



Tehran-Damascus military agreement result of years of co-op **2**



Iran's eastern railway could be used for Russia-India transit **4**



Shahla Behrouzi Rad falls in love with Para canoe **11**



"The Motherland's Borderless Commander" published on Qassem Soleimani **12**



©file photo

Massacre the world must remember

Ambassador Veladzie says he likes to thank Iran for supporting Bosnians in that terrible situation

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Russia says U.S. will never succeed in extending Iran arms embargo

TEHRAN — Russia's permanent representative to the UN, Vasily Nebenzia, said on Thursday that the U.S. draft resolution on extending the United Nations' arms embargo on Iran has no chance of succeeding. "This resolution has very sad prospects. I mean, they just do not exist," Nebenzia said in an open online interview, Sputnik News reported.

He said Russia told the U.S. as soon as the latter started working on the resolution that it has "absolutely no chance of being adopted."

"The adoption of such a resolution

would put an end to the JCPOA. It is clear that Iran will never accept that, and it has the right to do so," Nebenzia added.

In June, the United States introduced a draft resolution at the UN Security Council to extend the arms embargo on Iran before it expires in mid-October. Russia and China have already voiced their opposition to the draft resolution.

In 2015, Iran signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, the U.S., and the European Union. **→3**

Rouhani inaugurates industrial projects worth \$1.4b in 3 provinces

TEHRAN — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, on Thursday, inaugurated several industrial and mining projects worth 58.8 trillion rials (\$1.4 billion) in three provinces via video conference, IRNA reported.

The mentioned projects included a textile production plant in Sistan-Baluchestan Province, a sponge

iron production unit in Fars Province, and a foodstuff production complex in Isfahan Province.

The commissioning of the said projects is going to create direct job opportunities for 1,204 people, according to Director General of Planning and Financing Office of the Ministry of Industry, Mining, and Trade Alireza Hadi. **→4**

Iranian music video "Death of Satan" on U.S. racism released

TEHRAN — An Iranian music video titled "Death of Satan" that criticizes racial discrimination in the United States of America was released on Thursday.

The music video sung by Hamed Alizadeh has English and Arabic subtitles. The lyrics have also been composed by Alizadeh.

The video begins with the remarks the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei made on August 25, 2014.

"This issue of racial discrimination in this country, which claims freedom and human rights, has not yet been resolved," he said. **→12**



ARTICLE

Faranak Bakhtiari
Tehran Times journalist

Save the planet: Iran takes step to reduce plastic bags

In Iran, over 1 million tons of plastic bags are produced annually, while its shelf life is less than 10 minutes, but they remain in nature for hundreds of years. Fortunately, the Department of Environment has drafted a bill and sent it to the government for approval to reduce the consumption of plastic bags.

For several years now, plastic forests have been growing all over the country, don't be surprised; You got it right; Plastic forests; if you get in the car and hit the road, you can see these forests wherever, the trees and bushes are covered with plastic that has been abandoned by tourists in nature, which creates both visual and environmental pollution. These forests are masterpieces of humanity.

Plastic bags were first invented by Alexander Parks in 1856, and in a short time, they were able to expand their territory to the rest of the world and have many devastating effects. The world has certainly been affected, so the United Nations has designated July 11, 1974, as World Plastic Day, to be a flip for countries to reduce the production and consumption of plastic bags.

The average lifespan of each plastic bag is less than 10 minutes, while remains between 100 and 500 years in nature, statistics show that 1 million plastic bags and 5 trillion disposable plastic bags are used in the world every minute.

According to research conducted in Iran, 3,000 tons per day and over one million tons of plastic bags are produced annually, although these figures are approximate, it is very thought-provoking.

In recent years, many countries have banned the production and consumption of plastics, including Bangladesh in 2002, Bhutan in 2007, Hong Kong in 2007, as well as the UK, and instead reusable and recyclable bags were sold.

Ireland, Taiwan, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium are also seeking to impose heavy taxes and stop the production of plastic bags, or have done so, but how about Iran? **→9**

U.S. political approach fails in global coronavirus fight, Iran says

TEHRAN — The United States has practically failed in the fight against COVID-19 by taking a political approach toward the global crisis, said Iranian Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare Minister Mohammad Shariatmadari.

He made the remarks at a virtual global summit held by the International Labor Organization (ILO) to address the impact of COVID-19 on the world of work.

"The COVID-19 has put to test our beliefs in global solidarity, altruism, and cooperation. We need to together build a more resilient society. We need clear-cut crisis management systems and processes and the International Labor Organization has a key role to play."

COVID-19 has disturbed the whole world, precisely, when many believed that the human being had surmounted

all pandemics in light of the developed and medical knowledge and advanced health systems, but the rapid spread of the disease in every corner of the globe revealed how un-immune, vulnerable and off-guard man is against such crises.

Coronavirus challenged not only the resilience of health systems but also the economic and social systems of all countries without discrimination.

COVID-19 proved that if the world is now facing a viral crisis it is because the world was unable to take steps towards true security, justice, and stability.

The devastating economic implications of the disease are undeniably manifested in this collection of already-existing deficiencies in the countries' social-economic system, in terms of decent work, labor, widespread discrimination, etc. **→9**

N.Y.C. paints 'Black Lives Matter' in front of Trump tower

New York City painted "Black Lives Matter" in large yellow letters on the street outside Trump Tower, the latest flare-up in a yearslong feud between President Trump, who rose to fame as a Manhattan real estate developer, and Mayor Bill de Blasio, who once sought to replace him.

Mr. de Blasio, who briefly joined activists and city workers to paint the block of Fifth Avenue between 56th and 57th Streets in Manhattan, made his intent clear before he grabbed a roller.

"Black lives matter in our city, and Black lives matter in the United States of America," he said. "Let's show Donald Trump what he does not understand. Let's paint it right in front of his building for him."

The mayor went on to help fill in the bottom of the "L" in "Lives," as a number of people surrounded him chanting "Black lives matter"

and "No justice, no peace" — though a few others nearby also shouted insults critical of him and his administration.

Since winning the presidential election in 2016, Trump has increasingly clashed with officials in his former home state, including not only Mr. de Blasio, but Manhattan's district attorney, who issued a subpoena for eight years of Trump's business and personal tax records.

On Thursday, as the painting began, the Supreme Court ruled that Trump could not shield his financial records from New York prosecutors.

Thursday's public art project was announced last month, and city officials have presented its location as a direct rebuke of Trump, who has repeatedly disparaged those protesting against systemic racism and police brutality in recent weeks. **→10**

Macron asks Israel to drop West Bank annexation plans

French President Emmanuel Macron has asked Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to refrain from annexing Palestinian territory in the occupied West Bank and elsewhere during a telephone call between the two leaders.

The French president's office said in a statement on Friday that Macron on Thursday "emphasised that such a move would contravene international law and jeopardise the possibility of a two-state solution as the basis of a fair and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians".

It was the latest move by European leaders pressing Netanyahu to drop plans to annex Jewish settlements in the West Bank and the strategic Jordan Valley.

The controversial move was endorsed in a Middle East plan unveiled by U.S. President Donald Trump in January.

■ 'Consequences'

Israel's government had set July 1 as the date when it could begin taking over the Palestinian areas, where the population of Israeli settlers

has grown since the 1967 Six-Day War.

The foreign ministries of France and Germany, along with those of Egypt and Jordan - the only Arab states to have peace deals with Israel - warned this week that any annexation could have "consequences" for relations.

But Macron told Netanyahu that France remained committed to Israel's security and "expressed his attachment to the friendship and confidence that links France and Israel", his office said. **→10**

Ancient relics smuggled to Austria back home

TEHRAN — A batch of Iranian ancient relics, which had been smuggled to Austria, was recovered and surrendered to a representative of the Islamic Republic in Vienna on Thursday.

"A number of antiquities belonging to Iran that were illegally smuggled into Austria were handed over to our country's representative in Austria flowing a series of legal investigation and as the result of judicial assistance between the two countries and in cooperation with Interpol departments in the two countries," ISNA reported on Friday.

The extradition session was attended by the head of the Vienna police criminal investigation department, the report said.

Among the seized objects, there are examples of bronze objects known as Lorestan's pins, similar examples of which are being kept at the museums of Reza Abbasi and the National Museum of Iran.

Back in May, Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts called for the return of relics, which were discovered from a safety-deposit box of a bank in Austria last year.

"In Azar 1398 (the Iranian month falling on November 22 to December 21, 2019) through a telephone call from the head of Iran's Interpol, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts was informed of the discovery and seizure of some ancient objects of Iranian origin form a safety-deposit box of a bank in Austria," said Mohammad-Hassan Talebian, the deputy minister for cultural heritage affairs.

Talebian explained that "According to experts' assessments and available photos, the [seized] relics certainly belong to the geographical and historical realm of Iran [and they date back to the] first millennium BC, as well as the Achaemenid and Sassanid era." **→8**



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Mandaeans practicing baptism in Karun River

Followers of Mandaism are performing baptism in Karun River, southwestern Khuzestan province. According to Encyclopedia Iranica, the Mandaeans must have arrived into Iran from the west (i.e., Jordan, Palestine) as early as the 1st and 2nd centuries CE.

The Mandaeans, whose official designation by their Iranian and Iraqi neighbors is "Sabeans" ("dippers," "dyers," "baptizers"), call themselves "Mandaeans" ("the knowledgeable ones").

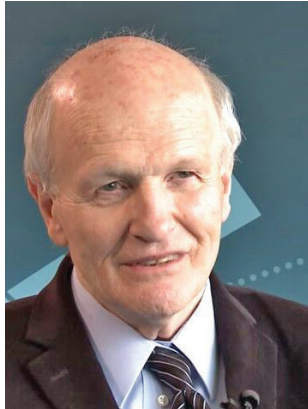
Today, the Mandaeans, whose population in Iran is estimated at 14,000 persons, are found chiefly in Khuzestan's capital city of Ahwaz.

Ex-WH official says Europe's performance on nuclear deal is disappointing

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Professor Frank N. von Hippel, **d e s k** former assistant director for national security in the White House Office of Science and Technology, has said that Europe's performance on the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, is "disappointing".

Von Hippel told IRNA in an interview published on Thursday that Britain, Germany and France showed a very "disappointing" performance in countering the United States' unilateralism.

The nuclear physicist expressed hope that the Europeans would counter the U.S. move to trigger the dispute resolution mechanism.



He said that the United States has been violating international law in various areas, noting that other countries should learn how to use their capabilities effectively.

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.

Despite quitting the multilateral deal, the Trump administration has also stepped

up calls for the extension of a UN arms embargo on Iran. The Trump administration has threatened that it may seek to trigger a snapback of all sanctions on Iran if its attempts to extend the arms embargo fail.

Iranian government spokesman Ali Rabiei has warned France, Germany, and the UK — three European countries signatory to the nuclear deal - against extending the UN arms embargo on Iran, signaling that doing so could spell the end of the Iran nuclear deal.

"According to UN Security Council Resolution 2231, the import or export of weapons to the Islamic Republic is subject to obtaining prior permission for a period of 5 years. This restriction should automatically end in October," Rabiei told a news conference on Tuesday.

Under the JCPOA backed by Resolution 2231, the UN must lift its arms embargo on Iran five years after the implementation of the nuclear deal. Despite its withdrawal from the JCPOA, the U.S. is pushing for the extension of the arms embargo on Iran, which is scheduled to expire on October 18.

Iran-China cooperation agreement a source of honor, Foreign Ministry says

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Thursday that the 25-year plan for cooperation between Iran and China is "honorable", calling relations "strategic".

"We have prepared draft of a strategic document with China and we are holding consultations with the other side and nothing has been finalized yet. Negotiations about this document shows that we have strategic ties and this document shows a 25-year prospect. There has been a hype against this issue in social media, however, this document is honorable," Mousavi said in a press conference in Isfahan.

He added that when the talks are finalized, the parliament should approve the document and there is nothing secretive.

"It is predicted that China will turn into the first economic power in the world in near future. We should not pay attention to elements of the Zionist regime [of Israel] in the United States and the anti-revolutionary elements," he said.

Iranian presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi said on Wednesday that foreign media outlets have created a commotion over the long-term cooperation agreement between Iran and China.

Vaezi said the 25-year partnership cooperation is a "conventional agreement".

Officials in Tehran have said the comprehensive agreement has not yet been finalized.

"This document is a conventional document to strengthen relations between the (two) countries," he told reporters after a cabinet meeting.

He noted that speculation has been spread in social networks claiming "something like leasing Kish or Qeshm [islands to China]. This [hype] is being supported from outside. Our executive bodies are making efforts to make everything transparent."

Secretariat of the Supreme Council of Iran's Free Trade, Industrial, and Special Economic Zones also announced on Wednesday that Iran will not lease any port to China.

Government spokesman Ali Rabiei said on Tuesday that Iran has not signed an agreement to lease land or port to China, noting there is nothing secretive in the 25-year cooperation plan.

"There is nothing secretive in this respect. It was discussed in the latest visit by Foreign Minister [Mohammad Javad Zarif] to China and was also discussed in a meeting between Leader of the Islamic Revolution [Ayatollah Ali Khamenei] with President of China [Xi Jinping]. When any agreement is reached, it will be announced," Rabiei said during a press conference.

He also said, "Division into West and East has no status in our foreign policy. The Islamic Republic does not limit itself and is ready to cooperate with all countries. Our only limitations are the Zionist regime and those who impose sanctions."

Zarif said on Sunday that there is no "hidden issue" in the long-term partnership agreement.

"The agreement was discussed in the meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Leader of the Islamic Revolution. We announced the issue to the people. In last year's visit, I took this agreement to China and it was announced. When China responded to our draft, we announced it and when China accepted negotiation with us, the issue was announced," Zarif told an open session of the parliament.

The foreign minister said the details will be announced when the agreement is "finalized".

Rabiei said on June 23 that Iran and China have drafted a 25-year plan for comprehensive cooperation which proves failure of the plots 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".

U.S. can't whitewash its crime in assassinating Gen. Soleimani by chastising UN, Iran says

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign **d e s k** Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi has said that assassination of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani was "an arbitrary killing" and a clear violation of the UN Charter.

"The coward(ly) assassination of Gen. Soleimani, the anti-terrorism hero of our region, was "an arbitrary killing" & a clear violation of the UN charter. The US is responsible for this criminal act, & can't whitewash this by chastising the UN. We'll never forget, we'll never forgive," Mousavi tweeted on Thursday.

A UN human rights investigator said on Monday that the U.S. assassination of Soleimani "was unlawful and arbitrary under international law".

The United States has failed to provide sufficient evidence of an ongoing or imminent attack against its interests to justify the strike on Soleimani's convoy as it left Baghdad airport, said Agnes Callamard, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions.

She noted that the assassination of Soleimani represented a "violation of the UN Charter".

Callamard wrote in a report that the attack



violated the UN Charter, calling for accountability for targeted killings by armed drones and for greater regulation of the weapons.

"The world is at a critical time, and possible tipping point, when it comes to the use of drones. ... The Security Council is missing in action; the international community, willingly or not, stands largely silent," she

told Reuters.

On January 3, U.S. President Donald Trump ordered drone strikes that killed General Soleimani, chief of the IRGC Quds Force, and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), as well as eight other people.

Gen. Soleimani assassination has turned into international issue: diplomat UN Human Rights Council shuns assassination of Gen. Soleimani

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Esmaeil Baghaei Hamaneh, **d e s k** Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the UN office in Geneva, has said that no country at a meeting of the UN Human Rights Council on Thursday supported the assassination of Iranian Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani by the United States.

In an interview with Al Mayadeen, Hamaneh also said the Europeans did not support the U.S. terrorist act.

Ambassador Hamaneh also said that the UNHRC's meeting about Soleimani was very important.

A UN human rights investigator said on Monday that the U.S. assassination of Soleimani was a "violation of the UN Charter".

The U.S. has failed to provide sufficient evidence of an ongoing or imminent attack against its interests to justify the strike on Soleimani's convoy as it left Baghdad airport, said Agnes Callamard, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions.

"Maj. Gen. Soleimani was in charge of Iran military strategy, and actions, in Syria and Iraq. But absent an actual imminent threat to life, the course of action taken by the US was unlawful," Callamard wrote in the report.

Callamard's report on targeted killings through armed drones - around half of which deals with the Soleimani case — was presented to the UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva on Thursday.

Ambassador Hamaneh said it was for the "first time" that

the UN special rapporteur in her own capacity gave a report at the venue of the United Nations Human Rights Council about the "criminal terrorist act" against General Soleimani.

