



Hatami visits Russia, to attend ARMY-2020 exhibition **3**



Iran to resume flights to Iraq after COVID-19 halt **8**



Brazil show green light to play Iran futsal **11**



Coronavirus moves Cinema VÉRITÉ festival online **12**

Hamoun wetlands restoration project started



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SATBA inks 15-year power purchase deal with Iran's only biogas power plant

TEHRAN – Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (known as SATBA) has signed a deal with the Water and Wastewater Department of Tehran Province to purchase the electricity generated by the country's only biogas power plant which is run by the mentioned department.

According to the Deputy Head of Water and Wastewater Department of Tehran Province, Abbasali Mesrzadeh,

based on the deal SATBA is going to purchase about 500 billion kilowatt-hours (Kwh) of electricity over a 15-year period at a base price of 10,500 rials (\$2.5), the portal of the Energy Ministry, PAVEN reported.

As reported, the mentioned deal has been signed following a government directive that obliges the Energy Ministry to buy the electricity produced by renewable power plants. **->4**

13 Security Council members oppose U.S. bid to return UN bans on Iran

TEHRAN – Thirteen countries out of the 15-member UN Security Council have expressed their opposition to the U.S. bid to reimpose the UN sanctions on Iran, arguing that Washington's move is void given it is using a process under a nuclear deal that it quit more than two years ago.

It came after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's Thursday announcement, which notified the world that the U.S. has

triggered a 30-day countdown to a return of the UN sanctions on Iran, including an arms embargo.

According to Reuters, long-time U.S. allies Britain, France, Germany and Belgium as well as China, Russia, Vietnam, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Indonesia, Estonia and Tunisia have written letters in opposition. **->3**

Leader praises Afshin Ala poem denouncing Israel, UAE deal

TEHRAN – The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, praised Iranian poet Afshin Ala for poetry that criticizes the United Arab Emirates' deal to forge ties with Israel.

Ala published a long poem last week in response to the deal between Israel and the United Arab Emirates intended to fully normalize relations, which follows a history of peace efforts between Israel and the Palestinians and their Arab allies.

The poem composed in 34 verses is full of praise for Iran and Hezbollah's Secretary-General Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah for their resistance against the Zionist regime and denouncement of the UAE for the deal.

"The poem you composed against the Arab leaders was really opportune and timely; thank you very much," Ayatollah Khamenei wrote in a message to Ala published on Saturday. **->12**



ARTICLE
ZHANG Yuan
SISU professor

The relationship between great powers in the epidemic control stage: Not a zero-sum game

The number of people diagnosed with coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has been rising, and the second wave of coronavirus might worsen the situation. The pandemic has triggered a global recession; unemployment rate reached an all-time high, and the public's anxiety surges.

People are anxious about economic decline. In the meantime, with the purpose of shifting domestic focus, the United States, a superpower, continuously created an artificially offensive external environment.

In the context of fighting the pandemic, the communication relationship between great powers countries is stumbling. No matter what relation pattern for great power would be in the future, at least it should not be a zero-sum game. A benign cooperative relationship between countries would be better to avoid misunderstandings and misjudgments. On the contrary, a pursuing of the zero-sum game political model will result in disaster, which harming national prestige, missing the timing of the implementation of more important domestic policies, undermining the unity of existing alliances, and ultimately dissipating country power.

To handle even greater challenges caused by this pandemic, the mutual assistance model between major countries is far superior to the aggressive confrontation model.

1. Political strengthening of global hegemony will not help prevent the spread of the virus

As the world's only superpower, the United States does not have enough moral responsibility. The U.S. government's responding to the epidemic is not efficient enough, while the Trump administration, with the ambition of maintaining global hegemony without taking up more international responsibilities, still turned its political focus to criticizing China. In fact, according to the Pew Research Center statistics, more than 60% of Americans say compared with other wealthy countries, the U.S. response to the coronavirus outbreak has been less effective. **->7**

With snapback gambit, U.S. puts its veto power in danger

TEHRAN – The U.S. move to trigger a return of all UN sanctions on Iran strategically puts the U.S. veto power in danger given the widespread opposition to its measure, an analyst tells the Tehran Times.

With 13 countries on the UN Security Council expressing their outright opposition to the U.S. bid to restore the international sanctions on Iran, the U.S. finds itself more isolated than ever. As the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo submitted a letter of complaint to the Security Council, the reactions began to pour in.

According to a Reuters report, 13 countries out of 15 on the Council rejected the U.S. move in letters they sent to the president of the Security Council.

On Thursday, Pompeo traveled to New York to "notify" the Security Council of a "significant non-performance" by Iran of its obligations under the 2015 nuclear deal as defined in the UN Security Council Resolution 2231. However, most Security

Council members strongly questioned the legality of the U.S. measure. They said with one voice that the U.S. had no legal authority to initiate the snapback process, a mechanism built into the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to allow the parties to the deal to restore the international sanctions on Iran in case it didn't uphold its obligations under the nuclear deal.

