for the players and pictures and videos of him dancing with the other participants at his event were posted on social media.

With both Serbia and Croatia easing lockdown measures weeks before the event, players were not obliged to observe social distancing rules in either country.

Djokovic said the idea behind his tournament was noble and he wanted to raise funds for players in need.

“Everything we did in the past month, we did with a pure heart and sincere intentions,” said Djokovic, who is also the head of the players council of the men’s ATP Tour.



“Our tournament meant to unite and share a message of solidarity and compassion throughout the region.

“The Tour has been designed to help both established and up and coming tennis players

from South-Eastern Europe to gain access to some competitive tennis while the various tours are on hold due to the COVID-19 situation.”

A following statement confirmed that the remainder of the Adria Tour had been cancelled, the two-day event on July 3 and 4 in Banja Luka, Bosnia and the planned exhibition match with Bosnian Damir Dzumhur in Sarajevo on July 5.

“We are extremely disappointed to have to cancel the events in Banja Luka and Sarajevo,” said Novak’s brother Djordje Djokovic, the director of the Adria Tour.

“We were looking forward to treating fans in these two cities to watching Novak Djokovic and other top players. Unfortunately, the recent events make everyone’s speedy recovery a top priority.”

(Source: Reuters)

## Bach calls for power of sport against pandemic on Olympic Day

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach on Tuesday called on people around the world to use the power of sport to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

The president made the remarks through a video message to National Olympic Committees (NOCs) on the 73rd Olympic Day.

“Celebrating Olympic Day may feel very different from all previous years, but at the same time, on this Olympic Day, our message of the power of sport to bring hope and optimism to everyone resonates even stronger,” said Bach.

“Let us join together to use this power of sport to prepare the postponed Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 as a moment of solidarity and resilience of humankind,” he added.

With the pandemic forcing a global lockdown, the IOC initiated a #StayStrong, #StayActive, #StayHealthy campaign to encourage people to share their exercising video on social media. So far, nearly 5,000 Olympians have engaged 243 million people online across more than 50 countries and regions.

“We are all in the same situation right now,” Bach continued. “With the global coronavirus crisis, all of us are living with much uncertainty about the future. In these difficult times, we need the values of sport, our shared Olympic values of excellence, friendship, respect and solidarity, more than ever.

“The Olympic flame can be the light at the end of the

dark tunnel that we all find ourselves in now. On Olympic Day, we are sending this Olympic message to everybody. Please stay strong, stay active, stay healthy. In this Olympic spirit, I wish you all a wonderful Olympic Day 2020,” Bach concluded.

The Olympic Day was introduced in 1894 to commemorate the birth of the modern Olympics on June 23 in Paris. It is marked to promote participation in sport regardless of age, gender and athletic abilities.

Olympic Day, marked on June 23, is celebrated around the world to spread the Olympic ideals. Thousands of people participate in sporting and cultural activities, such as runs, exhibitions, music and educational seminars. This year, the Olympic Games in Tokyo were called off due to the on-going coronavirus pandemic that has wreaked havoc in nations across the world.

Introduced in 1948, to commemorate the birth of modern Olympic Games in 1894 on June 23 at the Sorbonne in Paris, the goal of Olympic Day is to promote participation in sport across the world, irrespective of age, gender or athletic ability.

Whereas in 1987, there were 45 participating National Olympic Committees (NOCs), there are now over 205 NOCs joining. Many participating NOCs are in Africa too, indicating the widespread appeal of the day. The last 20 years have been associated with Olympic Day Runs across the world.



■ **Olympic Day: More than just a sports event**

The Olympic Day, celebrated on June 23, has developed into much more than a sports event. The NOCs, based on the three pillars of ‘move’, ‘learn’ and ‘discover’, organize sports, cultural and educational activities. Many NOCs have also added concerts and exhibitions to celebrate this day.

In some nations, the Olympic Day is included in school curriculums and recent NOC activities have organized for the meetings for children and youth with leading athletes. They have also developed websites to direct people to Olympic Day programmes in their neighborhood, to enlarge the scope of participation.

(Source: Xinhua)

## The IPL is back; massive test for Foolad and Esteghlal

**S P O R T S   T E H R A N** — Exactly 118 days after the last taste of Iran Professional League (IPL), Iran’s top flight returns on Wednesday and the prominent fixture of the first night back sees Foolad Khuzestan welcome Tehran giants, Esteghlal, to the Foolad Arena.