The ambassador said, "We all know that it is for many years that the U.S. is using drones for committing terrorist acts, but what makes this operation, that we consider it a kind of state terrorism, different from others is that the U.S., for the first time, targeted a senior military commander of a sovereign country who was visiting another sovereign country."

The Iranian ambassador to the UNHCR added, "This is a new phenomenon and great danger."

He noted that Soleimani was a top ranking official and Iran has the right to pursue his assassination through judicial bodies.

On whether after the Thursday session the Soleimani issue has turned into an international issues, he said, "The assassination of General Soleimani turned into an international issue from the very first moment."

"It was an unprecedented move against a country's independence and sovereignty," he said, adding it is for many years that the U.S. conducts secret operations to topple governments "but open assassination of a state official and then expressing proud over it is unprecedented."

The ambassador went on to say that "we believe that this action sounded the alarm about the approach and course of international relations, to the extent that most countries

were asking whether we are heading toward lawlessness in international relations or that only the law of jungle shapes relations between countries."

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

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

Benjamin Friedman, from George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs, said the killing could be construed as an act of war.

"This attack is different from all the drone strikes because it targeted a senior figure in Iran's government," he told Al Jazeera. "It seemed like an act of war and an assassination."

Tehran Prosecutor General Ali Alqasi-Mehr announced on June 29 that 36 individuals, including Donald Trump, have been identified in connection with the assassination and Interpol has been notified to arrest them.

"36 individuals who cooperated, collaborated, and participated in the assassination of Hajj Qassem, including political and military authorities of the U.S. and other countries, have been identified," he stated.

The prosecutor general explained that Trump is at the top of the list, and he'll be facing prosecution even after his term as president.

Iran to deploy two air defense missile systems to Syria: newspaper

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The military **d e s k** and security agreement signed on Wednesday between Tehran and Damascus allows Iran to deploy at least two types of its local-made air defense missile systems to Syria, according to a report published by the Raialyoum newspaper.

Citing "informed sources from Iran and Syria", the daily said that the agreement has two military and political parts. It said the most important thing in the military part is for Iran to provide Syria with its advanced air defense systems such as the Bavar-373 and Khordad-3 missile systems, which means that the two countries have decided to change

the rules of engagement in Syrian airspace and to respond to the repeated Israeli raids on Syrian soil.

Bavar-373 is an Iranian-made long-range surface-to-air system, which was formally unveiled on August 22, 2019. The system is manufactured by the Iranian Defense Ministry. Khordad-3 is an indigenous air defense system, which has an operational range of between 50 and 75 kilometers. Iran has used the Khordad-3 system in the downing of the U.S. Global Hawk drone on June 20, 2019.

Iran and Syria signed the military and security agreement on Wednesday which

is aimed at boosting military and technical cooperation and coordination to counter increasing challenges and threats. The agreement was signed by Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Bagheri and Syrian Defense Minister Ali Abdullah Ayyoub.

"Continued war against the Takfiri terrorism, which is being supported by certain regional and international powers, is one of the objectives of this agreement," the two sides said in a joint statement.

The Beirut-based al-Akhbar newspaper also said that the agreement "includes that Tehran develops and strengthens the

Syrian air defense systems". The Lebanese newspaper also said that General Bagheri "has discussed in Damascus the importance of the withdrawal of illegal foreign forces [from Syria] and countering the Israeli raids".

Raialyoum also said the political agenda of the continued American-Israeli pressure is to force Iran to leave Syria, a move that is intended to lay the groundwork for the dismantling of the strategic alliance between the two countries.

According to the sources of Raialyoum, the Iran-Syria military agreement has delivered a strong message to the U.S and Israel and underlined the strength of this alliance.

Syrian president says Tehran-Damascus military agreement is result of years of cooperation

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Syrian President Bashar **d e s k** al-Assad has said that that the military cooperation signed between Tehran and Damascus is the result of years of cooperation in fighting terrorism.

"This agreement is the result of years of cooperation in confronting terrorism in Syria and hostile policies against Tehran and Damascus," Assad said during a meeting with Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Bagheri on Thursday, al Mayadeen reported.

Assad also said that the agreement shows the level of relations between the two countries.

Bagheri said that Iran attaches great importance to expansion of ties with Syria in various spheres.

Iran and Syria signed a military and security agreement in Damascus on Wednesday. The agreement was signed by General Bagheri and Syrian Defense Minister Ali Abdullah Ayyoub.

According to the IRIB, the agreement is aimed at boosting military and technical cooperation and coordination to counter increasing challenges and threats.



"Continuation of fighting the Takfiri terrorism which is being supported by certain regional and international powers is one of the objectives of this agreement," the two sides said in a joint statement.

"The military agreement was signed in line with implementing the two countries' political and military

leaders' guidelines in order to play more effective role in countering any foreign aggression through promotion of Tehran and Damascus' defense capabilities," the statement added.

The Arabic-language al-Mayadeen news website quoted General Bagheri as saying after inking the agreement that Iran "will strengthen Syria's air defense systems in line with the reinvigoration of military cooperation between the two countries," according to the Fars news agency.

General Bagheri also said that the regional people and countries do not welcome the U.S. presence in the region.

"The agreement will increase our determination for joint cooperation to confront the U.S. pressures," Bagheri added.

General Ayyoub, for his part, said that if the U.S. could bring Iran, Syria and the resistance front to its knees, certainly it would not hesitate for a moment.

Ayyoub added that the cost of resistance is much less than surrendering.

Bagheri visited Damascus at the top of a military delegation on Wednesday.

U.S. claim of deal with China not in Iran's interest 'preposterous'

(Press TV) — The Trump administration's Iran policy has been a colossal failure, as it has driven the Eurasian powers into each other's arms, an American writer and former professor has said.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif reportedly told Parliament on July 5 that Iran and China were working on a 25-year trade agreement. China has said it will invest \$400 billion in the Iranian economy.

The U.S. State Department and anti-Iran Farsi media outlets based outside Iran have denounced the possible deal between Iran and China that seeks to expand economic and strategic partnership between the two powers.

The U.S. State Department went on to issue tweets in Farsi, comparing the potential Iran-China accord to the 1828 Treaty of Turkmenchay which was an agreement between Persia and the Russian Empire. By the treaty, Persia had to cede to Russia

control of some areas in the South Caucasus.

Iran has rejected the criticism, saying it is aimed at appealing the enemies of the Islamic republic.

"Unfortunately, a destructive line of propaganda has been initiated and directed from outside Iran against the expansion of Iran's relations with neighbors and especially (with) China and Russia," Iranian president's chief of staff, Mahmoud Vaezi, said on Wednesday.

The senior official, a close aide to President Hassan Rouhani, said Iran is seeking to set up a roadmap for its future strategic ties with China, a move he said was absolutely normal under the current diplomatic practices.

E. Michael Jones, the current editor of Culture Wars magazine, told Press TV on Thursday that the U.S. claim that the potential deal with China is not in Iran's interest is "preposterous."

Iran slams Soleimani assassination as 'act of state terrorism'

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Esmail d e s k Baghaei Hamaneh,

Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the UN office in Geneva, has condemned the U.S. assassination of top Iranian general Qassem Soleimani as an act of state terrorism that has endangered world peace and security.

Addressing a regular session of the UN Human Rights Council on Thursday, Baghaei Hamaneh described the assassination as an "illegal measure" and a "big crime".

He said the U.S. and the country that hosted the American drones used in the killing of General Soleimani must be held accountable for the atrocity, Tasnim reported.

The U.S. action was a violation of the international law, the UN Charter, and the humanitarian law, the Iranian envoy said, adding that the assassination was an immoral and dangerous action.

Washington must not be allowed to justify such illegal measure under any pretext, Baghaei Hamaneh stated.

He then called on the UN Human Rights Council to raise the alarm at the threat to the fundamentals of human rights, rule of law and international principles.

On January 3, U.S. President Donald Trump ordered strikes that killed General Soleimani, chief of the IRGC Quds Force, and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), as well as eight other people.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said Trump was misled to believe his country would get away with the assassination of General Soleimani.

Trump believed that the assassina-



Security guards removed photo of Gen. Soleimani on Ambassador Baghaei Hamaneh's table as he was addressing the UN Human Rights Council.

tion would augment U.S. security but it worked the other way around, Zarif said in an interview with NBC News' Richard Engel in Munich back in February.

On Monday, Agnes Callamard, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, said that the assassination represented a "violation of the UN Charter".

The United States has failed to provide sufficient evidence of an ongoing or imminent attack against its interests to justify the strike on Soleimani's convoy

as it left Baghdad airport, said Callamard.

She also presented her findings on Thursday to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, in which she said the U.S. measure constituted an "arbitrary killing" for which the United States is responsible under international human rights law (IHL).

Callamard said the United States had provided no specific evidence that showed Soleimani was planning an imminent attack against U.S. interests, particularly in Iraq, for which immediate action was

necessary and would have been justified.

Later on Thursday, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo defended the assassination, claiming the strike "was undertaken in the exercise of the United States' inherent right of self-defense."

In retaliation for the assassination of General Soleimani, who headed the IRGC Quds Force, an Iranian ballistic-missile strike on January 8 targeted a U.S. base in Iraq housing U.S. forces, leaving some 110 U.S. troops suffering from traumatic brain injuries.

Tehran rejects seizure of ship carrying arms to Yemen, says U.S. spreads such a lie to pressure Iran

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** —

Tehran has dismissed Washington's "baseless" claim of seizing an Iranian ship carrying weapons to Yemen.

In a statement on Thursday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said lying, leveling accusations and hate-mongering are among the main elements of the U.S. foreign policy, especially in the current administration.



According to the Foreign Ministry website, Mousavi labeled U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo as a "hate-monger", saying Pompeo's recent remarks stem from the same approach pursued by U.S. officials.

He said he Americans, who feel they have not succeeded in extending the UN arms embargo on Iran in the international arena and the Security Council, are trying to make up excuses for continuing their maximum pressure and advancing their evil goals by levelling accusations and spreading lies.

Mousavi further pointed to the five-year siege imposed by the United States and Saudi Arabia on the Yemeni people, thereby killing thousands as a result of starvation and malnutrition.

"Instead of being held accountable for their crimes in Yemen, the two regimes (the U.S. and Saudi Arabia) are trying not to fulfil their responsibilities and be held accountable for their inhumane behavior and crimes by accusing others and making baseless allegations," he added.

Pompeo announced on Wednesday that the U.S. and partner forces seized a boat in June carrying Iranian weapons to Houthis in Yemen as he renewed his call for the UN Security Council to extend an arms embargo on Iran.

"The Security Council must extend the arms embargo on Iran to prevent further conflict in the region," Pompeo told a State Department news conference. "No serious person can possibly believe Iran will use any weapon it receives for peaceful ends."

Pompeo is leading a U.S. bid to extend the embargo due to expire in mid-October under the terms of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal from which the United States withdrew in 2018.

Meanwhile, the U.S. special representative for Iran said during a visit to Jerusalem late last month that "the military option [against Iran] is always on the table."

Brian Hook said that the White House was willing to take military action against Tehran to prevent the Islamic Republic from "developing nuclear weapons".

In response, Mousavi said the United States' threat of a military attack on Iran was a "moldy option" which has been sitting on the table gathering dust for years.

Tehran and Washington have been at loggerheads since May 8, 2018, when the U.S. withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal and reimposed sanctions on Iran.

IRGC improves accuracy of homegrown rocket

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Ground Force has turned a 122mm homegrown rocket into a guided weapon by increasing its accuracy, a commander said.

Speaking to Tasnim, Director of the Research and Self-Sufficiency Jihad Organization of the IRGC Ground Force General Ali Koohestani said the 'Arash' 122mm rocket has become a weapon with pinpoint accuracy following the recent tests.



The commander said the IRGC experts have managed to transform Arash into a guided rocket, saying the homegrown rocket has hit the targets with pinpoint accuracy in a series of recent tests on the field.

The Arash 122mm rockets can now hit the targets with an accuracy of 7 meters, he noted, saying the weapon would be mass produced for delivery to the Defense Ministry.

Weighing 64 kilograms, Arash has a range of 22 kilometers and is equipped with a 19 kg warhead with great destructive power that detonates targets within a range of 25 meters.

Before being upgraded, the 122mm rocket was fired with launchers with a pack of 40 rockets to compensate for low accuracy, but the pinpoint accuracy would allow the artillery units to launch a limited number of rockets to destroy a target.

Iran has in recent years made great headways in manufacturing a broad range of military equipment, including air defense systems that use cutting-edge technologies.

Tehran has repeatedly stated that its military might is defensive in nature and poses no threat to other countries.

Military chief: U.S. presence not welcomed in the region

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** —

Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Bagheri says the regional people and countries do not welcome American presence in the region.

General Bagheri also said Iran will respond to Washington's nonsensical talks, Mehr reported on Friday.

He made the remarks in a meeting with Syrian Defense Minister General Ali Abdullah Ayyoub in Damascus.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the situation in Syria, stressing the need for the withdrawal of foreign troops who have entered the country illegally.

The Iranian general stressed that Iran will strengthen Syria's air defense systems in accordance with strengthening military cooperation between the two countries.

He criticized Turkey for being "slightly delayed" in fulfilling its obligations under the agreements reached in Astana for the withdrawal of terrorist groups from Syria.

Turkey should know that its security problems can be resolved through negotiations and understanding with the Syrian side, not through a military presence on the Syrian soil, he added.



General Bagheri visited Damascus on Wednesday and signed a "comprehensive" agreement with the Syrian defense minister to strengthen military and defense cooperation.

The accord provides for the expansion of military and security cooperation and the continuation of coordination between the armed forces of the two countries.

The two sides also underlined the need for the withdrawal of foreign forces which have been "illegally" deployed in Syria in violation of international law and.

Foreign forces are the main obstacle to the complete cleansing of armed terrorist groups in some parts of the Arab country, the two sides lamented.

Iran and Syria have signed different military and defense cooperation over the past years.

The Islamic Republic commenced providing Syria with advisory military assistance after numerous countries, at the head of them the U.S. and its Western and regional allies, began funding and arming militants and terrorists with the aim of deposing the Syrian president's government.

Although the Syrian government initially lost considerable expanses of territory to the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group and other terror outfits, the country rallied to retake the lost grounds and drive out terrorists from much of the country.

Russia says U.S. will never succeed in extending Iran arms embargo

1→

The JCPOA required Iran to scale back its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions removal, including lifting the arms embargo five years after the deal's adoption. In 2018, the U.S. pulled out of the JCPOA and reinstated harsh sanctions on Tehran.

The Donald Trump administration has threatened that it may seek to trigger a snap-back of all sanctions on Iran if its attempts to extend the arms embargo fail.

Russia warned earlier this month that the extension of the embargo will jeopardize efforts to preserve the nuclear deal.

"The United States' push was not only unjustified but also counterproductive in terms of the prospects of preserving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)," Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on July 2.

In a letter to the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres and the Security

Council circulated on June 8, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov accused the Trump administration of unleashing a politically motivated campaign against Iran and called for "universal condemnation" of the U.S. attempts.

The Russian foreign minister said the United States withdrew from the nuclear agreement between Iran and six major powers and now has no legal right to try to use the UN resolution endorsing the deal to indefinitely continue the arms embargo.

"The adoption of such a resolution (to extend arms embargo) would put an end to the JCPOA. It is clear that Iran will never accept that, and it has the right to do so," says Russian Ambassador to the UN Vasily Nebenzia.

Ghalibaf: World's parliaments must focus on ways to end unjust sanctions



TEHRAN (Press TV) — The speaker of Iran's parliament (Majlis) says after overcoming the current pandemic of the deadly new coronavirus, parliaments across the world must focus on preventing adoption of such illegal politics as unjust sanctions, which hamper development of economic ties among various states.

Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf made the remarks while addressing a virtual meeting of the Asian Parliamentary

Assembly on Thursday.

"The main basis for passing laws by parliaments in a post-coronavirus era should be formulation of legal frameworks, finding solutions to facilitate economic relations [among countries], supporting bilateral and multilateral agreements ... and preventing any form of restriction and illegal policies such as unjust sanctions, which prevent development of economic relations," Iran's parliament speaker said.

Ghalibaf noted that the way would be paved for rapid adoption of such measures "only when our policies and collective approaches are aimed at the right direction."

Iran's top parliamentarian noted that economic issues were a major victim of the pandemic, noting that countries need to revise their trade and commerce strategies in order to pave the way for the reconstruction of global economies.

"Despite the pandemic of this dangerous virus and in spite of all requests and pressures from international organizations for the removal or reduction of U.S. economic sanctions against countries, including Iran, the United States is still pursuing its maximum pressure policy against other nations amid coronavirus crisis," Ghalibaf said.