"France, Germany, and the United Kingdom ("the E3") note that the US ceased to be a participant to the JCPOA following their withdrawal from the deal on May 8, 2018. Our position regarding the effectiveness of the US notification pursuant to resolution 2231 has consequently been very clearly expressed to the Presidency and all UNSC Members. We cannot, therefore, support this action which is incompatible with our current efforts to support the JCPOA," the E3 foreign ministers said in a joint statement, moments after the U.S. submitted its letter to the UN. **->2**

U.S. protests: Police shooting death of African American sparks protests in California

By staff & agencies

The fatal shooting of an African American has sparked demonstrations against police violence in the U.S. city of Pasadena, California, with protesters calling on the city's officials to hold law enforcement to account for the man's death.

Anthony McClain, the 32-year-old father of three, was shot and killed during a traffic stop last week, with police claiming that the man had pulled a handgun while running from officers.

On Thursday, California police released the video of the shooting that left the black man dead in Pasadena at the weekend, prompting protests and community outrage.

In the footage, McClain can be seen fleeing on foot with what appears to be something shiny around his waistband which police claimed was a pistol.

After running a short distance with officers chasing him, McClain turned and looked at them over his right shoulder. Police said they feared

he was turning back to shoot at them, and so the officer closest to McClain shot at him twice.

He was taken to a nearby hospital, where he died from his injuries.

Caree Harper, the McClain family's attorney, rejected the officers' claims and said what police saw on the video was a large metal belt buckle not a weapon. **-> Press TV reported.**

The Police Department has so far refused to release the names of the law enforcement officers involved in the fatal encounter.

Since the deadly shooting on Saturday, protesters have gathered outside Pasadena's municipality as well as the home of Pasadena Councilman Victor Gordo to demand the officers in McClain's death be charged.

On one occasion, a crowd gathered at the scene of the incident and broke through police tape surrounding the site, with a man shouting and cursing at officers. **->10**

Hezbollah will not give Israel opportunity to attack Lebanon: Naim Qassem

By staff & agencies

Hezbollah Deputy Secretary General Sheikh Naim Qassem says the Lebanese resistance movement will neither allow Israel nor its sponsors the chance to launch an aggression against Lebanon, warning the Tel Aviv regime and its allies of a heavy price.

"We will neither give Israel nor anyone who recognizes it the opportunity to launch an attack without paying the price. We will not capitulate to those who wish to rob us of our honor and victory..."

We want to protect Lebanon, its sovereignty and independence, whereas they [those who recognize Israel] do not care if Israel is still occupying our lands," Sheikh Qassem said during a ceremony in the Lebanese capital Beirut late on Friday.

Sheikh Qassem dismissed allegations that this month's vast explosion in Beirut that killed 178 people, injured more than 6,000 others and destroyed swathes of the city was caused by a blast from a deposit of Hezbollah arms, emphasizing that such absurd claims have failed to undermine

the resistance movement's prowess.

"All allegations that Hezbollah used to store weapons at the port, warehouse massive amounts of ammonium nitrate there, and knew about their presence before the vast explosion have been vehemently rejected," he pointed out.

On August 18, Lebanon's President Michel Aoun dismissed as "impossible" suggestions that the August 4 catastrophic explosion was caused by a blast from a deposit of Hezbollah arms, but said all possibilities would be investigated. **->10**



Volunteer doctors offering services in deprived areas

A group of volunteer physicians have been dispatched to deprived areas of Tabriz, northwestern East Azarbaijan province, offering free of charge services to the underprivileged people in the region, August 22, 2020.

In Iran, National Doctor's Day is commemorated on the first day of the sixth calendar month of Shahrivar (this year falling on August 22) commemorating the birthday of Avicenna, the distinguished Iranian physician who is regarded as the father of modern medicine.

A peek into cemetery tourism in Iran

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – Tourism is one of the fastest-growing phenomena in our modern world. It always makes new changes to have unforgettable experiences, to create new travel motivators, and to reach new markets. Such a trend results in new tourist spots which were unthinkable only a few years ago!

In fact, travel marketers and tour operators contribute to such novel ideas in response to the soaring request of clients for new excitements and knowledge in the search of weird, bizarre, and unique memories.

It may seem peculiar to you but cemeteries as bridges between the present and the past, and the living and the dead, have been drawing their own fans both in groups or individuals each having specific interests.

Iran, a cradle of civilization, which is well soaked in history and culture, never disappoints cultural travelers with almost every taste even ones interested in cemetery tourism.

For intense, consider Shahr-e Yeri, known as the "city of the mouthless"! It is a unique archaeological site and cemetery in northwest Iran, embracing an Iron-Age fortress, three prehistorical temples, and tens of carved stones on which mouthless faces are depicted, all stretched across 400 hectares of several small hills.