The contest is a postponed match of the week 17th of the competitions and the first one after the break that was the result of the outbreak of pandemic coronavirus in the country.

Javad Nekounam, head coach of Foolad goes head-to-head with his former teammate at Esteghlal, Farhad Majidi, who is now at the helm of the Blues.

Prior to lockdown, Esteghlal were defeated 1-0 by Gol Gohar in Sirjan. They don’t want to lose back-to-back games in the league as they are now at the fourth place of the table with 36 points and a game in hand.

Majidi’s side could move to the second place ahead of Sepahan and Tractor, who are second and third respectively.

Foolad, on the other hand, are aiming to take the three points of the home fixture and move to fourth place. They have now 33 points and stand sixth at the table of the IPL.

However, home advantage looks likely to be worthless when football returns due to matches being played behind closed doors, which in the top European leagues has resulted in a remarkable increase of away wins and a decrease in home victories.

Nekounam’s side are hard to beat at home. They have not lost such a game since October 2019 but they will need to beat their rival if they are to make a late push for an AFC Champions League spot this season.

The first game back for both sides is a massive test.

## Sepahan want Charleroi loanee Noorafkan to stay

**PLDC** — Iranian football club Sepahan are keen to hold on to Omid Noorafkan after the end of the season and will discuss with Charleroi over signing the player.

The 23-year-old midfielder joined the Belgian team in 2018 and his current contract runs until the end of the next season.

Now, the Iranian football club are going to open negotiations with Zebras to sign the international player.

Sepahan acting president Manouchehr Nikfar has already traveled to Belgium to complete the transfer.

Sepahan sit second in Iran Professional League table, 10 points behind leaders Persepolis.

## Japan to let 5,000 fans attend football matches

Tokyo: Up to 5,000 fans will be able to attend Japanese football and baseball games from July 10, officials said on Monday as the sport inched towards normality after coronavirus suspensions.

The heads of Nippon Professional Baseball and football’s J-League announced the move at a joint press appearance after consultations with infection experts.

“We must fully consider the current situation... but we have received word from government officials that we can declare that we will let spectators in from the 10th of next month,” baseball commissioner Atsushi Saito told a press briefing.

J-League chairman Mitsuru Murai said the same date would apply for football matches.

Stadiums will admit only 5,000 spectators or 50 percent of their capacity, whichever number is smaller. Fans are expected to be asked to wear masks, wash their hands frequently and avoid shouting, according to reports.

Professional baseball began its season last Friday behind closed doors after a three-month delay as the COVID-19 pandemic swept around the world.

The top tier of Japan’s J-League football will return on July 4, initially in front of empty stadiums. The pandemic has forced a one-year delay of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

(Source: AFC)

## Burnley chair on banner: We’ll root out racists

Burnley chairman Mike Garlick has told ESPN that the club will “root out the racists” who organised the flying of a plane with a “White Lives Matter -- Burnley” banner over the Etihad Stadium prior to Monday’s Premier League clash with Manchester City.

The stunt, which coincided with both sets of players taking a knee in recognition of the Black Lives Matter movement, has prompted widespread condemnation, with Burnley captain Ben Mee saying after the game that he and his teammates were “embarrassed and ashamed” by the incident.

Lancashire Police have confirmed they are investigating the matter and Garlick has made it clear that, if those involved are identified as Burnley supporters, they will be dealt with severely.

“We will root out these racists and I am sure they will be dealt with in due course,” Garlick told ESPN in a telephone interview. “We will do whatever we can to make sure justice is done against these people.

“Let’s be clear. The plane didn’t fly in our name. It has absolutely nothing to do with Burnley Football Club and we absolutely deplore it.

“But we have to talk about it. We cannot and will not sweep it under the carpet.

(Source: ESPN)



INTERNATIONAL DAILY  
www.tehrantimes.com

■ Managing Director: Mohammad Shojaeian  
■ Editor-in-Chief: Ali A.Jenabzadeh

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895  
editor@tehrantimes.com

» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000

» Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430

» Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807

» Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603

» Webmaster: webmaster@tehrantimes.com

» Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737

Tehrantimes79

Tehrantimes79

Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran  
P.O. Box: 14155-4843  
Zip Code: 1599814713

GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who adopts patience like free spirits against hardships will benefit greatly, but if he is impatient like ignorant people, he will gradually fall into forgetfulness.  
*Imam Ali (AS)*

“Gando” director to make series on Hazrat Masumeh (SA)

→1 Afshar said that there have been no negotiations as yet to select members of the cast, and gave no details about the depiction of Hazrat Masumeh (SA) in the project.