He added that U.S. sanctions have created problems for collective measures taken to fight the pandemic, stressing

that this inhumane measure by the United States must be condemned in the strongest term in all discussions about the coronavirus pandemic.

Last Thursday, Iran's envoy to the United Nations called for an end to unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States on various countries as the restrictive measures hamper their fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

Noting that the lifting of sanctions is necessary to counter the spread of the flu-like pathogen in the targeted countries as well as across the world, Majid Takht-Ravanchi added, "These unilateral sanctions effectively target patients the most, and show how immoral, inhumane, and illegitimate these sanctions are."

In recent months, calls have been growing inside the U.S. and abroad for Washington to lift its unilateral sanctions, which are throwing a wrench into global efforts to rein in the respiratory disease known as COVID-19.

The UN, the European Union and human rights organizations as well as several American lawmakers and political figures have been pressing the U.S. administration to ease the bans on Iran, Venezuela, Syria, Cuba and North Korea, among others on the sanctions list.

The United States reinstated its sanctions against Iran in May 2018 after leaving a UN-endorsed multilateral nuclear agreement with the Islamic Republic and five other countries.

Rouhani inaugurates industrial projects worth \$1.4b in 3 provinces

1 → The inaugurations were made in the fifth week of the Industry Ministry's new program called "Persistent Production-Effective Employment-Sustainable Exports", based on which the ministry plans to inaugurate 200 industrial, mining, and trade projects across the country by the Iranian calendar year of 1400 (begins on March 21, 2021).



As reported, a total of 1.69 quadrillion rials (about \$40.23 billion) has been invested in these projects that are going to create job opportunities for 41,000 people.

The mentioned program has been defined by the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry in line with the government's new strategies for developing the country's infrastructure in order to realize the "Surge in Production" motto.

The same program (called "A-B-Iran") was also defined by the Energy Ministry last year,

under which numerous energy projects were inaugurated in various provinces across the country.

28 airport development projects to be implemented by Mar. 2021

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— Some 28 airport development projects are planned to be implemented in the country by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021), IRIB reported, quoting an official with Iran Airports Company (IAC).

According to Mohammad-Reza Zahmatkeshan, there are currently 51 development projects underway in the country's airports, of which 28 will be inaugurated by the end of the current year.

Back in May, President Hassan Rouhani, Minister of Roads and Urban Development Mohammad Eslami, IAC Managing Director Siavash Amirmokri, and other officials inaugurated two new airport development projects via videoconference.

The first project was the new runway at Ramsar International Airport in the northern Mazandaran Province; with the new runway, medium freight aircraft, including Airbus 320, can land and take off at the airport.

The second was the expansion of Sari International Airport's apron, the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development's news service reported.

As Amirmokri announced previously, IAC plans to inaugurate 21 aviation projects worth 10 trillion rials (\$56.65 million) in the current fiscal year.

The company has also 12 projects worth €9.2 million on its agenda for the upcoming years.

As previously announced by the Transport Minister Eslami, airport capacity in the country has increased by 10 million passengers since 2013.

Last month, the minister said that various projects had been completed in 15 Iranian airports over the past six years with an investment of around 20 trillion rials (about \$476 million), Press TV reported.

The minister said plans are in place for adding new terminals and runways to the existing airports across Iran to further increase the capacity of the airports by another 10 million passengers per year.

"These airport projects include the passenger terminal, runway, control tower, radar system, and navigation system," he said, adding that finishing those projects would greatly boost aviation safety in Iran.

Iranian airports currently have the capacity to handle more than 60 million passengers a year.

Iran-Iraq trade to be resumed after borders reopen

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran and Iraq are going to resume trade exchanges through Mandali and Shalamcheh borders following the reopening of the mentioned crossings from the Iraqi side, IRNA reported, quoting an official with Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO).

"The Iraqi government has agreed to reopen the Shalamcheh and Mandali borders after the joint trade borders with the Kurdistan Region were reopened earlier," Farzad Piltan, the director-general of TPO's Office of Arabian and African Countries, said.

Following the outbreak of the new coronavirus, all trade borders between Iran and Iraq were closed, however with the partial control of the pandemic's first wave, trade borders between the two countries were gradually reopened, Piltan said.

According to the official, trade from the mentioned border crossings is going to be carried out in accordance with international health and safety protocols.



Noting that declining trade with Iraq would hurt both sides, Piltan added: "Diplomatic efforts and negotiations with Iraqi officials led the Iraqi government to agree to the limited reopening of borders in Shalamcheh, and Somar, and the process of exporting from these borders will begin soon."

He expressed hope that with the reopening of all trade borders with Iraq, the trade between the two countries will return to normal and will continue to grow.

Head of Iraq's Border Crossing Authority, Omar al-Waeli had announced on Monday that the country's Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kazemi agreed to resume partial trade in the Mandali and Shalamcheh border markets with Iran.

"According to this decision, 250 shipments from Iran will enter Iraq for two days a week through the Shalamcheh border in Basra and Mandali border in Diyala province," al-Waeli said.

Head of Iraq's Border Crossing Authority said: "Only the exchange of goods is allowed and the entry of passengers into the border crossings for any reason is prevented."

In mid-March, the Iraqi Border Crossing Authority closed border crossings with Iran and its neighbors to prevent the coronavirus outbreak.

The trade volume between the two countries is estimated at \$10 billion a year.

Iran's eastern railway could be used for Russia-India transit

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran can use its eastern railway corridor for transiting commodities between Russia and India and also among CIS countries, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI) told IRNA on Friday.

Mentioning the beginning of the track-laying operations for Chabahar-Zahedan railway, Saeed Rasouli said: "So far we haven't been able to use the full capacities of Chabahar port since it wasn't connected to the railway network, but with the completion of this line the port can become a transit hub in the region."

"This route is one of the important parts of the country's railway network, which in addition to its regional and national role, is very important as a part of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) leading to Chabahar port," Rasouli said.

The track-laying operations of the Chabahar-Zahedan railroad, which connects Chabahar port in southeastern Iran to Zahedan (the capital city of southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province), was started on Tuesday in a ceremony attended by Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister



Mohammad Eslami and Deputy Transport Minister Kheirollah Khademi.

Establishing an all-rail corridor in the east of the country, connecting Chabahar

as the country's only oceanic port to the national railway network, developing Makran coasts through rail transportation, connecting Central Asia and Afghanistan

Over 3.5m tons of steel products produced in a quarter



ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Production of steel products in Iran stood at over 3.566 million tons during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20), IRNA reported.

As reported, the quarterly output shows a one-percent growth compared to the same period of time in the previous year.

Meanwhile, the production of steel ingot in the country has increased eight percent to stand at over 5.702 million tons during the first quarter of this year.

The country has defined 16 development projects in the steel sector to boost the output of steel products by 17.3 million tons in five years.

These projects are for constructing production units each with the capacity of 600,000 tons, while some other projects have been also defined to set up some units with under 500,000-ton capacity that together with the 600,000-ton capacity units will add 19.1 million tons to the country's annual steel products output.

In its latest report, the World Steel Association (WSA) has announced that Iran's crude steel production increased by 30 percent in 2019 while the average global growth in this sector stood at 3.5 percent.

Based on the WSA report, Iran produced 31.9 million tons of the mentioned commodity during 2019 compared to the preceding year's nearly 24 million tons.

Iran, which stood at the 13th place in 2017, passed over three major steel producers in the world, namely Italy, Taiwan, and Ukraine to stand at the 10th place in 2018 despite the re-imposition of sanctions by the U.S.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has urged the government to prevent the exports of raw minerals in order to be processed in the country for making products with more added value.

Following the leader's remarks, the government levied a 25-percent duty on the exports of raw minerals (especially iron ore) as from September 23, 2019.

Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry believes that the duty is going to encourage the production of more processed minerals such as pellets and concentrate instead of selling the raw minerals.

Iran's export of steel products in the past Iranian calendar year rose 27 percent compared to its preceding year.

As reported, the country's major steel producers managed to export about 7.33 million tons of the products in the previous year.

According to Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Darioush Esmaili, 10 years ago Iran exported more than 20 million tons of unprocessed iron ore and the figure fell to a maximum of six million tons last year.

TEDPIX rises 8% in a week



ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), went up eight percent during the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

The index gained 141,000 points to 1.753 in the previous week, IRNA reported. On June 30, TEDPIX hit the record high of 1.5 million points.

It has also climbed 28.77 percent in the past Iranian calendar month (April 21-June 20) from its preceding month.

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

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

While the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) was full of success for the TSE, the market is also preserving its successful performance in the current year, and the noticeable point in this due is that the other economic sectors are experiencing some declining trend due to the coronavirus pandemic.

We have been witnessing new record highs continuously posted by the exchange since the year start, and climbing to the peak of one million points, something almost unbelievable just some time ago, came true in early May.

In a press conference on June 22, 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 amount of financing 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.

Financing through this market stood at 1.2 quadrillion rials (about \$28.5 billion) in the calendar year 1397.

Tehran, Vienna stress expansion of economic relations

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — During a meeting between Iran's new Ambassador to Austria Abbas Ardakani and Austrian Deputy Minister for Economic and Digital Affairs Michael Sterl, the two sides stressed the expansion of trade and commercial relations between the two countries.

As reported by Mehr news agency, the two sides also agreed to hold Iran-Austria

Joint Economic Committee meeting soon.

In addition, it was decided that the working groups established under the important document 'Roadmap for Economic Relations', which was signed in 2016, will be continuously strengthened by pursuing further agreements.

The meeting was also attended by the director-general of economic cooperation, the planning adviser to the minister of

economy, and the director of West Asia, United States and Africa Office of the Austrian Ministry of Economy.

Ardakani submitted his credentials to the Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen in a ceremony held at the Austrian Presidential Palace last week.

He conveyed the friendship message of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to the Austrian president and full readi-

ness of the Iranian government for the development and expansion of relations with Austria in all the political, economic, and cultural fields based on historical and long-standing relations between the two countries.

The Austrian president also extended his greeting to his Iranian counterpart and voiced his readiness for the expansion of bilateral ties.

Quarterly cow milk output up 3%

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Production of cow milk in Iran rose three percent during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20) from its previous quarter, according to the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI).

SCI put the quarterly cow milk output at 1.9 million tons, IRIB reported.

Last December, the secretary of Iran Dairy Industries Union noted that Iran is among the top milk-producing countries in the world.

"Close to 7 million tons of milk is produced in the coun-

try annually, 450,000 tons of which are exported as dairy products," Reza Bakari said.

He further put the country's annual dairy products output at seven million tons and said that of this figure some 450,000 tons valued at \$770 million are exported.

The official also said that some 120,000 persons have direct jobs while 480,000 persons have indirect jobs in 400 companies active in dairy industry in Iran.

He said Iran's main dairy importers are Iraq, Afghanistan, and Russia, adding that Qatar, the UAE, Kuwait, Japan, Azerbaijan, and Armenia are other export destinations.



Sistan-Baluchestan's 1st wind farm to go operational this summer

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** — The first wind farm in Iran's southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province will be commissioned in the Iranian calendar month of Shahrivar (August 22-September 21) after the construction of a 400 kilovolt (kV) line, head of Iran's Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution Management Company (Tavanir) said.

Mohammad-Hassan Motevalizadeh made the announcement in a meeting of the energy minister with the representatives of the Supreme Council of Provinces, whose task is to investigate water and electricity problems in the provinces, IRNA reported.

According to Motevalizadeh, Tavanir has it on the agenda to supply electricity to 187 villages in this province.

Over 44 percent of Iran's power plants are solar farms, while 34 percent are wind farms and 12 percent are hydroelectric power



plants and the rest are other types.

Iran's renewable electricity generation capacity reached 820 megawatts (MW) at the end of the second month of the current Iranian calendar year (May 20).

The number of installed renewable power plants across Iran reached 131 by May 20, and 79 power plants are also under construction.

The volume of public investments in renewable power plants has exceeded 143 trillion rials (over \$3.4 billion) by May 20.

Renewables, including hydropower, account for just seven percent of the country's total energy generation, versus natural gas' 90 percent share.

Overall, in the next five years, Iran is aiming for a 5,000 MW increase in renewable capacity to meet growing domestic demand and expand its presence in the regional electricity market.

Iran to build 17 desalination plants



TEHRAN (ICCIMA) — Iran's energy minister says the country has plans to launch new desalination projects to supply 17 provinces with desalinated water from the sea.

Feasibility studies have begun to inspect building desalination facilities at a distance of 100 kilometers from the sea, Reza Ardakanian said on Tuesday.

Pointing to the growing progress in the seawater desalination facility technology in the world, the minister said advanced technology would reduce the cost of saltwater desalination.

He further noted that one of the

economically feasible ways for Iran to run desalination facilities is to use the waste heat from thermal power stations.

Supplying the energy for desalination plants with the waste heat energy from the gas-fired and combined cycle gas turbine plants would increase the efficiency of power stations and help supply fresh water for the bulk of coastal provinces, the minister explained.

Iran's energy ministry will open second phase of a major seawater desalination project in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas in the coming weeks.

281 parts domestically-made by Bandar Abbas refinery



TEHRAN (Shana) — The commercial deputy of Bandar Abbas Oil Refining Company said the facility has provided 281 types of refinery items by relying on domestic manufacturers over the course of the previous Iranian calendar year of 1398 which ended on March 19.

According to the National Iranian Oil Products Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC), Fardin Bahrapour pointed out that many of the items are important and vital parts and equipment in the oil refining industry, which guarantee stable production.

He said supporting domestic manufacturing resulted in saving the country over 128 billion rials (about \$3 million) in costs only last year.

Bahrapour said that so far over 5,000 item types, comprising 552,000 items, have been localized at the refinery by relying on local manufacturers for the first time in the country.

The official also added that scouting for capable manufacturers in the southern province of Hormuzgan was one of the plans top on the agenda of the refinery for entrusting production of items domestically.

Covid-19 could boost fossil fuels, slow renewables in emerging economies

Just as the pandemic has had a considerable impact on the global economy, travel restrictions and the suspension of industrial activities have led to an unprecedented drop in global emissions.

According to data from the Helsinki-based Integrated Carbon Observation System (ICOS), by the first week of April daily carbon emissions had fallen by 17 percent against mean 2019 levels, with some countries experiencing a 26 percent fall in CO2 output.

The fall was the sharpest on record, with global emissions dipping back to 2006 levels. This was a far greater drop in both absolute and percentage terms than was seen at other comparable moments in history, such as the Arab oil embargo of 1973, the collapse of the Soviet Union or the 2008 Global Financial Crisis.

However, as lockdown measures have been eased and economic activity has resumed, emissions have also increased.

ICOS statistics found that by June 10, emissions had rebounded to a level just 4.7 percent below pre-lockdown levels, with the recovery taking place more quickly than many had expected.

Global energy investment takes a hit

This development has led many to conclude that austerity alone will not be enough to adequately reduce emissions while facilitating economic growth, and that environmentally friendly solutions will be necessary to ensure

future sustainable development.

"From a policy perspective, every government should try to promote green energy more aggressively. Covid-19 has cleared a path for green energy by changing lifestyles," Bundit Sapianchai, president and CEO of Thai renewable energy company BCPG, told OBG.

The call for more green investment was bolstered by the release of a report from the Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA) in June, which found that global investment in energy was set to fall by 20 percent — some \$400bn — this year.

The agency said that the bulk of losses will be borne by the oil and gas industry. A separate report by the IEA noted that, although newly installed renewable power capacity was expected to decline by 13 percent this year, the green energy sector was proving to be disproportionately resilient to the impacts of the pandemic.

This resilience, combined with the falling cost of renewable energy generation, has led many to predict a significant increase in green investment moving forward.

"From an investment perspective, in March 2020 share prices of companies across the energy industry fell by more than 50 percent from their pre-Covid-19 prices. There is a strong consensus that green energy is the future emerging segment for the industry," Sapianchai told OBG. "This is thus an opportunity for green funds and green investors to buy shares at a cheaper price."

Indeed, there have been some large investment moves made in cleantech and renewable energy since the outbreak of the pandemic.

Notably, in late June US multinational Amazon announced that it was creating a \$2bn venture capital fund to invest in renewable and environmentally sustainable technology.

In country-specific terms, the Philippines approved two wind power projects with a combined capacity of 1.2 GW in late March, while in Vietnam — which has been the leading installer of solar power in ASEAN over the past couple of years — local company BCG launched a 330-MW solar project in the central province of Binh Dinh.

Meanwhile, in Japan, which along with China has traditionally been one of the largest investors in fossil fuel projects in South-east Asia, two of the country's largest banks — Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation and Mizuho — announced commitments in April to curb their financing of new coal power projects.