The country is also home to a great number of brick tomb towers. Top on the list may be ones dedicated to the Prophet Habakkuk in Hamedan province. Kharagan twin tomb towers in Qazvin province and the UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus in Golestan province are amongst others to name a few. **->8**

Iran hails China's 'principled' stance on snapback

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Mohammad Keshavarzadeh, Iran's ambassador to China, has welcomed China's opposition to the U.S. push to restore international sanctions on Iran through a contested mechanism built into the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"China's principled stances on international issues, including JCPOA and countering U.S. unilateralism, reflect the commitment and responsibility of a strong country that, unlike the United States, does not abuse its power to violate international law and regulations. The United States has never been so isolated in UNSC," the ambassador tweeted on Saturday.

On Thursday, the U.S. submitted a notification to the UN Security Council calling for a return of all UN sanctions on Iran



in a bid to extend a UN arms embargo on the country. The U.S. claimed it still had the legal authority to trigger a snapback of UN sanctions on Iran even though it terminated its participation in the nuclear deal on May 8, 2018.

China along with other countries on the Security Council strongly opposed the U.S. measure, saying the U.S. request lacks legal standing.

"The US demand has no legal ground and common sense. It is nothing but a political show staged by the United States. It receives no support of the Security Council members and no acknowledgment of the international community.... Having quit the JCPOA, the United States is no longer a participant to the JCPOA and has no right to demand the Security Council invoke a snapback as stipulated in Resolution 2231." China's mission to the UN said in a statement following the U.S. measure.

There will be a new chapter in Iran-Russia military co-op: diplomat

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran's ambassador to Russia said that there will be a new chapter in military and technical cooperation between Iran and Russia.

Kazem Jalali made the remarks as Iranian Defense Minister Amir Hatami visited Moscow on Saturday for talks with top Russian military officials, ISNA reported.



Jalali also said that Iran will continue military consultation with Russia along with talks on the 2015 nuclear deal and fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

Hatami started a visit to Russia at the head a high ranking delegation. The trip took place at the invitation of Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu.

Iran's defense chief is also scheduled to tour military exhibition of ARMY 20 during his stay in Russia.

IAEA chief to visit Iran on Monday

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency Rafael Grossi is scheduled to visit Iran on Monday.

"I will travel to Tehran on Monday for meetings with Iranian authorities to address outstanding questions related to safeguards in Iran. I hope to establish a fruitful and cooperative channel of direct dialogue. It is necessary," Grossi tweeted on Saturday.



Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's ambassador to the Vienna-based international organizations, said in a tweet that Grossi's visit is in line with continuation of Iran-IAEA cooperation.

He noted that Iran is a main partner of the IAEA. According to NHK, Grossi is expected to ask for Iran's cooperation over the IAEA's inspections of two facilities where it is claimed that the country is suspected of storing undeclared nuclear material.

Grossi is also expected to talk with Iranian officials about a nuclear facility in Natanz in central Iran, where a fire broke out last month.

The IAEA plans to release its updated report on Iran's nuclear program in early September, ahead of a board of governors meeting in the middle of the month.

The UN nuclear watchdog's board of governors adopted a resolution in June calling on Iran to give inspectors access to the two sites. The resolution was proposed by Britain, France and Germany.

At a meeting of the IAEA board of governors in June via video conference, Gharibabadi said, "Iran acknowledges the IAEA's right for asking legitimate questions, seeking transparency or demand of access for its mission; meanwhile, Iran also emphasizes its right as a member state to request that the IAEA provide solid evidence and supporting documents and arguments in this regard."

Moscow says Washington attempt to trigger snapback is legally void

By staff and agency

The Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement published on Friday that the United States' attempt to trigger snapback mechanism to restore all the UN sanctions on Iran is "legally void".

"We are adamant that the U.S. notification is legally void and cannot enact the mechanism of restoration of previous resolutions on Iran. Insisting on its mistaken position, the U.S. cannot count on support of the UN Security Council. One cannot reject one's obligations under a treaty while demanding the rights it provides," TASS quoted the statement as saying.

It is noted in the statement that the U.S. quit the 2015 nuclear deal (officially known as the JCPOA), and therefore stripped itself from rights and abilities to use mechanisms, provided by the UN Security Council resolution 2231.

The 2231 resolution endorses the nuclear deal.

"The U.S. side seeks to prove that it has right to comply only with clauses of [UN Security Council Resolution 2231] that suits it, because they could be used for the needs of the anti-Iran policy. But this is not the case. Besides, the U.S. cannot provide the



"The UN Security Council has no reason to take the UN notification for reviewing, let alone take any action based on it."

list of its 'best efforts in good faith' within the framework of the dispute settlement procedure, mentioned by the JCPOA. They made no such efforts. And this is necessary," the statement said.

The ministry added that Russia also provided its points to the Security Council.