Holy shrine of Hazrat Masumeh (SA), Qom.

Based on Islamic rules, depiction of Prophet Muhammad (S), Imams, and the members of their households in film productions and other art forms are forbidden.

The project will be produced in collaboration with the custodians of the holy shrine of Hazrat Masumeh (SA) in Qom.

The producer of the project is Mojtaba Amini, who worked with Afshar in the series “Gando” on the true story of the major espionage case of Jason Rezaian, an Iranian-American journalist who served as Tehran bureau chief for the Washington Post.

The series faced some criticism from Iran’s Foreign Ministry, which has been portrayed as an uninformed, neutral and westernophile organization in the series.

Nuha al-Radi’s “Baghdad Diaries” published in Persian

CULTURE TEHRAN — A Persian translation of “Baghdad Diaries: A Woman’s Chronicle of War and Exile” by Iraqi postwar and contemporary artist Nuha al-Radi (1941 – 2004) has been published by Cheshmeh Publications in Tehran.

The book has been rendered into Persian by Maryam Momeni.

“In this often moving, sometimes wry account of life in Baghdad during the first war on Iraq and in exile in the years following, Iraqi-born, British-educated artist Nuha al-Radi shows us the effects of war on ordinary people,” writes Amazon.

“She recounts the day-to-day realities of living in a city under siege, where food has to be consumed or thrown out because there is no way to preserve it, where eventually people cannot sleep until the nightly bombing commences, where packs of stray dogs roam the streets and rats invade homes. Through it all, al-Radi works at her art and gathers with neighbors and family for meals and other occasions, happy and sad,” it says.

“In the wake of the war, al-Radi lives in semi-exile, shuttling between Beirut and Amman, travelling to New York, London, Mexico and Yemen. As she suffers the indignities of being an Iraqi in exile, al-Radi immerses us in a way of life constricted by the stress and effects of war and embargoes, giving texture to a reality we have only been able to imagine before now. But what emanates most vibrantly from these diaries is the spirit of endurance and the celebration of the smallest of life’s joys,” it adds.

Born in Baghdad, Nuha al-Radi trained at the Byam Shaw School of Art in London in the early 1960s and later taught at the American University of Beirut. A painter, ceramist and sculptor, her works have been shown throughout the Arab world and in Berlin, London and Washington.

Tehran Intl. Short Film Festival receives about 5000 submissions

A R T TEHRAN — The 37th edition of the Tehran International Short Film Festival (TISFF) has received 4986 submissions from different countries, the organizers have announced.

France stands first with 604 submissions, and next comes the U.S. with 278 films, and then India with 270.

The countries of Spain and Germany stand next, each with 257 and 215 submissions respectively.

“Brotherhood”, a co-production between Canada and Tunisia by Canada-based Tunisian director Meryam Joobeur, received the grand prize in the international competition of the 36th Tehran International Short Film Festival in Tehran in November 2019.

The film is about the tensions within a Tunisian family when their older son, who has been away for several years, returns home with a new Syrian wife who wears a full niqab, igniting his father’s suspicions that his son has been fighting for ISIS.

Photographer Omid Heidarifar’s work on faith wins award at HIPA competition

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian photographer Omid Heidarifar has won the People’s Choice Award at the HIPA Instagram Photo Contest.

The contest was organized by the Hamdan International Photography Award (HIPA) on the theme of faith during May.

Heidarifar received the award for a single photo that depicts a Muslim couple praying among the rubble after the 2017 earthquake in the Sarepole Zahab region in western Iran, the organizers announced on Sunday.

“This photo shows the people keep their faith in God’s mercy despite their fate in difficult times after the devastating earthquake,” Heidarifar has said about his photo.