Challenges for renewables

While the outlook for renewables is largely positive — and most countries in the world are signatories of the Paris Agreement on climate change, which requires them to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions — there are concerns that some states may prioritise economic growth over environmental concerns as they emerge from the lockdown.

Indeed, some analysts have argued that, despite the rapid drop in global emissions,

Covid-19 will actually prove to be damaging to the environment.

This is especially pertinent for emerging markets under significant economic strain, particularly if they can tap domestic hydrocarbon resources.

In South-east Asia, for example, countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam still have significant coal deposits, viewed in some quarters as a cost-effective option for boosting power generation.

These issues have been compounded by the crash in global oil prices that accompanied the outbreak of the virus. While this has had a negative effect on hydrocarbons companies worldwide, cheaper oil could incentivize the use of fossil fuels for energy during the recovery phase.

Fatih Birol, executive director of the IEA, told international media that although renewables were expected to be more resilient than fossil fuels, the overall drop in investment could hinder a transition towards renewable power.

"The historic plunge in global energy investment is deeply troubling for many reasons. The slowdown in spending on key clean energy technologies also risks undermining the much-needed transition to more resilient and sustainable energy systems."

However, Hatem Al Mosa, CEO of the Sharjah National Oil Corporation, told OBG that any slowdown in the transition should only be temporary.

Iran-Russia energy working group holds online meeting

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** — The fourth meeting of the Iran-Russia energy working group was held on Wednesday, via video conference, Shana reported.

In the meeting which was chaired by the Iranian Deputy Oil Minister for International Affairs and Trading Amir-Hossein Zamania and Russia's Deputy Energy Minister Anatoly Tikhonov,



the two sides stressed the implementation of previous agreements and expanding future cooperation in joint oil and gas projects.

The working group also discussed the issues of mutual interest in the oil, gas, petrochemical, refining, electricity and water sectors, and at the end of the meeting, a memorandum of understanding was exchanged within the framework of the agreements reached.

BP-Sinopec bunker venture to start fuel oil deliveries to Fujairah: source

The BP and Sinopec marine fuel bunkering joint venture will start deliveries of high sulfur and low sulfur fuel oils to Fujairah next month, a source close to the matter told S&P Global Platts.

The 50:50 venture, BP Sinopec Marine Fuels Pte., was started five years ago and focused on Asia in the early years, and now has rented storage space for the fuels at the UAE port, the source said. BP and Sinopec declined to comment.

BP and Sinopec had said when the venture was announced in May 2015 that they plan to serve ports in Singapore, Fujairah, Antwerp, Rotterdam and Amsterdam, and China's Tianjin, Qingdao, Shanghai, Ningbo and Shenzhen.

Sinopec started producing LSFO for bonded bunkering in January with a target production capacity of 10 million mt in 2020.

Production of LSFO has gathered pace since the Chinese government introduced a rebate of Yuan 1,218/mt (\$174.24/mt) consumption tax and 13 percent VAT on domestically produced fuel oil, effective Feb. 1.



Over January-May, China's fuel oil exports totaled 5.2 million mt, up 29.8 percent year on year, latest data from the General Administration of Customs showed.

Sinopec is the world's largest refiner by capacity and accounts for nearly 40 percent of China's total crude throughput.

Fujairah produces its own fuel oils, with three refineries located at or near the port. VTTI's refinery has a capacity of 82,000 bpd, Uniper Energy has two 40,000 bpd distillation columns, and Ecomar Energy Solutions has a 15,000 bpd plant producing naphtha, kerosene, gasoil and residual fuel.

Fujairah fuel oil prices won't be under pressure from the additional supplies, the source said, noting that the market recently has been reacting to crude oil prices. Delivered bunker fuel for marine fuel maximum 0.5 percent sulfur in Fujairah was assessed by Platts at \$325/mt on July 8, up from \$322/mt a week earlier.

North American oil and gas companies continue to go bankrupt at \$40 oil

The rash of oil and gas bankruptcies in North America is set to continue for the remainder of 2020, a report by Haynes and Boone cited by Reuters shows.

After the coronavirus pandemic and oil price war set in at the end of the first quarter, the second quarter began with a wave of bankruptcies in the oil and gas sector in North America, according to the report.

There have been more than 18 producer bankruptcies in Q2 alone, according to Haynes and Boone—it is the highest quarterly figure since 2016 during the previous oil price crash. So far this year, 41 oil producers and oilfield service firms have sought bankruptcy protection.

Even without the coronavirus pandemic or the oil price war, the flurry of bankruptcies were to be expected, with companies holding junk-rated bonds defaulting on interest payments at record levels even in 2019, with more distressed companies in the energy sector than in any other, Michael Bradley, energy strategist with Tudor, Pickering, Holt said at the end of last year.

Of course, these distressed companies were all holding out hope that oil prices would recover in 2020.

Nothing could have been further from how this year is playing out. This year has seen Chesapeake Energy, Diamond Offshore Drilling, Whiting Petroleum,

And even while prices have rebounded, the \$40 per barrel oil price right now will not be sufficient to stave off doom for the debt-laden shale producer, Haynes and Boone said. \$40 oil will not be enough for shale companies to make good on their hefty debt obligations.

Rystad Energy in April warned that as many as 530 U.S. oil companies could file for bankruptcy protection if oil had stayed at \$20 per barrel.

No intent to drive U.S. shale out of business, says OPEC chief

OPEC Secretary Mohammad Barkindo said there was no aim to drive U.S. shale oil producers out of business, after the price of U.S. barrels briefly turned negative in April, Arab News reported.

He was speaking in a CERAWEEK interview ahead of next week's OPEC+ market monitoring panel meeting. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and other exporters including Russia are collectively known as OPEC+. In April the group agreed the single largest output cut in history in response to plunging oil prices that followed in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

"There is no objective whatsoever for us as a group or as individual countries to drive U.S. shale production out of business," said Barkindo. "No. It is not in our interest to do that. It is not in the interest of the global industry to do that. Without the U.S. shale probably,



we could have entered into a worse crisis than we are seeing in this pandemic."

It costs more for U.S. shale drillers to produce oil than their conventional counterparts in OPEC, so the slide in prices this year has had a devastating impact on that industry. The situation reaching crisis point on April 21 when storage space at Cushing in Oklahoma, the main delivery point for U.S. light sweet crude oil, became full, forcing prices to turn negative for the first time ever.

Barkindo said OPEC had established a line of communication with U.S. independent producers and thanked both the U.S. and the G20 for helping to "restore communication" between OPEC+ producers.

Oil prices dipped on Thursday amid concerns about the renewed spread of the coronavirus in the U.S. and other countries.

Brent crude was down about 0.2 percent to \$43.20 in early afternoon trade in London while U.S. WTI also dipped by about 0.7 percent to \$40.59.

First Announcement



Brief Notice of International Tender No.9803197

Industrial hoses- include 42 items

Esfahan Steel Co. intends to purchase through international tender purchasing 42 Items hoses Prospective bidders specialized and experienced in the said area may visit Esfahan Steel Co.'s Website at www.esfahansteel.ir to get the tender documents no later than 06/July/2020 and deliver their bids to the following address no later than official closing time (i.e.14.00 pm) on 20/July/2020

For further information, prospective bidders may contact us via the following email address: mousavi-sh@esfahansteel.ir

Public Relation of Esfahan Steel Co.

First Announcement



Brief Notice of International Tender No.9900849

Esfahan Steel Co. intends to purchase 2 Items Refractory Mortar for Steel Ladle's Slide Gate (Type CS60). Prospective bidders specialized and experienced in the said area may visit Esfahan Steel Co.'s Website at www.esfahansteel.ir to get the Tender documents no later than 21.07.2020, and deliver their bids to the following address no later than official closing time (i.e.01:00 p.m.) on 02.09.2020.

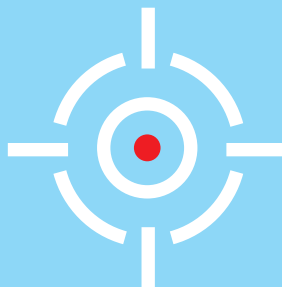
Confidential Secretariat of ESCo.'s Security Department, at the main entrance gate next to Melli Bank, Esfahan Steel Company, 45th km of Zobahan- Shahrekord highway, Esfahan, Iran, telephone No. 0098-31-5257-2197.

Public Relation of Esfahan Steel Co.

TEHRAN TIMES

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First Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER No: 99/103-24/03

Tender Holder:

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender :

Broadcasting the TV networks of English iFilm, Press TV and IRIB World Service Radio 6 on Intelsat 20 for three years in accordance with the technical specification and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents:

From Saturday 11 July 2020 (1399/04/21) until Tuesday 14 July 2020 (1399/04/24) by 04:00 p.m with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document:

Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept. ,4th Floor of IRIB Administration Complex ,Hotel Esteghlal St. Vali –Assr Ave,Tehran, Iran

The fee of the tender documents and how to deposit it:

Submission of payment receipt for the amount of 1,000,000 Rials to account 4101029171204273 with BIC No.IR 310100004101029171204273 IRAN Central Bank in the name of IRIB.

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender:

The amount of deposit for participant in tender is USD 53000 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 10600000000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

Time and place of delivering Bidding Envelopes:

The sealed (A,B&C) packages/envelopes and the qualification evaluation packages/envelopes separately packed, should be submitted no later than 09:00 a.m. on Saturday 15 of Aug 2020 (1399/05/25) and at the address mentioned in 4th clause.

Time and place of opening Qualification Evaluation envelopes:

The date of opening the Qualification Evaluation envelopes on Saturday 15 of Aug 2020 (1399/05/25) at 10:00 a.m in the office of International Purchasing Dept.

Time and place of opening Envelopes:

The envelopes A of those eligible participants who meet the qualification criterion and approval of Technical and Commercial committee will be opened on Sunday 16 Aug 2020 at 03:00 p.m (1399/05/26) in the office of Financial Vice President .In case of complete content in the envelopes A the envelopes of B and C of eligible participants will be opened at the same time and place.

The participant must be qualified by the competent authorities.

Fore more information please see :

www.iriboffice.ir/tenders and <http://iets.mporg.ir/> Tel: 00982122167053

Purchasing (Kala) Dept.,IRIB

First Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER No: 99/103-25/03

Tender Holder:

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender :

Broadcasting the TV network of Hispan TV on Intelsat 21 (Latin America) for three years in accordance with the technical specification and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents:

From Saturday 11 July 2020 (1399/04/21) until Tuesday 14 July 2020 (1399/04/24) by 04:00 p.m with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document:

Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept. ,4th Floor of IRIB Administration Complex ,Hotel Esteghlal St. Vali –Assr Ave,Tehran, Iran

The fee of the tender documents and how to deposit it:

Submission of payment receipt for the amount of 1,000,000 Rials to account 4101029171204273 with BIC No.IR 310100004101029171204273 IRAN Central Bank in the name of IRIB.

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender:

The amount of deposit for participant in tender is USD 31070 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 6214000000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

Time and place of delivering Bidding Envelopes:

The sealed (A,B&C) packages/envelopes and the qualification evaluation packages/envelopes separately packed, should be submitted no later than 09:00 a.m. on Saturday 15 of Aug 2020 (1399/05/25) and at the address mentioned in 4th clause.

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Purchasing (Kala) Dept.,IRIB

By M.A. Saki

TEHRAN — The ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Iran blames the United Nations for failing to prevent the massacre in Srebrenica in July 1995, telling the Tehran Times that the tragedy “is a big black spot in the history of the United Nations Organization” that took place “in the heart of Europe”.

The interview with Ambassador Samir Veladzic was conducted as Bosnia and Herzegovina is commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide.

The diplomat also says, “The Bosnian people who survived from this carnage, have never shown that they want to take revenge on the executioners, on the contrary, they have given always the message of peace and patience.”

Following is the text of the interview:

■ Genocide in Srebrenica took place despite the fact that the city had been declared a UN safe area. Based on this inaction, can we draw this conclusion that the United Nations failed not only in the Balkan war, it also failed in other cases in the years before after the Srebrenica massacre? For example, failure by the UN to protect Palestinians against Israel, Rohingya against extremists in Myanmar, etc.

A: Generally speaking, the Bosnian War, in fact, was an invasion to Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Army of the former Yugoslavia and it took place when the international community knew what was happening there. At that time, Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence from Yugoslavia and it happened after the declarations of independence of the Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Croatia. Although the international community was informed about all happening there, they banned the imports of weapons to the new independent country, the Army of which had already been formed. In that situation, the United Nations Organization just sent peacekeepers and created some safe areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina to protect the people. One of these safe areas was Srebrenica. This city was different from other safe areas, because it was declared as a non-military area too. Therefore, many people from the cities around Srebrenica went there and gathered in this small city. When the enemy forces attacked Srebrenica, the peacekeepers didn't protect the unarmed people, most of whom were women and children. As a result, the enemy forces killed thousands of people just in few days. The Peacekeepers were there in order to protect the unarmed people, but they failed and this is a big Black Spot in the history of the UN. Considering this experience, the

Bosnian people can understand very well the other people living in bad situations.

■ Srebrenica is a deep wound that the history will never forget. It happened before the eyes of the entire world, especially in proximity of Europeans who consider themselves defenders of human rights? What is your assessment of the Europeans' performance at the time?

A: Srebrenica, of course, is a deep wound that Bosnian people can never forget. As we said before, Srebrenica is a Black Spot that took place in the heart of Europe and on the other hand, we would like all nations and civilizations to learn from this tragedy in order not to happen anymore and anywhere.

■ How can this wound be healed?

A: There are some things that make people sad, for example, some politician claim that what happened in Srebrenica was not a genocide; or some executioners have not been sentenced yet. Moreover, some people who were killed in Srebrenica have not been found yet, because those who did genocide, buried the bodies of the killed people in mass graves in different places and their families can't find even their bones in order to bury them as they deserve.

■ What lessons can the world learn from this horrendous carnage in Srebrenica?

A: The carnage in Srebrenica teaches us that such a genocide should not happen anymore, anywhere and to anyone all over the world. But unfortunately, the same is happening in some places in the world and the innocent people are dying every day. Those who commit this crime, should be sentenced in order to be an example for all people in the world.

■ What is your description of the psychological trauma of the massacre, especially for those who lost sons, husbands and fathers?

A: It is not possible to describe the psychological trauma of the massacre, because many people from Srebrenica lost

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank the Iranian government and people for supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian people in that terrible situation. All supports provided by Iran helped a lot in order that less people be killed.”

Srebrenica is a ‘big black spot’ in UN history: ambassador

“Considering the Srebrenica experience, Bosnians can understand very well the other people living in bad situations”



“The carnage in Srebrenica teaches us that such a genocide should not happen anymore, anywhere and to anyone all over the world.”

their families and unfortunately in many cases all members of a family were killed and nobody was left, so, today, when we find the bones of the killed people, there is no one to give DNA test in order to identify the found bones. Moreover, a great number of women were raped during this executions and they cannot have their normal life. Especially for this part of the tragedy and its psychological trauma we cannot find any appropriate word to describe how they feel.

■ The UN war crimes tribunal for former Yugoslavia in The Hague has put the number of those killed in and around Srebrenica in July 1995 at around 8,000, but Bosniak officials and war victims' associations say the number is higher. Do you have any comments on the number of victims?

A: As I said before, Srebrenica, as a UN safe area, was a place where many people gathered to survive. Before the Bosnian War, this city was one of the smallest one in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the population of 35,000, and during wartime, according to the official sources, around 60,000 people were gathered there. Many of them managed to escape through forest and it took them

few days to find a safe area, but on the way from Srebrenica to the new destination, many people were killed. There is a great number of people who were lost in this tragedy and as we have not found all bones yet, we don't know exactly how many people died.

■ In your view, what steps are needed to be taken at national and international level to prevent genocides such as the one in Srebrenica, Rwanda, and the one against Rohingya in Myanmar?

A: The international community must take severe action when such a massacre like this happens.

■ Don't you think that such tragedies are the consequences of hatred, excessive nationalism and intolerance of other communities?

A: Some countries in Europe and other parts of the world have adopted Resolution which condemns the genocide in Srebrenica. Such a Resolution, should be adopted by all Parliaments in the world. It would be a good message to all nationalist and intolerant communities. The massacre in Srebrenica should be considered as a good lesson to all people in the world and not as an inspiration for more nationalism and intolerance in

Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries. The Bosnian people who survived from this carnage, have never shown that they want to take revenge on the executioners, on the contrary, they have given always the message of peace and patience. The victims just insist on justice, that is, all executioners, inside or outside the country, must be sentenced. Many of them, around 50 people, were sentenced to 700 years in prison just for the Srebrenica genocide, but unfortunately, not all of them for now.