"Therefore, the UN Security Council has no reason to take the UN notification for reviewing, let alone take any action based on it," the Ministry added. "This would contradict the UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which, apparently, is exactly what Washington seeks by trying to pull other Security Council members into depths where the light of the international law does not shine."

Elsewhere, the statement said that the path of escalation of tensions around Iran is a dead end.

"We call on the U.S. to make a choice in favor of sensible solutions, and not to strip itself of ability to reach agreements with Iran," the statement added.

On August 20, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo presented Washington's request to activate the procedure of restoration of sanctions against Iran to the chairman of the UN Security Council.

UK, Germany and France slap on the U.S. face, and the latter deserves it: Global Times

The UK, France and Germany issued a joint statement Thursday rejecting the U.S. plan to trigger the re-imposition of sanctions on Iran. This is the most resolute time for the U.S. major European allies since the 2003 Iraq War to collectively say "no" to the U.S., which has further isolated the U.S. on the Iran issue.

The UN arms embargo on Iran is set to expire on October 18. The U.S. requested a renewal of the embargo last week at the UN Security Council, but only won the support of Dominica. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo notified the UN on Thursday that the U.S. is triggering the snapback mechanism included in UN Security Council Resolution 2231. The joint statement by the UK, France and Germany is a slap on the face of the U.S.

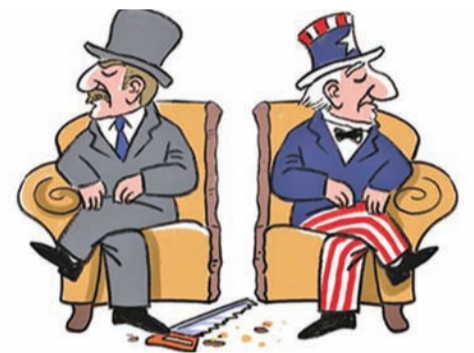
The U.S. withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal in May 2018. Apparently, it doesn't have the legal right to trigger the snapback. Its request for snapback is like one still wanting the right to vote after withdrawing his shares from the board of directors. The U.S. is acting like a gangster, putting itself in the position of having super powers. Many Western media outlets say the purpose of the U.S. is to isolate Iran, but Washington is isolating itself. It has gone too far, regarding its own interests and goals as what the whole world must

support. It pushes to legitimize the "America First" and suppresses whoever doesn't obey it.

Iran is geographically close to Europe, and the country's stability is of vital significance to Europe. After the signing of the Iran nuclear deal, European companies flocked to Iran. The Trump administration's abandonment of the Iran nuclear agreement not only has threatened the security of Europe, but also undermined its economic interests. The dissatisfaction and even anger of those European countries can be expected.

Washington's unilateralism is expanding. It's fair to say the current U.S. administration has lost its mind. It forces European countries to pick sides between China and the U.S., and coerces them to give up the Nord Stream 2 natural gas project with Russia. Washington seems to believe that its strength has made it omnipotent, and that it can crush the will of any other country, making them bow to the U.S. order.

As a matter of fact, the U.S. now has its weakest strategic control capability but the most arrogant government which is promoting aggressive policies around the world. Given U.S. coercion, it's inevitable that Washington will encounter strong resistance. The UK, France and Germany have "humiliated" the U.S. this time. Washington deserves it.



The Trump administration has almost gained nothing from its policy of exerting pressure on others. It has only been embarrassed by the North Korea nuclear issue, witnessed its isolation from the Iran issue and failure on Venezuela. Pompeo is begging around the world to form an anti-China alliance. If the U.S. is truly mighty, it should have settled everything by making a phone call. But it is unable to do so.

The U.S. is an arrogant but pathetic superpower, and it's greedy. It used to have ample strategic resources, but the pursuit of unrealistic goals has caused a strategic deficit and isolated it.

Washington needs to remember: It can neither sanction nor control the world. If it arrogantly sanctions the world, it will only hurt itself. The rejection of the UK, France and Germany has sounded the alarm. If Washington stubbornly goes its way, it will have to swallow more bitter fruits.

As a matter of fact, the U.S. now has its weakest strategic control capability but the most arrogant government which is promoting aggressive policies around the world.

Russia: U.S. claims to trigger snapback go against 'elementary common sense'

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Russia's permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations said on Saturday that the United States' move to trigger snapback mechanism and return the UN sanctions on Iran go against "elementary common sense" as the U.S. is no longer a party to the JCPOA, the official name for the 2015 nuclear agreement.

"Very impressive resistance in the U.N. Security Council to US attempts to trigger snapback. Member-States refuse to recognise US as a #JCPOA Participant. US claims go against elementary common sense," Mikhail Ulyanov tweeted.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday officially informed the UN Security Council it is demanding the restoration of all UN sanctions on Iran, insisting that the U.S. has the legal right to "snap back" UN sanctions.