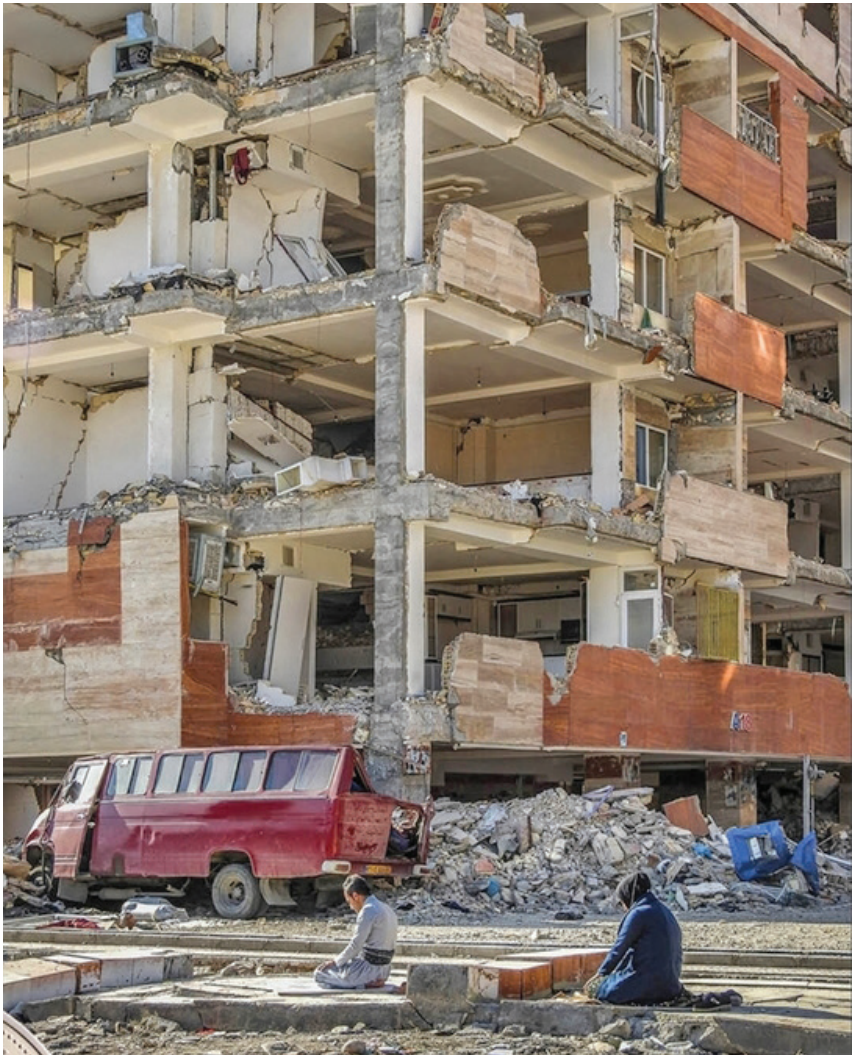
Ahmed Alibrahim from Saudi Arabia

is another winner of the HIPA Instagram Competition. His photo shows a man clad in a different costume from those worn by other pilgrims in Mecca.

The other winners were Jassim Mohamed Alshakhoori from Bahrain, and Rene B. Bernal and Mark Anthony Agtay, both from the Philippines.

The HIPA Instagram Photo Contest is organized every month and in June, the theme is “shadows” and the organizers have asked photographers to submit works in monochrome.

The Hamdan International Photography Award has been established by Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Crown Prince of Dubai.



Iranian photographer Omid Heidarifar’s photo won the People’s Choice Award at the HIPA Instagram Photo Contest in Dubai on June 21, 2020.

Iranian masters comment on Turkey’s efforts for registration of calligraphy on UNESCO list

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian masters of calligraphy believe that Turkey has made great efforts in applying to register calligraphy on UNESCO’s List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, while Iran has been negligent.

According to a statement released by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkey has applied for the registration of calligraphy on UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Hamidreza Qelichkhani said that Iran’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization (CHTHO) began to work on preparing the document on calligraphy to apply for registration on the UNESCO list last year and had asked him for cooperation, but it has not been completed and there always were worries that other countries might register calligraphy under their own names.

“Of course I must say that countries like Iran, Turkey and Iraq can apply for registration of calligraphy on the UNESCO list since it’s a joint culture between these countries. But those countries that have more experience are viewed more favorably, and this time Turkey has taken the lead which is a notable credit for the country,” he said.

“Nastaliq and shekasteh nastaliq all belong to Iran and we can register them first on our national heritage list and then apply for the UNESCO World Heritage List. However, we have been negligent and the only way left is to register them as quickly as we can,” he added.

“A book was published in Turkey to introduce calligraphers of Istanbul. Nevertheless, they have introduced calligrapher Mir-Emad as a Turkish calligrapher since he had traveled



A calligraphy work by Mohammad ibn Seyfi Qazvini (1553-1615) known as Mir-Emad.

to Turkey and lived in Istanbul for a few years,” he said.