■ There is some evidence suggesting that during the Srebrenica massacre U.S. spy planes were monitoring and registering the event without doing anything. Such inactions also happened when Daesh (ISIS) was committing crimes in Iraq and Syria. The U.S. was just looking from the sky. However, later it tried to depict itself as the main force against Daesh. In view of this, how some Muslims succeeded to survive the Balkan war, especially the Srebrenica carnage

A: A couple of years after the Srebrenica genocide and the Bosnian War, some satellite images appeared in the media, about the massacre and carnage especially in the Srebrenica area. Unfortunately, we could use these images just to find the mass graves and the hidden bodies of the killed people. We have been witness to many details about the Srebrenica massacre during the wartime in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in national and international media. In general, all helpful information we have should be used in order to protect the people's life and health. Finally, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank the Iranian Government and people for supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian people in that terrible situation. All supports provided by Iran helped a lot in order that less people be killed.

A couple of years after the Srebrenica genocide and the Bosnian War, some satellite images appeared in the media, about the massacre and carnage especially in the Srebrenica area.

25 years later: Questions of legal responsibility for Srebrenica

By Professor Otto Spijkers



On July 11, 2020, exactly 25 years have passed since the genocide in Srebrenica happened. In 1995, Bosnian Serb soldiers killed more than eight thousand Bosnian Muslim men in just a few days, while a United Nations (UN) peacekeeping force of Dutch soldiers was there to protect these men. This makes the Srebrenica genocide also a dark page in Dutch history. In what follows, I describe briefly what happened, and say something about the role of (international) law and the courts in dealing with questions of Dutch State liability for what happened.

Let me begin with an overview of the facts. The breakup of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) began in the 1990s. In 1991, both Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence from Yugoslavia. To maintain the peace, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was established. When Bosnia Herzegovina also issued a declaration of independence, the Serbs and Muslims in Bosnia began to fight each other. Many Muslim civilians fled to Srebrenica, a town in eastern Bosnia, to shelter from the violence of the war. The town was situated in a valley, surrounded by mountains, where the Bosnian Serb

Army was stationed. Approximately 40,000 civilians found themselves trapped in the tiny town, with not enough food. In 1993, UNPROFOR Commander Philippe Morillon went to Srebrenica himself. He spoke to a large crowd of frightened and starving civilians, and he tried to reassure them: “you are now under the protection of the UN forces”.

The UN had to act on this promise, which was made in the UN's name. It thus designated Srebrenica as a “safe area”. This was a new concept. The town was supposed to be protected by the peacekeepers of UNPROFOR. If needed, they could call upon the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to conduct air strikes. Also, a weapons embargo was imposed on the enclave and its immediate surroundings.

But it all went horribly wrong. First, some of the Dutch peacekeepers were taken hostage by the Bosnian Serbs and attached to military targets, which made NATO airstrikes impossible. And then in July 1995, Bosnian Serbs took the enclave of Srebrenica. The civilians fled from the town to UNPROFOR's compound in nearby Potočari. From there, women and children were transported to safety in buses. The Muslim men of military-age were killed by the Bosnian Serbs.

Surviving relatives believed that the Dutch peacekeepers could and should have done more to prevent the genocide from occurring. And thus, three cases were instituted against the State of the Netherlands at the Dutch court. I will now briefly describe these three cases.

Hasan Nuhanović was an interpreter, working for the United Nations Military Observers. In this capacity, he provided assistance to “Dutchbat” (this is the name commonly given to the Dutch

battalion of UN peacekeepers). After the fall of the enclave, Hasan Nuhanović was allowed by the Bosnian Serbs to remain with the peacekeepers of Dutchbat. Hasan's father had some formal relationship with Dutchbat, and for that reason, he could also have remained with Dutchbat. However, he decided to leave with his other son, who was not permitted to stay with Dutchbat because he was not working for them. The father's decision to accompany his other son was a heroic act; that cost him his life. Hasan Nuhanović's father and brother were among the thousands of Bosnian Muslims killed by the Bosnian Serbs. Hasan Nuhanović brought legal proceedings in the Dutch court, holding The Netherlands legally responsible for Dutchbat's failure to protect his father and brother from the Bosnian Serbs. He believed this failure constituted a wrongful act, attributable to the State of the Netherlands. The court agreed with him.

Rizo Mustafić was working as an electrician for Dutchbat. For that reason, he was on the list of local staff members who were permitted to stay with Dutchbat. However, because of some administrative confusion, Dutchbat was not aware that his name was on the list. This led to his death at the hands of the Bosnian Serbs. His surviving relatives instituted legal proceedings against the Netherlands, holding the latter responsible for not doing enough to protect Rizo's life. Again, the court agreed.

The Mothers of Srebrenica is a foundation, established under Dutch law, which purports to represent the interests of the surviving relatives of those killed at Srebrenica in 1995. The foundation claimed that Dutchbat's failure to protect the Bosnian Muslim

men from the Bosnian Serbs, constituted a wrongful act attributable to both the Netherlands and the United Nations. The UN successfully relied on its immunity from the jurisdiction of the Dutch domestic court and was thus removed from the case, but the State of the Netherlands was held liable. The Netherlands Supreme Court held that the group of male refugees situated inside Dutchbat's compound in Potočari on July 13, 1995, could and should have been protected from the Bosnian Serbs. The Supreme Court declared as follows: “[...] the prospects of the male refugees were very bleak, even if they were to remain in the compound. It must be assumed that the Bosnian Serbs, after discovering that some 350 male refugees had stayed behind in the compound, would have been greatly displeased. They probably would have done everything within their power to remove the men from the compound or to have them removed. The Bosnian Serbs could exert heavy pressure to that end, either by continuing the shut-down of the supply route to the compound or by threatening to use violence, because they largely outweighed Dutchbat in terms of both the number of troops and strength of the weaponry [...]. On the other hand, it cannot be completely ruled out that if Dutchbat had been able to withstand the threat of violence, the Bosnian Serbs would not have been willing to risk attacking the compound in order to deport the male refugees. [...] All in all, it must be ruled that the chance that the male refugees, had they been offered the choice of remaining in the compound, could have escaped the Bosnian Serbs, was indeed small, but not negligible. In view of all of the circumstances, the Supreme Court estimates that chance at 10%.”

In all three cases, the Netherlands Supreme Court held the State of the Netherlands responsible for wrongful acts and omissions in the context of a failed UN peacekeeping mission. That makes these judgments unique in the world. There are very few examples of judgments, issued by domestic courts, holding a UN troop-contributing State liable for wrongful conduct. Normally, the United Nations is itself responsible for the conduct of its peacekeeping forces. The situation in Srebrenica was truly exceptional, in the sense that the Dutch government – and not the UN Chain of Command – exercised effective control over the peacekeepers in the days immediately after the fall of Srebrenica.

What happens next? In the Mothers of Srebrenica case, the Supreme Court held that the Dutch State was liable for 10% of the damage suffered by the surviving relatives of the approximately 350 male refugees who were at the compound in Potočari on July 13, 1995. The Netherlands State is currently implementing this decision by issuing compensation. For this purpose, on July 2, 2020, an independent committee of experts started preparations for a claim settlement.

It is important to keep in mind that the entire international community failed to provide adequate protection to the people trapped in these so-called “safe areas” in the former Yugoslavia, including the “safe area” of Srebrenica. When the UN asked for states to volunteer and send troops, most states did nothing. The Netherlands did send troops. Other states were and continued to be bystanders. Indeed, we see that in practice there are good reasons for states not to act. States that do, are seldom rewarded for their efforts. And when

peacekeeping ends badly, which often happens, this can traumatize both the victims, the troop-contributing state, and the individual UN peacekeepers themselves.

Moreover, it is unfortunate that, primarily for jurisdictional and procedural reasons, the responsibility of the UN itself – in particular the UN Security Council and its permanent members – for the consequences of important strategic decisions, cannot be adjudicated by a court of law. This gives the impression that only the Netherlands bears responsibility.

Having said that, as a member of the international community, the Netherlands does bear some responsibility for the situation to arise in which the Srebrenica genocide could have happened. And indeed, the Netherlands government already acknowledged its political responsibility for this in 2002, by offering its resignation. But it is essential to always remember who is really to blame for the Srebrenica genocide, i.e. the Bosnian Serb forces, led by Ratko Mladić (military leader) and Radovan Karadžić (political leader).

Finally, what is worth emphasizing is that the Netherlands government fully supported – and even initiated – various independent fact-finding efforts. See especially The Fall of Srebrenica (Report of the UN Secretary-General of 15 November 1999); the Rapport sur les événements de Srebrenica (Report of the Assemblée Nationale of France of 22 November 2001); Srebrenica—A “Safe” Area (Report of the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation of 10 April 2002); and Missie zonder vrede (Report of Dutch Parliament of 27 January 2003). The Netherlands never tried to obstruct any efforts to find out what had gone wrong in Srebrenica.

Professor Otto Spijkers is a Dutch scholar who has published extensively on Srebrenica. He is currently professor of international law at the China Institute of Boundary and Ocean Studies (CIBOS) of Wuhan University, China.

“It is important to keep in mind that the entire international community failed to provide adequate protection to the people trapped in these so-called “safe areas” in the former Yugoslavia, including the “safe area” of Srebrenica. When the UN asked for states to volunteer and send troops, most states did nothing.”

15 natural sites in Qeshm Island demarcated

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – Fifteen natural sites in southern Qeshm Island were demarcated, CHTN quoted Mostafa Purali, a senior official with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, as saying on Thursday.

Qeshm Geopark, Valley of Stars, and Naz Islands are among the natural sites demarcated on the Persian Gulf island, the official added.



He also noted that nine natural sites of the island including Tandis Valley, Chakavir Strait, Namakan Dome, and Kargah Beach were added to the natural heritage list.

Qeshm Island is a heaven for eco-tourists as it embraces wide-ranging attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines.

The island also features geologically eye-catching canyons, hills, caves, and valleys, most of which are protected as part of the UNESCO-tagged Qeshm Island Geopark, itself a haven for nature-lovers.

Many travelers to Qeshm believe that the Stars Valley or Valley of Stars is a “MUST SEE”. It is home to bizarre-shaped gorges, tall pillars, canyon-like paths, hollowed-out spaces as well as the smooth and round stones, which have been formed by the wind and rain eroding the soil, rocks, and stones. Locals believe that a star once fell on this area thereby creating the rocky shapes that make it seem as if from another planet.

Over the past couple of decades, the coral Kish Island has become a beach resort where visitors can swim, shop, and sample a laid-back and relatively liberated local lifestyle. It is home to free-trade-zone status, with ever-growing hotels, shopping centers, apartment blocks, and retail complexes.

19 properties in South Khorasan added to National Heritage List

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Nineteen historical and natural sites in the eastern South Khorasan province have been inscribed on the National Heritage List, CHTN reported.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts announced the inscription on Thursday in a letter to governor general of the province, the report added.

Ten mansions, a post office, a castle, a mill, and two gardens as well as four Asbads (ancient vertical-axis windmills) in different cities of the province have been added to the National Heritage List.

Asbads can be found in Sistan-Baluchestan, South Khorasan, and Khorasan Razavi provinces.

Asbad used to be a smart technique to grind grains. It also bears testimony to the human being’s adaption with nature by transforming environmental obstacles into opportunities.

Iran plans to register a wide collection of its Asbads in different provinces on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Located in eastern Iran, South Khorasan province is home to many historical and natural attractions such as Birjand Castle, Dragon Cave, Furg Citadel, and Polond Desert.

It is also known for its famous rugs as well as its saffron and barberry which are produced in almost all parts of the province.

Ancient relics of Iran: Statuettes of little dogs wearing a hatched collar

(Part: 1/2)

(Louvre museum) – These two little silver dogs are quite exceptional pieces. Indeed, although dogs are often represented in Iranian or Mesopotamian art, objects of this type - probably ornaments of dress - are rare. They testify to the high technical skill achieved by goldsmiths of the region termed trans-Elamite. Their work can be defined by its outstanding use of precious materials and color combinations, as well as by its remarkable treatment of animal figures as plastic forms.

■ **A testimony to the work of silversmiths**

These two little dog figures come from Bactria, a region situated between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, defined as trans-Elamite by Pierre Amiet. The historian was referring to the production in the late 3rd and early 2nd millennia BC of objects that are similar to those found in Iran in the same period, but whose beauty is enhanced by the use of more precious materials and



by more lavish decoration. Silver was frequently employed by Oriental goldsmiths, yet few examples of silver pieces still exist because these objects were seldom kept. This precious metal was particularly popular in Bactria. There are many fine examples of dress ornaments, miniature trumpets, vases with repoussé decoration, and compartmented seals from this area.

Ancient relics smuggled to Austria back home

→ 1 “Based on national laws and international pacts such as the 1970 UNESCO Convention, to which Austria is a signatory, it is required that the items seized to be returned to the Islamic Republic of Iran as soon as possible.”

“The images [that we have been received from the confiscated objects] show a metal rhyton in the Achaemenid style, which its counterparts are found in the National Museum of Iran and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; and a bronze headpiece of the Sassanid King (Shapur II), the original of which is made of silver being kept at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.....,” he explained.

In April, Second Brigadier General Hadi Shirzad, the head of the Iranian Police’s international department, announced that the police “in a European country” have seized a cache of ancient Iranian relics hidden at a safety-deposit box of a bank.

“According to the Interpol, one of the banks in a European country intends to renovate and open the safe-deposit boxes inside the bank (previously informed the holders of the safe-deposit boxes that the bank intended to open them). Then, the bank finds out that one of the holders keeps some antiques of gold and silver in his/her box,” the senior police official added without mentioning the name of the European country.

“In coordination with the judicial authorities and with their assistance, a lawsuit has been prepared, translated, and submitted to that country. We are following the case through Interpol and diplomatic channels until the relics are back home,” Shirzad said.

The Achaemenid [Persian] Empire was the largest and most durable empire of its time. The empire stretched from Ethiopia, through Egypt, to Greece, to Anatolia (modern Turkey), Central Asia, and to India.



The extradition session was attended by a representative of the Islamic Republic and the head of the Vienna police criminal investigation department in the Austrian capital on July 9, 2020.

The Parthian Empire, also known as the Arsacid Empire, was a major Iranian political and cultural power in ancient Iran. The Parthians largely adopted the

art, architecture, religious beliefs, and royal insignia of their culturally heterogeneous empire, which encompassed Persian, Hellenistic, and regional cultures.

The Sassanid era (224 CE–651) is of very high importance in Iranian history, under which Persian art and architecture experienced a general renaissance.

Coronavirus shuts Zanjan’s Katala-Khor cave once again

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Katala-Khor, a limestone cave full of natural crystals believed to date from the Jurassic era, has gone on lockdown again for at least two weeks following the increase in the number of people infected with the coronavirus, CHTN reported.

Literally meaning “Mountain of Sun”, Katala-Khor is located in the northwestern Zanjan province and is said to date back to some 120 million years ago, so that it has embraced lots of natural and artificial changes during this lengthy period. The cave was reportedly discovered some seven decades ago by a group of Iranian cavers.

As the caves have a cold and humid environment, and given that the coronavirus is more durable in the cold environments, as well as the presence of bats in Katala-Khor cave, the travelers and cavers are asked not to travel to this tourist attraction until the further notice, said provincial tourism chief Amir Arjmand on Friday.

All the other tourist attractions in the province are disinfected and monitored every day, the official added.

The country closed cultural heritage museums and historical sites across the



country in a preventive measure amid fears of coronavirus outbreak back in February, but as the coronavirus lockdown was eased, they were reopened in early May.

In June, Arjmand announced that Katala-Khor cave is planned to become one of the country’s tourism hubs and asked the private sector to collaborate in

investing in the tourism industry of the province.

Katala-Khor cave interiors embrace huge hallways and corridors, which are impressively lit by flashlights.

Some three-seventh of the prolonged cave have been explored so far. A length of about 3km of the cave is open to the public while a 4km-route is accessible to experienced cavers and researchers.

Exploring a cave may not be on the “to-do list” of travelers in Iran. However, Karaftu, Ali-Sadr and Quri Qaleh, and Katala-Khor are amongst the most visited caves, the latter is situated some 150km south of Zanjan, off a road that connects Soltaniyeh to Hamedan.

Iran is geologically a part of the Alpine-Himalayan organic belt. According to Britannica Encyclopedia, the enigmatic evidence of human presence on the Iranian plateau is as early as Lower Paleolithic times.

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

Visit 17th-century museum-like factory in Isfahan



TOURISM **TEHRAN** – “Assarkhane” is a Persian word equivalent to a traditional oil-extracting factory where special mills are/ were used to grind stuff such as stones, turmeric, and pepper. There were many Assarkhanes operational in every corner of Iran in the time of yore.