President Donald Trump officially terminated the U.S. participation in the JCPOA in May 2018 and imposed sanctions against Iran.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said in a statement published by the European Union's official website on Thursday that the U.S. cannot be considered to be a participant to the nuclear deal and cannot trigger the snapback

mechanism.

"I take note of today's announcement by the U.S. regarding the so-called UN sanctions 'snapback mechanism' under UN Security Council resolution 2231. As I have repeatedly recalled, the U.S. unilaterally ceased participation in the JCPOA by presidential Memorandum on 8 May 2018 and has subsequently not participated in any JCPOA-related activities. It cannot, therefore, be considered to be a JCPOA participant State for the purposes of possible sanctions snapback foreseen by the resolution," he said.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said on Friday that the U.S. will never realize its "illegal demand" through the UN Security Council to activate the snapback mechanism.

Khatibzadeh noted that all the signatories to the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, have rejected the U.S. status to take such action, noting

that Washington has become totally isolated.

"All the remaining parties to the JCPOA, three European countries of Germany, France, and England and also Russia and China, have strongly opposed the United States' illegal and unfounded demand and have informed the president of the Security Council. Other members of the Security Council will adopt similar position in the coming days," he said.

Thirteen countries out of the 15-member UN Security Council have expressed their opposition to the U.S. bid to reimpose the UN sanctions on Iran, arguing that Washington's move is void given it is using a process under a nuclear deal that it quit more than two years ago.

According to Reuters, long-time U.S. allies Britain, France, Germany and Belgium as well as China, Russia, Vietnam, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Indonesia, Estonia and Tunisia have written letters in opposition.

With snapback gambit, U.S. puts its veto power in danger

➔ Other signatories to the deal – Russia, China, and the EU – echoed the same position, a move that raised concerns in Washington over a possible undermining of the U.S. veto power.

"Invoking 'snap-back,' when the U.S. first violated the Iran Deal by withdrawing unilaterally, will undermine the U.S. veto in the UNSC and global sanctions regimes. Dumb and Dumber," tweeted Susan Rice, the former national security advisor during Barack Obama's administration.

Another former national security advisor – John Bolton – echoed the same concern. He said that Donald Trump's threat to trigger the snapback will have long-term consequences for the U.S. veto power.

"Trump's threat to invoke 'snapback' sanctions from Obama's 2015 nuclear deal, which we have withdrawn from, risks long-term, permanent damage to U.S. veto power in the UN Security Council," tweeted Bolton on August 17, three days before the U.S. requested a return of the UN sanctions on Iran.

Bolton added, "As I noted back in 2015, 'snapback' provisions were a central feature of Obama's Iran Deal & a key failing from the outset. By design, they bypass UN Security Council veto power & establish a precedent for defeating the veto powers of permanent members."

He also wrote an opinion piece in the Wall Street Journal to warn against invoking the snapback.

"The agreement's backers argue that Washington, having withdrawn from the deal, has no standing to invoke its provisions. They're right. It's too cute by half to say we're in the nuclear deal for purposes we want but not for those we don't.

That alone is sufficient reason not to trigger the snapback process," Bolton admittedly wrote, adding, "Why afford any American legitimacy to this misbegotten creature? Further, the U.N. Charter allows no vetoes to decide 'procedural' questions, and that is how between nine and 13 members may categorize, and thereby stymie, Mr. Trump's ploy."

Experts and analysts also believe that the triggering of the snapback is a strategic danger to the U.S. veto power in the Security Council.

"We have never seen such a consensus against the U.S.

"Invoking 'snap-back,' when the U.S. first violated the Iran Deal by withdrawing unilaterally, will undermine the U.S. veto in the UNSC and global sanctions regimes. Dumb and Dumber," tweeted Susan Rice, the former national security advisor during Barack Obama's administration.

in the Security Council in the past 75 years. Naturally, this is a strategic and legal failure for the U.S.," Hanif Ghaffari, an Iranian political expert, told the Tehran Times.

According to Ghaffari, the U.S. move to trigger the snapback can be viewed from legal and strategic perspectives.

"Legally, the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 was adopted to endorse the JCPOA and it's not detached from the JCPOA. In other words, it's not independent of the JCPOA. Therefore, when a certain party to the deal withdraws from it, automatically loses the privileges stipulated in resolution 2231," the expert said.

Ghaffari added that strategically the U.S. efforts to force a return of the UN sanctions pose a danger to the U.S. veto power in the Security Council because the U.S. is now accused of using its veto to secure illegitimate interests.

Bolton and Rice's concerns are indicative of this accusation, he added.

It's not clear yet if the U.S. would use its veto to restore the UN sanctions. But it's difficult to see how it would trigger the snapback without using the veto and while the entire world says the U.S. has no legal right to initiate the snapback mechanism. The U.S. submitted its notification to the UN with the purpose of restoring UN sanctions on Iran, but it may end up undermining its legal authority to wield veto power in the UN Security Council. If the U.S. fails to use veto in its efforts to kill the JCPOA, it will set a precedent for how other countries can question its veto power, which could permanently damage the U.S. interests in the UN.