Mohammad ibn Seyfi Qazvini (1553-1615) known as Mir-Emad was the titan of the nastaliq script, a unique and ornate Iranian style of calligraphy.

“They also tried to change the name of nastaliq to taliq in the recent years, which shows that they have a long

range program and aim to gain a greater share of Islamic art from other civilizations. Turkish calligraphy is a branch of Iranian calligraphy,” he added.

“We always wait until something happens and then get worried. But we must first register our Iranian style of calligraphy on the world heritage list so that we can be the heir to this ancient and precious asset,” he noted.

Ali Shirazi for his part said that Turkey has a long and noteworthy background in calligraphy, but calligraphy was limited to the city of Istanbul and the number of those who practiced calligraphy was small but were being supported by the Turkish government.

“Turkish calligraphers are very active in their country and other countries as well, and this has made Turkey into the heart of calligraphy,” he added.

“Our country, Iran, has long had a broad background in calligraphy, and many Iranian calligraphy works are sold in world auctions, but the art of calligraphy has been ignored in the country and the organizations in charge do not support the calligraphers,” he commented.

Javad Bakhtiari also said that when he was in charge of the Association of Calligraphers, he seriously pursued the world registration of calligraphy, but the officials did not cooperate much and that Turkey made use of the opportunity for its registration.

“Turkey enjoys great masters of calligraphy in the naskh and thulth styles of calligraphy, but they have nothing to say in nastaliq; and Iran is famous for its nastaliq style of calligraphy. However, they have found a way to register it in their name,” he concluded.

Deputy Culture Minister Mohammad Khodadi meets Afghan counterpart in Tehran



Deputy Culture Minister for Press Affairs Mohammad Khodadi (L) holds talks with Afghanistan’s Deputy Minister of Information and Culture Mohammad Rasoul Bawari (C) in his office in Tehran.

CULTURE TEHRAN — Deputy Culture Minister for Press Affairs Mohammad Khodadi met with Afghanistan’s Deputy Minister of Information and Culture Mohammad Rasoul Bawari in his office in Tehran to discuss expansion of cultural relations, the office announced on Tuesday.

“The constant relations between Iran and Afghanistan have always been based on kindness, cooperation and friendship, and the two nations have always supported each other,” Khodadi said in the meeting.

“Millions of Afghan nationals living in Iran and receiving free services like Iranian citizens demonstrates Iranians’ friendly behavior toward their old neighbor,” he added.

“The western countries have long been exaggerating about the problems in the

Muslim countries seeking to further their own interests. They have been trying to introduce the developing Muslim countries as undeveloped, war-seeking countries that are encountering cultural and social crises,” he said.

Bawari also announced his country’s willingness to engage in media collaboration with Iran and to exchange journalists between the two countries.

He also noted that the culture ministers of the two countries are scheduled to sign a media agreement, based upon the terms of which Iran will have a cultural center in Herat while Afghanistan will be able to establish a cultural center in Mashhad.

Media cooperation, exchange of media delegations between the two countries and holding journalism courses were other topics discussed at the meeting.

Composer Loris Tjeknavorian creates “memorable” piece in home quarantine



Composer Loris Tjeknavorian in an undated photo.

A R T TEHRAN — Loris Tjeknavorian, the 82-year-old Iranian composer, has said that he has created one of the most memorable pieces of his life during the home quarantine.

Speaking to Mizan on Tuesday, he said, “I have worked on a special piece over the past four months for which I have not selected a name as yet, but it is the outcome of contemplation and mediation during the home quarantine. I believe it will be one of the most memorable works of my professional life.”

“Despite the government’s permit for reopening concert halls after about a four-month shutdown, everything is still closed and I think it is impossible to perform any concert at present, but I

have many pieces ready to be performed,” he added.

“The pandemic caused great losses for musicians, however, it also provided great opportunities for them to create new and innovative works in their solitude during the home quarantine,”

Earlier in April Tjeknavorian released a 12-minute composition named “Corona”. The piece was composed in three movements named “Assault”, “Death” and “Life”.

“The first step to fight the coronavirus is to observe all the health tips to get rid of this new disease soon, but as long as this situation continues we should try to do our best. If we are artists or musicians we need to work harder and if not we need to increase our personal knowledge,” he said at that time.