Assarkhane Shahi in Isfahan, which is the focus of this article, is almost hidden among the labyrinthine bazaar adjacent to the UNESCO-registered Naqsh-e Jahan Square. It’s a museum-like place that turns the spotlight on early technology and everyday life of the people who lived

in the last centuries. It also demonstrates how roasted seeds such as castor, sesame, poppy, and sunflower were ground and the extracted oils used in food preparation, soap production, and oil lamps.

Two large round millstones that revolved on each other by ox or camel to grind the seeds; the plantain’s trunks that fastened together used for pressing the grinding seeds are amongst highlights of the Assarkhane.

It’s interesting to know that the Assarkhane was built afterward the plantain’s trunks had been housed there due to the enormous size of the trunks.

The Assarkhane Shahi with an approximate area of 380 square meters is one of the most important historical and tourist

attractions of Isfahan. The main area of the extracting factory was 1,800 square meters in which some portions such as stall, dock, and the Assarkhane entrance have been destroyed.

The entrance to the Assarkhane Shahi, like many other of its counterparts, takes you few steps down to reach the lower basement (or pillar room) which you can encounter stones, barrels, and... showing you clearly the hustles and bustles of the aged company during its heyday.

The building has one floor and designed in three-domed ceiling spaces with some 11 meters height. The shape of ceilings helps to store the extracted oil in the lower temperatures. The seeds were ground down



by revolving the millstones and then, the masses of the resultant pulp were flattened on the woven stuff that was made from palm leaves. Then, one by one put them on each other in a wooden cylindrical jar to press them with a large beam and collect the extracted oil in a barrel.

Isfahan is Iran’s top tourist destination for good reasons; its profusion of tree-lined boulevards, Persian gardens, and important Islamic buildings gives it a visual appeal unmatched by any other Iranian city. Moreover, many artisans working here underpin its reputation as a living museum of traditional culture.

Iran warns sanctions hamper regional locust battle

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — U.S. sanctions have hampered the implementation of a regional locust control program by Iran, and if the country fails to control the outbreak, the neighboring countries will also suffer, Somayeh Karimdoost, representative of the Iranian Embassy in Pakistan has said.

At a briefing to the diplomatic community by the National Locust Control Centre (NLCC), in Islamabad, she criticized the problems of regional cooperation in controlling the desert locust's infestation, underling that If the pressures from the coercive approaches against Iran continue and create obstacles in providing poison and spraying planes, other countries, including neighboring ones will bear the consequences.

She called on the World Food Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to play a more prominent role in assisting countries in the invasion of desert locusts and facilitating cooperation between them.

Following the influx of locusts into southern parts of the country this year, a total budget of 200 billion rials (nearly \$4.7 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) has been allocated to fight desert locust swarms.

Last year, desert locusts penetrated the



provinces of Bushehr, Fars, Hormozgan, Ker- man, Khuzestan, and Sistan-Baluchestan, which resulted in major losses on over 500,000 hectares of farmlands and gardens.

FAO explains that desert locust infestations are normally present in southeast Iran during the spring. Local breeding coincides with seasonal rains that often occur from about February or March until April or May. In warmer years, rains that occur during the winter can lead to late winter and early spring breeding.

By June, vegetation is usually dry again and any adults that were produced during the spring move east towards the Indo-Pakistan summer breeding areas. Most of the spring breeding occurs along a 450 km stretch of coastal plains on the Arabian Sea from Jask (Hormozgan) and the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman in the west to Chabahar and Gwadar (Sistan-Baluchestan) near the Pakistan border in the east.

The most important area along the coast is the Vashnum Plains near Chabahar. If rains fall and temperatures are warm, breeding may also occur in the interior, namely the Jaz Murian Basin from Kahnij to Iranshahr, and in the Zaboli, Suran, and Saravan valleys that lead to Panjgur, Pakistan. Desert Locust adults rarely cross the mountains to the north of these areas.

Save the planet: Iran takes step to reduce plastic bags

1 → Take 'employment' into account

Payam Joharchi, head waste management office at the DOE, told IRNA on Friday that because Iran is an oil-rich country and the raw materials for the production of plastic bags are abundantly available, there is also the issue of employment, so it must be carefully planned.

"Therefore, in the bill to reduce the consumption of plastic bags, which is mentioned in 6 articles, we focused more on incentive issues such as tax exemptions and suggested that the production of plastic bags be reduced by at least 20 percent annually or towards the production of renewable bags, given the importance of the issue of employment, it is planned to happen in six years," he added.

Emphasizing that culture promotion is very important in changing the pattern of public behavior in consuming plastic bags, he said that manufacturing units cannot



be closed, but their raw materials must be changed to renewables in the next 5 to 6 years.

"Another issue with plastic bags is the number of microns in production, which means that the lower the microns, the more they move. Now, if we raise the standard that is also included in the bill, for example, production below 50 microns is prohibited, then its weight will increase and it will not be easily moved, its shelf life will increase and will not be disposable anymore, because recycling bags with 80 or 100 microns may be affordable.

In the reduction and production of plastic bags, we came to the conclusion that we should focus on the destination, i.e. consumers, which can be reduced by cultural work, and people will be more directed to fabric bags.

We do not want to harm the people's employment and business, we have proposed to reduce production and change the approach over a period of 6 years," he concluded.

U.S. political approach fails in global coronavirus fight, Iran says

1 → The U.S. administration was one of the countries which because took a politicized position towards the crisis. Which ethical principle can justify the blocking of access path of a nation especially the most disadvantaged part of the society, such as workers, women, children, at medicine and medical equipment and that under false pretexts?

The world has got to know that during this time and under the toughest of sanctions, the Iranian nation stood firm fighting against the virus and fortunately, our health system and economy managed to contain the crisis despite facing the worst conditions.

Today, countries are going through various phases of managing the pandemic, what is obvious is the unsynchronized entry to these phases which can in the

absence of close and coordinated cooperation, the multilateral system lead to the further extension of the crisis.

On the other hand, from now on, the ILO must initiate measures to immunize countries' labor markets against a similar pandemic crisis to build a more resilient, more inclusive, and more sustainable world of work along with the recovery of member countries from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The lessons learned for the countries, during the crisis of valuable sources to form a clearcut cooperation framework among regions and countries, to prevent similar future outbreaks, equally it is important to extend cooperation framework to post-crisis management and reconstruction.

The international organizations, particularly ILO, have a key role to play in



this regard. Iran has seriously taken the issue

into account in every humanitarian, social, economic, income and protection aspect and following the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, Iran has incorporated in the four themes including, strengthening the economy and employment, supporting enterprises, jobs, and incomes, supporting workers in the workplace, and social dialogue finding solutions, he explained.

We not only believe but also have the conviction that sustainable prosperity and wellbeing is possible to sustainable friendship, peace and security in the world.

The outbreak of COVID-19 one second proved that the bonds and interconnectedness determined the fate of mankind irrespective of ethnicity, religion, race, language, and skin color, he concluded.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → E

Cabinet disapproves production of carbureted motorcycles

While the ministries of industry and interior have demanded the cabinet to reconsider its decision to ban the production of carbureted motorcycles and allow issuance of license plates, the cabinet of ministers rejected the proposal on June 17, ISNA reported on Friday. Resuming the production of carbureted-motorcycles and issuing license for carburetor motorcycles is against the law, Tehran city councilor Zahra Sadr-Azam Nouri has said.

Referring to the fact that the interior and industry ministers' request was against the law, she said it seems that supporting the private sector and manufacturers as well as employment and income generation is prioritized over public health.

تولید مجدد موتورسیکلت‌های کاربراتوری خلاف قانون است

به گزارش روز جمعه خبرگزاری ایسنا با وجود درخواست به وزیر کشور و وزیر صنعت و معدن مبنی بر تولید موتورسیکلت‌های کاربراتوری هیات دولت هفته ی گذشته شماره‌گذاری این موتورسیکلت را ممنوع اعلام کرد. زهرا صدر اعظم نوری رییس کمیسیون سلامت شورای اسلامی شهر تهران با اشاره به مصوبه هیات وزیران مبنی بر ممنوعیت تولید و شماره‌گذاری موتورسیکلت‌های کاربراتوری، گفت: تولید مجدد موتورسیکلت‌های کاربراتوری خلاف قانون است.

وی با اشاره به اینکه درخواستی که وزیر کشور و وزیر صنعت و معدن در این زمینه از هیات دولت دارد خلاف قانون و مصوب هیات دولت است و نباید مجوز داده شود، گفت: بیشتر نگاه حمایت از بخش خصوصی و تولیدکنندگان است و به نظر می رسد اشتغال و درآمدزایی بر مباحث سلامت افراد ارجح است.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“-et, -ette”

■ **Meaning:** small

■ **For example:** This *marionette* performance was the best school program I have seen in my 21 years of teaching.

PHRASAL VERB

Think back

■ **Meaning:** to think about things that happened in the past

■ **For example:** Thinking back, it amazes me how we survived on so little sleep.

IDIOM

Bury your head in the sand

■ **Explanation:** to refuse to face the unpleasant reality by pretending that the situation doesn't exist

■ **For example:** It's no good burying your head in the sand. We've got a problem on our hands.

Half the world lacks access to air pollution data to tackle public health threat

Half the world lacks access to information on air pollution, creating a vacuum of government accountability on the greatest environmental threat to public health.

A new study, published on Thursday, revealed that countries in the developing world are less likely to have access to air pollution data compared to wealthier nations. In countries where air pollution levels are the highest, the data was often the least accessible.

Outdoor air pollution leads to 4.2 million deaths each year, with the vast majority (90%) in low- and middle-income countries. Nine out of 10 people breathe polluted air every day around the world, leading the World Health Organisation to call it the greatest environmental risk to health. Burning fossil fuels is the primary cause of air pollution, and a driving force in the climate crisis, the Independent reported.



The study, by NGO OpenAQ, looked at data from 11,000 air monitoring stations in 93 countries to compare the number of stations with levels of PM2.5 — the deadly, fine particle pollution that has been linked to heart disease, strokes, lung cancer and diabetes. Researchers found that the greater the number of stations, the lower the pollution levels.

In 13 countries, researchers found no evidence of government programmes to provide air quality data. This affected a total of 1 billion people in nations including Pakistan, Nigeria, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Kenya.

In Lahore, Pakistan, hazardous levels of air pollution have led to a five-year reduction in life expectancy. Without access to real-time government data, the report found, it was up to concerned citizens to use personal sensors to monitor pollution levels.

Abid Omar, founder of air quality crowd-sourcing group Pakistan Air Quality Initiative, said: "Blue skies and clean air are a barometer of good governance. International funds should be linked with targets towards improving air quality, especially in regions such as Lahore."

At least 30 governments generate real-time data on air quality but are not fully transparent with the information, the report found. This affects a total of 4.4bn people in countries including China, India, Indonesia, Brazil, Russia, Japan, the Philippines and South Africa.

Scientists in South Africa found that PM 2.5 pollution levels in the country may be four times as high as global models estimate.

Dr Rebecca Garland, Principal Researcher at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research in South Africa, said: "This report makes it clear that there is a critical need for increased monitoring and open reporting of air pollution data across Africa. Currently, there are large uncertainties in the impact of air pollution in Africa due to a lack of freely available data. Global models try to fill in the gaps, but they can't get very far without ground-based data to compare to."

In a review of 212 countries, the report concluded that 109 governments are not producing air quality data of any major pollutants. The report called for greater investment after finding that few overseas aid programmes focus on air quality, with only \$1 in every \$5,000 going to projects.

The new research was supported by NASA who use OpenAQ for global air quality forecasts. Dr Bryan Duncan, a NASA atmospheric scientist, said: "Open data is one small step to cleaner air. To fight air pollution we need to raise public awareness of its detrimental effects on human health. Making air pollution data easily accessible is critical to this."

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Election time in El Salvador

(March 22, 2004)

El Salvador has elected a new president. Tony Saca of the right wing ARENA party has beaten the former rebel commander, Schafik Handal. This report from Clare Marshall.

After a nasty election campaign, which opened up the **old divisions** of El Salvador's bitter civil war, the right has triumphed once again. ARENA, the party which has ruled this tiny Central American country for the last fourteen years, **has been given a new mandate**. The party faithful started celebrating just minutes after the vote count began, when **initial results** suggested that former sports television presenter, Tony Saca, would win in the first round.

Less than three hours later, before the official result was **confirmed** by the electoral council, Tony Saca declared himself El Salvador's president elect. Appearing at a **podium in his trademark shirt** of his party's colours - red, white and blue - Mr Saca said that the people of El Salvador have asked me to **take care of** the future and not to **slip back** into the past. Live on local television, he then proceeded to take several congratulatory telephone calls from the leaders of other Central American nations. Fireworks could be heard crackling across the skies of the capital.

This result is a **resounding** rejection of the left wing in its current form. It's unlikely that the seventy three year old Communist former guerrilla commander, Schafik Handal, will stand again. It seems that its leaders will have to modernise in order for the left to become a significant force in modern Salvadorean politics.

■ **Words**

old divisions: issues which people have strongly disagreed about for a long time

has been given a new mandate: has been given the authority to do something

the party faithful: people who have been loyal members of a political party for a long time

initial results: early election results

confirmed: said that is was definitely true

podium: a small platform used for making speeches

in his trademark shirt: in the shirt he often wears and people now associate the shirt with him

take care of: deal with, look after

slip back: go backwards

resounding: clear, strong, leaving no doubt

(Source: BBC)

Macron asks Israel to drop West Bank annexation plans

Russia: Israel's annexation bid risks outburst of regional violence

→ 1 Regional violence

Meanwhile, Russia has warned that the Israeli regime's contentious plans to annex large parts of the occupied West Bank and strategic Jordan Valley risk the outburst of violence across the Middle East region.

Speaking at a weekly press briefing in Moscow Thursday, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova described the impending move as a unilateral implementation of U.S. President Donald Trump's controversial proposal for "peace" between the Tel Aviv regime and the Palestinians, dubbed "the deal of the century," and reiterated the need for an international consensus to reject Israel's plans.

The deal of the century envisions Jerusalem al-Quds as "Israel's undivided capital" and allows the Tel Aviv regime to annex illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank and Jordan Valley. The plan also denies Palestinian refugees the right of return to their homeland, among other controversial terms.

Trump's plan has triggered waves of protest around the globe.

The annexation move will also put an end to the prospect of the so-called two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Zakharova added.

She further noted that Russia shares the same position as that of the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) vis-à-vis such an attempt.

Zakharova also highlighted the need to restart negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) and the Quartet on the Middle East – the United States, the European Union, the United Nations and Russia – to work out a comprehensive and sustainable solution to the issue.

The last round of Israeli-Palestinian talks collapsed in 2014. Among the major sticking points in those negotiations was Israel's continued settlement expansion.

More than 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem al-Quds.

The UN Security Council has condemned Israel's settlement activities in the occupied territories in several resolutions.

Less than a month before Trump took office, the United Nations Security Council in December 2016 adopted Resolution 2334, calling on Israel to "immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem" al-Quds.

Many Palestinians believe the Israeli plan to annex one-third of the already illegally occupied West Bank, including parts of the strategic Jordan Valley, is only a formality and a de facto Israeli occupation of their land has been under way for many years.

"Israel's annexation plan has been in process since 1967," said Salah Khawaja, coordinator of an anti-occupation campaign called the Popular Committee to Resist the Wall and the Settlements.

"Israel has since built settlements and the wall. And so, annexation has been ongoing for a long time," he added.

N.Y.C. paints 'Black Lives Matter' in front of Trump tower

→ 1 "The president is a disgrace to the values we cherish in New York City," a spokeswoman for Mr. de Blasio said in a statement at the time. "He can't run or deny the reality we are facing, and any time he wants to set foot in the place he claims is his hometown, he should be reminded Black Lives Matter."



Trump, who has a history of denigrating Black people, appeared to take the bait. The city's announcement of the painting provoked an inflammatory response from the president that tried to play on tensions between Black Lives Matter protesters and the New York Police Department.

Trump and Mr. de Blasio have sparred repeatedly in recent years. The mayor once said that New York would not "welcome back" Trump, who was born in Queens, after his presidency ended. Months later, the president, who has called Mr. de Blasio "the worst mayor in America," switched his primary residence to Florida.

Resistance News

Palestinian citizen killed in IOF shooting

INTERNATIONAL TEHRAN—A Palestinian man from Kifl Hares village to the north of Salfit governorate was killed by Israeli occupation forces (IOF) on Thursday night.