Iran warns of taking proportional action regarding JCPOA

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran's ambassador to the United Nations has warned of the Islamic Republic's proportional action against Washington's bid to reimpose the UN sanctions on Iran that were lifted under the Iran nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"Depending on the extent to which the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and Resolution 2231 are threatened, Tehran's actions will be commensurate with what is happening to JCPOA and Resolution 2231," Majid Takht-Ravanchi said in an interview with the Washington Arms Control Association on Friday, Iran Press reported.

Takht-Ravanchi also said Iran was discussing the development of the Arak nuclear facility with its partners.

"If Iran fails to develop this part of the nuclear facility, it will return to its original design, which is an indigenous construction," he said.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Thursday officially informed the UN Security Council it is demanding the restoration of all UN sanctions on Iran, insisting that the U.S. has the legal right to "snap back" UN sanctions even though U.S. President Donald



Trump pulled out of the deal endorsed by the Security Council Resolution 2231.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said the U.S. has no right to abuse mechanisms enshrined in the JCPOA to restore UN sanctions after they were lifted under

the accord.

He said the dangerous and unlawful position of the United States defies the established norms of international law and procedures, which have been put in place through centuries to safeguard the world from chaos.

Earlier, France, the UK, and Germany - three signatories to the JCPOA - released a joint statement telling the U.S. that it could not use "snapback" measures against Iran as it is no longer part of the nuclear deal.

"France, Germany, and the United Kingdom note that the U.S. ceased to be a participant to the JCPOA following their withdrawal from the deal on May 8, 2018," the statement said. "We cannot, therefore, support this action which is incompatible with our current efforts to support the JCPOA."

In response, Pompeo on Thursday accused the three European countries of "siding with the ayatollahs", claiming that "their actions endanger the people of Iraq, of Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, and indeed their own citizens as well."

===== **JCPOA Joint Commission to meet on Sept. 1**

On Friday, the official website of the European Union reported that a meeting of the Joint Commission of the JCPOA will take place in Vienna on September 1.

The Joint Commission will be chaired on behalf of EU High Representative Josep Borrell by EAS Secretary General Helga Schmid and will be attended by representatives of China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and Iran, it added.

Weakening UN can reignite flames of war, violence in the world: ambassador

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Ambassador to Paris Bahram Qassemi has said undermining international bodies such as the United Nations can reignite the flames of war and violence in different parts of the world.

"Unilateralism and attempts to undermine international bodies, especially the United Nations which is the outcome of two destructive world wars and death of millions of innocent people in the European continent, can reignite the flames of war and violence in different parts of today's world, which is full of tension," Qassemi wrote in a series of tweets, IRNA reported on Saturday.

He said the rejection of the United States' anti-Iran measure by a lot of countries is a productive and positive approach toward world affairs.

"The unipolar world and attempts made by one country to impose its unilateral policies on others will cause nothing but an increase in poverty, lack of development,



extremism and terrorism for nations across the world," the ambassador wrote.

It came after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo officially

informed the UN Security Council it is demanding the restoration of all UN sanctions on Iran, insisting that the U.S. has the legal right to "snap back" UN sanctions even though U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of the UNSC-endorsed nuclear deal between Iran and six major powers.

Other parties to the nuclear deal, including Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany, have voiced strong opposition to Washington's push for sanctions on Iran.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the United States cannot benefit from the fruits of its unlawful act of withdrawing from the nuclear deal, officially referred to as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"Based on the universally accepted general principle of law, the United States cannot benefit from the fruits of its unlawful act of withdrawal from the JCPOA by assuming that it has no obligation to submit its notification alongside a description of good-faith efforts," Zarif wrote in a letter to the chairman of the UN Security Council on Thursday.

Trump resorts to threats to make up for popularity decline, Vaezi says

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi said in a tweet on Friday that since the popularity of Donald Trump, who is facing reelection in November, has been declining over the last months, he has resorted to threats against Iran as a way out of the current dilemma.

In another tweet on Friday, Vaezi said, "The United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has not learned from the recent humiliating defeat and threatens other member states of the [UN] Security Council by baseless legal reasoning and despite firm position adopted by China, Russia and the European countries against triggering snapback mechanism."

Vaezi noted in another tweet that the era of practicing unilateralism has ended.

"The era of unilateralism has ended and the international community will not bow to the United States' force and threats. This action of them will face defeat," he wrote.

On Thursday, the U.S. sent a letter to the UN Security Council requesting to initiate the "snapback" mechanism, which allows a participant to the JCPOA to seek reimposition against Iran of UN sanctions lifted under the nuclear deal.

The U.S. took the move following its failure last week at the UN Security Council in its attempt to extend arms embargo on Iran which will expire in October in accordance with Resolution 2231.

On Wednesday, Pompeo threatened to punish those countries that oppose its effort to re-impose sanctions on Iran.

In a joint statement on Thursday the



foreign ministers of France, Germany and the United Kingdom, whose countries are signatory to the 2015 nuclear deal (JCPO), issued a joint statement saying they cannot support the United States' action in triggering the snapback mechanism because the U.S. is no longer a participant to the JCPOA.

"France, Germany and the United Kingdom (the E3) note that the U.S. ceased to be a participant to the JCPOA following their withdrawal from the deal on 8 May, 2018. Our position regarding the effectiveness of the U.S. notification pursuant to resolution 2231 has consequently been very clearly expressed to the Presidency and all UNSC members. We cannot therefore support this action which is incompatible with our current efforts to support the JCPOA," said the statement published by the UK Foreign Ministry's website.

The Chinese mission to the United Nations said in a tweet on Friday that the United States is not a participant to the nuclear deal and therefore it is "ineligible" to invoke the snapback mechanism to return all the UN sanctions on Iran.

Hatami visits Russia, to attend ARMY-2020 exhibition

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The Iranian defense minister left Tehran for Moscow on Saturday afternoon at the head of a high-ranking military delegation for talks with Russian officials.

Amir Hatami is scheduled to hold talks with Sergei Shoigu, the Russian Federation's defense minister, and other senior officials of the country.

In addition, Brigadier General Hatami is set to visit the 6th International Military-Technical Exhibition and Forum of Russia called "ARMY 2020", Mehr reported.

The International Military-Technical Exhibition and Forum of Russia has been held every year since 2015 at

the order of the president. The latest achievements of the Russian defense military are showcased in the fair.

The international exhibition and forum is attended by senior and high-ranking defense-military officials as well as experts and specialists from different countries.

The military cooperation between Iran and the Russian Federation has been keeping growing in recent years in tandem with other aspects of bilateral cooperation in the political and economic fields.

Strengthening defense cooperation bilaterally, regionally and internationally are the most important goals behind the visit by the Iranian defense minister to Moscow.



U.S. 'maximum pressure' brought Iran, Venezuela closer together: expert



POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — An international relations expert says the United States' "maximum pressure" policy on Iran has brought Iran and Venezuela closer

together as energy partners, with Venezuela serving as a destination country for Iranian gasoline exports.

"The Trump administration has routinely claimed that 'maximum pressure' will force Iran to make concessions in nuclear negotiations, as well as over Iran's ballistic missile program and support of militia groups labelled by the United States as terrorist organizations," Stephen Herzog, who is a Ph.D. candidate in political science at Yale University, told ILNA in an interview published on Saturday.

"However, Iran has enhanced its trade ties with China, Venezuela, and other countries," Herzog said.

He said since the activities that the Trump administration claims to be stopping are also continuing, it is a paradox to watch U.S. officials - particularly Secretary of State Mike Pompeo - continuously say more sanctions are needed because of Iran's strength while also claiming Iran is weak because of sanctions.

"Both cannot be true simultaneously," the expert added.

Pointing out that the maximum pressure policy is clearly not working, Herzog said the United States would be better served by a more constructive approach prioritizing negotiations and a return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

On the prospects of the JCPOA, he said if former Vice President Joe Biden defeats Trump in the U.S. presidential election in November, "I am confident Biden will seek a return to the JCPOA framework."

"Biden is very committed to the deal, which was negotiated while he was serving under President Barack Obama, he said.

In May 2018, Trump unilaterally pulled his country out of the JCPOA, unleashing the "toughest ever" sanctions against Iran.

Observers say Trump's reason for the withdrawal from the nuclear deal was prompted by his hatred of any achievement by his predecessor Barack Obama.

13 Security Council members oppose U.S. bid to return UN bans on Iran

1→ Washington has accused Tehran of violating the 2015 nuclear pact, official known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from in May 2018 while denouncing it as the "worst deal ever".

The U.S. move to trigger what is known as the "snapback" mechanism came a week after its efforts to extend the UN arms embargo on Tehran failed miserably. Only the Dominican Republic joined Washington in voting yes.



Dominican Republic has not yet written to the council to state its position on the snapback move.

According to a 2015 Security Council resolution enshrining the nuclear deal, if no council member has put forward a draft resolution to extend sanctions relief on Iran within 10 days of a non-compliance complaint, then the body's president shall do so within the remaining 20 days.

The United States would be able to veto this, giving it a cleaner argument that sanctions on Iran have to be reimposed.

However, the resolution also says the council would "take into account the views of the states involved." Given the strong opposition, some diplomats say the council president - Indonesia for August and Niger for September - would not have to put up a draft text.