The Palestinian ministry of health said that Ibrahim Mustafa was fatally shot by the IOF in the neck and was hospitalized in critical condition. He succumbed to his serious wound at Salfit government hospital soon after his admission.

Meanwhile, medical sources said that another Palestinian citizen was wounded in his foot also by IOF gunfire.

Russia will ensure its security if New START ceases to exist: Lavrov

Russia is interested in maintaining New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), however, it will ensure its security if the treaty is not prolonged, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Friday during an online session of the Primakov Readings international forum, dubbed «Russia and the world after COVID-19.»

«We know and we are confident that we will be able to ensure our long-term security even if there is no treaty,» he said, adding that it is too early to discuss Russia's steps in case New START ceases to exist.

«However, we are ready for any turn of events, this is true, and if the treaty is not prolonged, there are many options. I can assure you that our general aim would be to continue strategic dialogue with the USA, as well as the dialogue on new arms control means in the context of all factors affecting strategic stability,» the minister stressed. Lavrov stated that Russia would not convince the USA to prolong the treaty. «If they categorically decline, we won't try to convince them. <...> We need this treaty to be prolonged to the same extent as the Americans. Right now, they see our calls to



prolong it for five or some number of years without preconditions as some sort of game,» the foreign minister noted.

However, the minister added that Russia

is ready to discuss the control over new types of weapons not falling under New START. «We are ready to begin a discussion about the types of weapons that are not «classic»

under New START. Naturally, this will be within the discussion of all issues affecting strategic stability in some way or form,» he said, adding that Russia's motivation is to «lower the threat to global stability and security.»

The Russian-U.S. New START treaty took effect in 2011. Under its terms, either party shall reduce its strategic offensive arms in such a way that by the end of a seven-year period following the moment the treaty takes effect, it should have no more than 700 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched missiles and heavy bombers, 1,550 warheads for them and 800 deployed and non-deployed ICBM and SLBM (submarine launched ballistic missiles) launchers and heavy bombers.

The treaty shall stay in effect for ten years (up to 2021) unless it is replaced by another agreement by that moment, or it can be prolonged for no more than five years (until 2026) by mutual consent. Lately, Moscow repeatedly urged Washington to avoid delays in prolonging that treaty, which it described as a gold standard in the field of disarmament.

U.S. Supreme Court rebuffs Trump's immunity claim, lets prosecutor get financial records

The U.S. Supreme Court firmly rejected President Donald Trump's arguments for sweeping presidential immunity and ruled that a New York prosecutor can obtain his financial records but prevented - at least for now - Democratic-led House of Representatives committees from getting similar documents.

The twin 7-2 rulings authored by conservative Chief Justice John Roberts mark another milestone in Trump's tumultuous presidency and in the short term prevent details of his finances from becoming public because lower courts must resolve lingering issues, Reuters reported.

The businessman-turned politician, seeking re-election on Nov. 3, has fought tenaciously to keep his tax returns and other elements of his finances secret - and the rulings spare him of any major revelation at a sensitive time. But looking further ahead, Trump faces possible future criminal prosecution in his native New York, perhaps after he leaves office.

The Supreme Court emphasized that there are limits to the powers of the presidency and stoutly reaffirmed the principle that not even the president is above the law - a message delivered 3-1/2 years into a presidency in which Trump has repeatedly skirted the norms of American political conduct.

Trump's two Supreme Court appointees, conservatives Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh, joined Roberts and the four liberal justices in both rulings, spurning Trump's arguments that the Constitution gave him absolute immunity from any criminal proceedings as a sitting president.

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance, a Democrat, and the three House committees all issued subpoenas to third parties for the records, not to the Republican president himself. Trump sued to block enforcement of the subpoenas.

The court in the New York case ruled that the subpoena to Trump's long-term accounting firm, Mazars LLP, for tax returns and other financial records to be

turned over to a grand jury as part of Vance's criminal investigation can be enforced.

The justices rebuffed Trump's broad arguments on expansive presidential powers in a showdown with Congress as he tried to block subpoenas by lawmakers to Mazars and two banks - Deutsche Bank and Capital One - for his financial records. In doing so, the court also faulted the broad arguments made by the House and sent the litigation back to lower courts, delaying the final outcome.

Trump portrayed himself as a victim, calling the subpoenas a "pure witch hunt" and a "hoax" in comments to reporters. On Twitter, he wrote, "This is all a political prosecution — and now I have to keep fighting in a politically corrupt New York. Not fair to this Presidency or Administration!"

Trump's argument that he was immune from any criminal process "runs up against the 200 years of precedent establishing that Presidents, and their official communications, are subject to judicial process," Roberts wrote.

N. Korean leader's sister says another summit unlikely but "a surprise thing may still happen"



Kim Yo Jong, the sister of North Korea's leader, said another summit with the United States would only be useful for Washington at this point, adding her country had no intention of "threatening the U.S.," according to state media.

Kim said in her personal opinion, there is unlikely to be another summit between leader Kim Jong Un and U.S. President Donald Trump this year but "a surprise thing may still happen," news agency KCNA reported on Friday.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Thursday he was "very hopeful" about resuming talks with North Korea about denuclearisation and appeared to leave open the possibility of another summit between the countries' leaders.

Kim Yo Jong's comments came a day after the U.S. point man for North Korea, Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun, wrapped up a three-day visit to Seoul where he rejected speculation he was seeking to meet North Korean officials during his trip, but said the United States was open to talks.

Recent North Korean statements have rejected the idea of new talks, and Kim reiterated Pyongyang's objections to what it sees as hostile and self-serving policies of the United States.

"We would like to make it clear that it does not necessarily mean the denuclearisation is not possible," Kim Yo Jong said. "But what we mean is that it is not possible at this point of time."

Her comments were couched in a somewhat softer tone than previous statements, and she even noted she had received special permission to view recordings of the recent Fourth of July Independence Day celebrations in the United States.

"We do not have the slightest intention to pose a threat to the U.S.... Everything will go smoothly if they leave us alone and make no provocation on us," she said.

According to Reuters, Kim said it was unclear if mixed messages of engagement and pressure from Trump and his aides are an "intentional scheme or a result of the President's loose grip of power."

China hopes for 'reasonable' U.S.



China continues to try its best to convince the U.S. to stop dangerous approaches to deal with the ties, and to be sincere at dialogues to solve problems, said Chinese foreign minister in a speech at an online forum with more than 30 top diplomats and experts around the world on the direction of China-U.S. relations.

China-U.S. relations, "one of the most consequential bilateral relationships in the world," are faced with "the most severe challenge since the establishment of diplomatic ties," Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi warned on Thursday at the China-U.S. Think Tanks Media Online Forum. Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger also attended the forum.

According to Global Times, from the trade war and competition in the field of high-tech, such as 5G, to military tensions in the South China Sea and the Taiwan problem, as well as the war of words on the COVID-19 pandemic, the two most powerful countries and

biggest economies in the world have been competing and struggling in almost every aspect in recent years.

Although China is receiving pressure and challenges from the U.S., the Chinese government has always been calm and pragmatic in handling the severe situation, while the U.S. is getting increasingly unpredictable and unreasonable, experts said.

However, experts are pessimistic about whether the U.S. would appreciate China's sincerity and return to the right track, as Washington refuses to accept the rise of China even if it's aware of the fact. In the future, more struggles will come.

Analysts said maybe the struggles, which could make hostile forces in the U.S. feel the pain, could help the U.S. learn how to coexist with China peacefully. The unprecedented global challenge of COVID-19 pandemic, for example, could force U.S. decision-makers to choose cooperation if the U.S. realizes it cannot save its economy, as well as the world economy, on its own.

UN human rights expert calls on Saudi Arabia to free women activists

A United Nations special rapporteur has called on the member states of the UN Human Rights Council to pressure Saudi Arabia to free women activists, four months before the Arab kingdom is to hold the 2020 G20 Riyadh summit.

Agnes Callamard, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, made the call during a speech to the council in Geneva on Thursday.

The Saudi regime should release "prisoners of conscience,

women, human rights defenders that are currently in prison for demanding the right to drive," she said.

Saudi authorities put at least a dozen prominent women's activists behind bars in 2018 as the regime lifted a ban on women driving cars, a step that most of the detainees had long campaigned for.

According to Press TV, these activists were arrested as part of a broader plan of crackdown on dissent that extended

to even clerics and intellectuals.

According to Reuters, several of the arrested women have already said that they had gone through torture and been the victim of sexual assault in detention.

Saudi officials, however, reject the allegations, claiming that the detainees were suspected of having damaged Saudi interests and allegedly offered support to what they described as hostile elements abroad.

Saudi Shia clerics denounce Asharq Awsat's insulting cartoon of Ayatollah Sistani

A group of Saudi Shia clerics have vehemently condemned the London-based and Riyadh-owned Asharq al-Awsat daily newspaper for insulting Iraq's most prominent Shia cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani.

"The status ... of religious scholars is a matter of consensus among all Islamic doctrines and divine laws, and Islam stresses the need for Muslims to safeguard the standing and sanctity," the clerics said in a joint statement released on Thursday.

"Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, May God bless him, is a religious authority. He is a revered and respected personality for the Shia com-

munity in our country and elsewhere in the world," Saudi clerics said.

They added, "He is a source of rationality for the entire Iraqi nation, irrespective of their faiths and sects. He has had a leading role in stabilizing Iraq and defending its sovereignty, and his famous [July 2014] fatwa (religious decree) to stand against terrorism and terrorists greatly contributed to the protection of Iraq against division and bloodshed."

The clerics also denounced Asharq al-Awsat's insulting cartoon of the prominent cleric as "irresponsible, unethical, and contrary to the fundamentals of professional journalism."

"It is actually an act that provokes discord, and threatens the stability of our country and nurtures sectarianism," they pointed out.

The insulting cartoon has also been censored by Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement, which has emphasized that Ayatollah Sistani enjoys a sublime position in the hearts and minds of Muslims.

"Ayatollah Sistani has always preserved Iraq's safety, political stability and national unity," Hezbollah said in a statement released on Saturday evening, pointing to the fatwa issued by the top cleric, which called on all Iraqi citizens to defend their country shortly after

Daesh unleashed its terror campaign in Iraq.

The fatwa helped Shia fighters, Sunni tribesmen as well as Christian and Izadi volunteers gather under the umbrella of the Popular Mobilization Units, commonly known as Hashd al-Sha'abi, to prevent Daesh's advances.

On Sunday, thousands of Iraqi protesters converged outside the gates of the heavily-fortified Green Zone in the capital, Baghdad, which is home to several embassies and government offices, including parliament and the prime minister's office, seeking to break into the Saudi embassy.

Shahla Behrouzi Rad falls in love with Para canoe

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian Para canoe athlete Shahla Behrouzi Rad has expressed her desire for the sport.

Behrouzi Rad, who started her career as a discus thrower, represented Iran at the 2016 Paralympic Games in Para canoe.

Now, she says that the sport gives her peace of mind. She trains at home since all sports have been suspended for months due to COVID-19.

“I won a gold medal in Samarkand, Uzbekistan in 2016, thanks to my family for encouraging me to do the sport,” Behrouzi Rad said. “Canoeing give me the peace of mind and I want to keep going.”

“In the 2016 ICF Paracanoe World Championships I booked my place in the final but at the 2016 Paralympics I finished in ninth place and failed to qualify for the final. It was a great experience for me and will be helpful for the next Paralympic Games,” she added.

2016 Olympic gold medal winner Hassan Yazdani is her role medal and Behrouzi Rad praised him on and off the field.

“Sportsmanship is my priority. I want to be like Yazdani,” the para athlete went on to say.

“I stay at home due to coronavirus and train but I am sure the good days will return when life will get back to normal,” Behrouzi Rad concluded.

Para canoe first featured with exhibition status under the name “paddleability” at the 2009 Canoe Sprint



World Championships in Dartmouth, Canada, and was given official status as Para canoe at the following year's

edition in Poznan, Poland.

In 2010, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) announced that

the sport would be part of the 2016 Paralympic Games program with six events in kayak.

Esteghlal, Tractor will be held as scheduled: Iran League Organization

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran Football League Organization announced that the match between Esteghlal and Tractor will be held on Saturday, as it previously scheduled.

Last week, Esteghlal, who were scheduled to go to Jam, Bushehr Province for the game against Pars Jounubi, refused to travel to the southern city as the club stated that 11 players and one staff member at the team have tested positive for coronavirus.

Consequently, there were rumors that Esteghlal's match against Tractor in Tehran on Saturday may be canceled for the same reason, but the league organization decided to hold the match as the results of a repeat testing revealed that the test results of a number of Esteghlal players who

tested positive previously have changed to negative.

Another team in the Iran Professional League (IPL) impacted by the coronavirus were Foolad Khuzestan. Saeed Azari, the general manager of Foolad, a club from the south-western city of Ahvaz, confirmed on last Saturday that 16 club staff, including 11 players, had tested positive.

Foolad's away match against Nasaji was canceled last week and, according to the announcement of the league organization, the team's next home match against Naft Masjed Soleyman, planned to be held on Saturday, was canceled.

The Ahavaz based football team have been allowed by the league organization to restart their football activities from Sunday, July 12.



AFC reiterates commitment to complete 2020 competitions with new calendar

Following a series of constructive discussions with its Member Associations (MA), Leagues and Clubs, the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has now produced a calendar for concluding the National Team, Club and Futsal Competitions in 2020.

The AFC's National Team and Club competitions as well as the AFC Futsal Championship planned for Turkmenistan have been postponed since February and March but, thanks to the support of the Members, Leagues and Clubs, there is a determination to finish the competitions this year.

Dato' Windsor John, the AFC General Secretary, said: “The AFC Administration has been in constant dialogue with our MAs, Leagues and Clubs in recent weeks so that we can establish a clear picture of the opportunities that exist in each MA.

“During those discussions which began in Kuala Lumpur, Doha, Dubai and Delhi in February and March, and have continued online ever since, we have looked to agree a calendar of matches that will allow us to complete both the club competitions and centralized tournaments in 2020.”

The venues for the centralized groups to be used for both the AFC Champions League



and the AFC Cup are to be confirmed. All of the planned group stage matches will be played in full while the knock-out rounds will now consist of single match ties (rather than home & away), as will the Final of both competitions.

The AFC will also look to conclude the age-

group National Team and Futsal tournaments in 2020 with the new schedule involving:

- AFC U-19 Championship Uzbekistan – October 14 to 31, 2020
- AFC Futsal Championship Turkmenistan – November 4 to 15, 2020.
- AFC U-16 Championship Bahrain

– November 25 to December 12, 2020.

- AFC Futsal Club Championship United Arab Emirates – December 2 to 13, 2020.

The Asian Qualifiers for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Second Round, which were postponed from March, June and September, have already been rearranged for October and November 2020.

Dato' Windsor added: “I would like to thank all our stakeholders, including our MAs, the Leagues and Clubs as well as our Commercial and Broadcast Partners, once again for their understanding and patience as well as loyalty and commitment to Asian football during what continues to be a difficult and uncertain time in the history of our game.

“Notwithstanding the challenging times, I am delighted that we are seeing more encouraging progress on the return of many domestic Leagues to the field and with them comes an expectation that we can conclude both the AFC Champions League and the AFC Cup in the coming months.”

(Source: the-afc)

AVC likely to cancel all 2020 competitions due to COVID-19 concerns

As the massive global Covid19 outbreak has brought Asian volleyball activities to a complete standstill with countries imposing tight air travel restrictions, AVC is poised to make a clear decision of cancelling all 2020 AVC indoor and beach volleyball competitions.

Cloud of uncertainty has loomed over the future of the AVC Championships since the outbreak of the deadly coronavirus has been first identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019. Major competitions both indoor and beach volleyball events have been put on hold, making cancellation and rescheduling the only options left.

AVC has been closely following the pandemic of the novel coronavirus on a daily basis since the beginning of January 2020 and also is in active communication with FIVB and AVC Board of Administration in an effort of continuing its activities and competitions on schedule as many as possible.

However, the Covid19 has still spread with alarming speed, reportedly infecting over 12 millions and killing up to 550,000 as of July 9. With the strict safety measures of FIVB and IOC to safeguard the health of athletes, everybody involved at the competitions and the Asian volleyball community, AVC has come to a decision to cancel all 2020 AVC competitions when only 47 days are remaining ahead of the 3rd Asian U19 Beach Volleyball Championships, the first 2020 AVC event initially due to be held in Phuket, Thailand after cancellations and rescheduling.

FIVB General Director Mr Fabio Azevedo on July 8 chaired an online meeting attended by FIVB and AVC Executive Vice President Mr Essa Hamza, FIVB BA Member and AVC Secretary-General Mr Shanrit Wongprasert and Mr Luis Alexandre Pontes Rodrigues, FIVB Director for Asia and Oceania to share the latest situation updates and data regarding the Covid19 outbreak as well as discussing and studying the possibility of hosting the 2020 AVC competitions.

Regarding the meeting, it has been definitely accepted that the global Covid19 pandemic made a potential impact on hosting the 2020 AVC competitions. With Asian countries extending their lockdown restrictions, the quarantine measures and international airlines halting their flights, the AVC Cup for Men and Women, the Asian Men's and Women's Clubs Championships and all AVC Beach Tour events and Asian U19 Beach Volleyball Championships, which are supposed to take place between coming August to October, look difficult and are all likely to be cancelled.

At the same time, all 2020 Asian Underage Tournaments, the qualifications for the 2021 FIVB Underage World Championships, tend to shift the commencement owing to the grave Covid19 outbreak concerns.

It has also been agreed in principle that if situation returns to normal in the next few months, with countries lifting their lockdown restrictions and airports and transportation



solutions implemented to ensure continuity of service, all Asian Underage Tournaments (Men's U20, Women's U19, Women's U17 and Men's U18) are likely to be held in either November or December 2020.

However, if things turn sour, with most Asian countries affected by the Covid19 outbreak continuing their lockdown restrictions which make host countries and participating teams unable to join the fray, AVC will postpone all Asian Underage Tournaments. The four AVC tournaments have been set to take place later between early January and February.

Meanwhile, the AVC General Assembly, which is due initially to be held in Bangkok in mid-October 2020, is also likely to suffer postponement and is due to take place in December 2020 instead, with specific date to be confirmed.

(Source: Asianvolleyball.net)

Stefano Cusin named Shahr Khodro temporary coach

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Italian coach Stefano Cusin **d e s k** has been named Shahr Khodro football team interim coach.



The Italian coach replaced Mojtaba Sarasiaei, who stepped down from his role on Wednesday in a shock move.

Sarasiasai resigned after disagreements with the club's management.

Cusin, 51, had been named as Sarasiaei since January and now will work as head coach with seven matches remaining in Iran Professional League.

He has already worked in Emirati football clubs.

In two weeks after the restarting of the IPL match – after a four months break over the outbreak of novel coronavirus –Shahr Khodro defeated Zob Ahan and Gol Gohar Sirjan and climbed to the third place of the league table, 12 points behind leaders Persepolis.

The Mashhad based football team will host Saipa on Saturday.

Iran futsal remain best Asian team

IRNA — The Iranian national futsal team remained unchanged in the world futsal ranking.

In the latest Futsal World Ranking released on Thursday, Iran are sixth in the world with 1603 points.

Iran still are the best Asian team in the ranking.

Brazil and Spain are first and second with 1810 and 1801 points, respectively.

Argentina remained third with 1694 points.

Russia and Portugal are fourth and fifth with 1642 and 1639 points, respectively.

Japan are 16th in the ranking and the second best Asian team with 1368 points.

Iran national futsal team prepares for the 2020 AFC Futsal Championship in November, where they have been drawn along with South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Thailand in Group D.

Soryan confirmed as United World Wrestling Bureau candidate

The official candidacies for the 2020 United World Wrestling Bureau elections have been received and confirmed.

There are seven positions up for re-election in 2020, including six seats on the Bureau and the position of UWW President. Five incumbents have submitted their candidacy for re-election while nine new candidacies have been received for Bureau positions. Successful candidates serve a six-year term on the Bureau.

Incumbent President Nenad LALOVIC (SRB) will be running un-opposed for re-election. The election will be his second six-year term as President.

Elections were scheduled to be held on 6 September 2020 during the Ordinary Congress planned on the eve of the 2020 Junior World Wrestling Championships in Belgrade. Due the pandemic, different options are examined for this year's congress. An announcement will be made later when the calendar is consolidated.

■ **Present incumbent:**

DI BUSSOLO PELLICONE, Marina (Ms) (ITA)

GAMA FILHO, Pedro (BRA)

MAMIAHVILI, Mikhail (RUS)

MESKOUT, Fouad (MAR)

RUZIEV, Akhroldjan (UZB)

■ **New candidates:**

CANEVA, Lucio (ITA)

IGALI, Daniel (NGR)

KARISNAK, Jan (SVK)

KHARENKO, Dina (Ms) (UKR)

KORPELA, Marko (FIN)

MACHAIDZE, Edisher (GEO)

RYAN, Don (CAN)

SORYAN, Hamid (IRI)

ZAMBRANO, Johnny (ECU)

The end of the term of the late Mr. Tzenov was this year. A new candidate - with regards to his term as Continental Council President - the Bureau approved Mr Theodoros Hamakos (GRE), Vice-President of UWW-Europe to act as interim President of the European Council until next year when all Continental Councils hold their elective assemblies to renew all positions.

Tabatabaei 2nd at Speed Chess Championship Grand Prix

Tasnim — Iran's GM Amin Tabatabaei finished in second place at the sixth Speed Chess Championship Grand Prix.

The Iranian chess player lost to American GM Hikaru Nakamura in the knockout final.

The sixth Speed Chess Grand Prix tournament was held with 879 participants.

It was GM Fabiano Caruana who won the Swiss part with a 9.0/10 score as he edged out Tabatabaei on tiebreak.

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A usurped stone in a house causes the ruin of that house.

Imam Ali (AS)

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES



Watercolor
■ Mahsa Mahdizadeh is displaying her latest watercolors in an exhibition at Atashzad Gallery. The exhibit runs until July 15 at the gallery located at 3 North Abbaspur (Tavanir) St. near Vanak Sq.



Painting
■ Seyhun Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Vahid Ezzatpanah. The exhibit titled "Fallen Wall" runs until August 7 at the gallery located at No. 11, 4th St., Vozara Ave.



■ Raika Khorshidian is hanging her latest paintings in an exhibition titled "Home Is Leaving Me" at Negar Gallery. The exhibition will run until July 15 at the gallery located at 154 near Iranshahr St., Karim Khan Blvd.

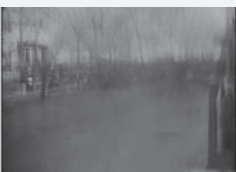


Photo
■ Sina Borumandi is showcasing his latest collection of photos named "Soft Material" in an exhibition at O Gallery. The exhibit will continue until July 27 at the gallery located at 18 Shahin St., Sanai St.



■ An exhibition of photos by a group of photographers, including Babak Borzueh, Javid Tafazzoli, Elnaz Amini, Mehdi Qanavati, Mohsen Kaboli, Parisa Mohseni and Ali Seraj is currently underway in an exhibition at Negah Gallery. The exhibit entitled "Life Documents 2" runs until July 21 at the gallery located at 64 Ghaffari St., Jam St., Motahhari Ave.



Print
■ A collection of prints by Rozita Nosrati, Sara Kaveh, Saeideh Miqani, Mahsima Shokrian, Roya Alipur and several other artists is currently on display in an exhibition at Hoom Gallery. The exhibit runs until July 21 at the gallery that can be found at No. 2, 4th Alley off Qaem Maqam St.



Drawing
■ An exhibition of drawings by Shantia Zakarameli is currently underway at Homa Gallery. The exhibit entitled "Don't Gaze at Me" runs until July 20 at the gallery located at No. 8, Forth Alley, Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.



■ Dastan Basement Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of drawings by Niaz Azadikhah. The exhibit will be running until July 23 at the gallery located at 6 Bidar St., off Fereshteh St.



Multimedia
■ A group exhibition displaying artworks in various media by Seyyed Mohammad Mosavat, Aria Tabandepur, Amir-Hossein Bayani, Sassan Abari, Gohar Dashti and several other artists is underway at Mohsen Gallery.

The exhibit named "Company 03" runs until July 21 at the gallery located at 42 East Mina Blvd., Naji St., off Zafar St.

■ Ehsan Gallery is hanging a collection of artworks in various media in a group exhibition entitled "Light Room".

Among the artists are Arghavan Panahi, Manijeh Nuri, Setareh Gholami, Somayyeh Pashai and Yeganeh Qenaat, and the exhibit will continue through July 15 at the gallery located at No. 22, East 14th St. in the Ajudanieh neighborhood.

"The Motherland's Borderless Commander" published on Qassem Soleimani

A R T TEHRAN — A book titled "The Motherland's Borderless Commander" that gives a deep insight into the life of Martyr Qassem Soleimani has recently been published.

Zehtab Sohbatzadeh is the author of the book published by Bolur, a publishing house in the northern Iranian city of Rasht.

The book is composed of 13 chapters, one of which studies Soleimani's accounts of Operation Karbala-5 during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

The Siege of Basra, code-named Operation Karbala-5, was an offensive operation Iran carried out to capture the Iraqi port city of Basra in early 1987. Iran failed to reach the objective in the battle that is known for its

extensive casualties and ferocious conditions.

The role of Lieutenant-General Qassem Soleimani, as the commander of the Quds Force, the overseas arm of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, in the defeat of the ISIS terrorists in the region is also discussed in the book.

Another highlight of the book is a chapter that scrutinizes the legal aspect of the assassination of Commander Soleimani during a U.S. air raid in Baghdad on January 3.

Based on the information collected for this chapter, the writer argues that the U.S. operation to assassinate Soleimani is in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and many other world conventions on peace.

Actor Kianush Gerami, family tested positive for COVID19



Actor Kianush Gerami in an undated photo.

A R T TEHRAN — Kianush Gerami, star acclaimed movies such as "So Close, So Far", announced on Thursday he and his wife and two daughters have been tested positive for COVID19.

He is currently in Tehran's Milad Hospital as he is having problems breathing and needs further treatment.

Speaking to the Persian service of Tasnim, the actor asked people to take the new virus seriously and pray for the patients.

"I first thought I had a cold and I did not take it seriously, but gradually I felt worse and had to go to the hospital and found out my COVID19 test is positive," he said.

"I stayed at home for two more days, but at midnight I woke up unable to breathe and had to go to the Milad Hospital, and found out my lungs have been affected by the virus," he added.

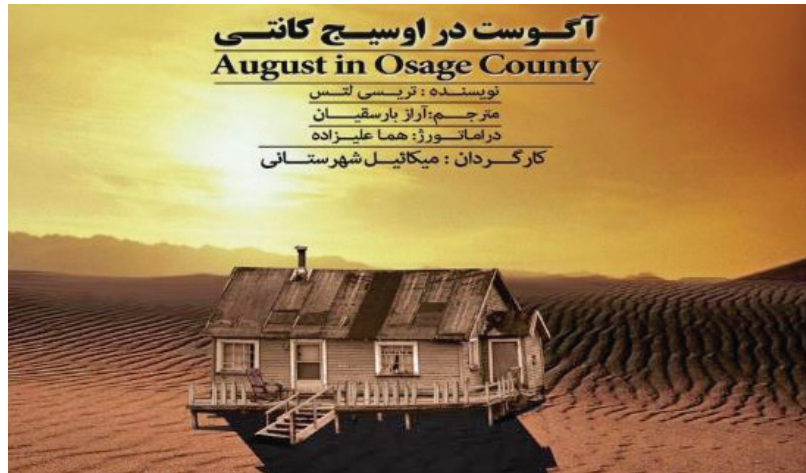
"I ask that people take coronavirus seriously so that they will not be affected like me and my family. I am 58 and never expected to be hospitalized. Here the wards are crowded, and unfortunately, I witnessed some pass away, making the decease harder for me," he stated.

"I really need to express my thanks to the doctors and nurses for all their great efforts. They really treat the patients well and I wish good health for them and their families," he added.

"I ask everybody to wear a mask and listen to all the medical advice so that we can get rid of this disease sooner. I am really sad that all my family members are affected and I pray that God saves us from this disease," concluded Gerami, who has acted in dozens of movies, including "Tambourine" and "St. Petersburg".

He has also starred in the TV series "Forbidden Fruit" and "The Chef".

Tracy Letts' "August: Osage County" on stage at Tehran theater



A poster for director Mikail Shahrestani's performance "August: Osage County".

A R T TEHRAN — "August: Osage County", a play by American actor and dramatist Tracy Letts is on stage by director Mikail Shahrestani at Tehran's Mehregan Theater.

Winner of the 2008 Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award for Best New Play, "August: Osage County" centers around the Weston family, whose members are brought together after their patriarch, world-class poet and alcoholic Beverly Weston, disappears.

The matriarch, Violet, depressed and addicted to pain pills and "truth-telling," is joined by her three daughters and their problematic lovers, who harbor their own deep secrets, her sister Mattie Fae and her family, well-trained in the Weston family art of cruelty, and finally, the observer of the chaos, the young Cheyenne housekeeper Johnna, who was hired by Beverly just before his disappearance.

Holed up in the large family estate in Osage County, Oklahoma, tensions heat up and boil

over in the ruthless August heat. Bursting with humor, vivacity and intelligence, "August: Osage County" is both dense and funny, vicious and compassionate, enormous and unstoppable.

Zohreh Yaqubi, Shirin Farkhondenejad, Maryam Farahabadi, Mahi Moshiri, Masud Ashuri and Ali Qanbrazadeh are among the main actors in the play.

Letts is best known for "August: Osage County". Inspired by his father's work in community theater, Letts pursued a career in acting. He briefly attended Southeastern Oklahoma State before moving to Dallas and then, at age 20, to Chicago, where he eventually landed acting jobs. In Chicago, he also began to write plays.

In 2003, Letts's next play, "The Man from Nebraska" about an insurance agent's loss of religious faith was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.

His subsequent play, "August: Osage County" won a Pulitzer Prize and five Tony Awards.

Todd Henry's "Die Empty" at Iranian bookstores

CULTURE TEHRAN — Todd Henry's book "Die Empty: Unleash Your Best Work Every Day" has been published in Persian.

Ali Haraini is the translator of the book, which has been published by Torang Publications in Tehran.

"Die Empty" is a tool for people who aren't willing to put off their most important work for another day," Henry wrote about his book.

Henry explains the forces that keep us in stagnation, and introduces a process for instilling consistent practices into your life that will keep you on a true and steady course.

"Embrace the importance of now, and refuse to allow

the lull of comfort, fear, familiarity and ego to prevent you from taking action on your ambitions. The cost of inaction is vast. Don't go to your grave with your best work inside of you. Choose to die empty," Henry wrote.

"Most of us live with the stubborn idea that we'll always have tomorrow to do our most important and valuable work. We fill our days with frantic activity, bouncing from task to task, scrambling to make deadlines and chase the next promotion," he added.

"But by the end of each day we're often left asking ourselves, 'did the work I do today really matter?' We feel the ticking of the clock, but we're stuck in first gear, unsure of the path

forward and without a road map to guide us," he noted.

"Here's the hard truth: sooner or later all of our tomorrows will run out, so how we choose to spend today is significant. Each day that we postpone difficult tasks and succumb to the clutter that chokes creativity, discipline and innovation results in a net deficit to the world, our organizations and ourselves," he remarked.

Henry is the founder of Accidental Creative, a company that helps creative people and teams be prolific, brilliant and healthy. He regularly speaks and consults with companies about how to develop practices that lead to everyday brilliance.

Poet Reza Afzali dies at 72

A R T TEHRAN — Poet Reza Afzali died of a stroke in a hospital in the northeastern Iranian city of Mashhad on Thursday. He was 72.

He was the founder and manager of the Daash Aqa Café, a literary association in Mashhad for poets from the Khorasan region.

Ayyub Dehqanqar, an official from the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance's Cultural Department, expressed his condolences over the death of the poet in a message published by some Persian news websites on Friday.

"Afzali was a hardworking scholar and an eternal figure of art and culture who spent his life on the promotion of literature as well as art and culture and created valuable books and artworks," he said.

"He helped the Iranian culture flourish through his books such as 'In the Sad City of Autumn' and 'A view from the Beach to the Sea'," he added.

"Messenger of Good News", "Biography of Qodratollah Sharifi" and "Biography of Mohammad Qahraman" are among his other books.



Poet Reza Afzali in an undated photo.

Iranian music video "Death of Satan" on U.S. racism released

→ "This issue of racial discrimination in this country, which claims freedom and human rights, has not yet been resolved," he said.

"It is not yet possible for a human being to be safe in that society because of having black skin. The theory of colored skin in America

is a bitter story," he added.

The name of the video refers to the remarks made by Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic, who called the U.S. "the great Satan" following the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The piece has been composed by Moein

Tayyebi and the video has been produced in collaboration with IRGC's Muhammad Rasulallah Division.

The death of George Floyd, a black man who died under the knee of a white officer, roused world protests against racial injustice.



A poster for the Iranian music video "Death of Satan".