"Faced with this very strong view of a majority of Security Council members that the snapback process has not been triggered, as the presidency they are not bound to introduce the draft resolution," Reuters quoted a UN Security Council diplomat as saying on condition of anonymity.

The U.S. has signaled that it expects Indonesia or Niger to put a text to a vote. Another U.S. option is to put forward the draft itself or ask the Dominican Republic to do so.

The United States argues that it can trigger the sanctions snapback process because the 2015 Security Council resolution still names it as a nuclear deal participant.

However, in a joint letter to the Security Council on Thursday hours after the U.S. submitted its complaint, Britain, Germany and France said: "Any decisions and actions which would be taken based on this procedure or on its possible outcome would also be devoid of any legal effect."

Iranian MPs table motion on JCPOA exit if snapback triggered

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — A group of Iranian lawmakers put forward a motion for an automatic withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal in case the activation of snapback mechanism in the JCPOA would re-impose the UN sanctions on Tehran.



The proposal, signed by 49 MPs and submitted to the Parliament's presiding board, asserts that Iran must withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) automatically as soon as the snapback mechanism is triggered and the UN sanctions are reinstated.

The lawmakers also lashed out at the U.S. government for mounting pressures on Iran and its push to trigger the snapback mechanism after its unilateral withdrawal from the nuclear deal in 2018.

While the U.S. has violated the JCPOA and is attempting to re-impose the UN sanctions against Iran by resorting to the JCPOA mechanism, it is necessary to protect the national interests, said the proposal.

Considering that remaining in the JCPOA will not be in Iran's interests and the UN Security Council sanctions will be re-imposed if the snapback mechanism is triggered, the Iranian government must be required to withdraw from the nuclear deal in that case as a preemptive measure, the MPs said in the motion.

As part of an illegal push, the United States is trying to invoke the snapback mechanism in the JCPOA despite its withdrawal in May 2018 in violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 that endorses the nuclear deal.

The key point in the snapback mechanism is that in case of a failure to resolve a dispute among the parties to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the UNSC would vote on a resolution "to continue the sanctions lifting", meaning that a single veto from one of the UNSC members (most likely from the U.S.) would end the sanctions' lifting and slap the previous sanctions against Tehran again.

TEDPIX drops 30,000 points on Saturday

ECONOMY TEHRAN — TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), which is Iran's major stock exchange, fell 30,000 points to 1.727 million on Saturday, which is the first day of the Iranian calendar week, IRIB reported.

The index had dropped 11.3 percent to stand at 1.757 million points in the past week.

As reported, most of the trades were conducted through the indices of National Iranian Copper Industry Company, Ghadir Investment company, Bank Saderat, Mobarakeh Steel Company, and Bandar Abbas Oil Refining Company, while transportation, paper products, ceramic and tile, cement and chalk were the most traded items at the TSE during the previous week.



TEDPIX had also experienced a two-percent drop in the week ended on Friday, August 14.

It should be mentioned that the index had hit the record high of two million points on August 2, and while it had been experiencing an unprecedented trend of rising over the recent months, it witnessed several days of drop in the past two weeks.

Gaining 45,672 points on August 2, the TSE's main index had stood at 2.007 million, notching up another outstanding record in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20).

It had hit the record high of 1.5 million points on June 30, and then it climbed half a million points in just one month to hit the record high of two million.

Constructional materials, agricultural products export to Qatar increases in 4 months

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran's export of some constructional materials as well as agricultural products and foodstuffs to Qatar has risen during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-July 21) compared to the same period of time in the past year, director-general of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO)'s office of Arabian and African countries announced.

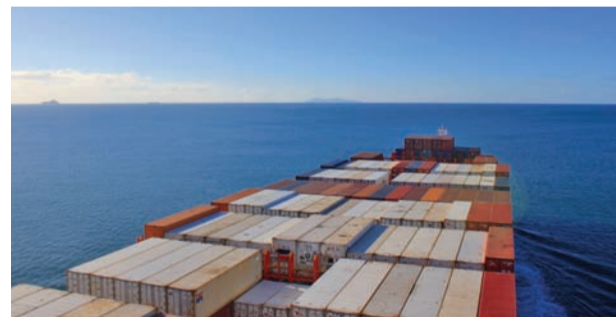
As published by the TPO official website, Farzad Piltan said that among the exported constructional materials, white chalk, white cement, stones, pipes and profiles have experienced growth of exports during the mentioned four-month period.

He also mentioned egg, pistachio, saffron, orange and date as some of the agricultural products with rise in exports to the Qatari market in the first four months of this year.

Trade between Iran and Qatar started to thrive when the Arab country came under a blockade by Saudi Arabia and allies in June 2017.

Iranian exporters have supplied various agricultural products as well as construction materials to Qatar, bringing in over \$335 million in revenues over the past Iranian calendar year that ended on March 19.

Iran's imports from Qatar topped \$30 million over the same period, said Adnan Mousapour, the head of Iran-Qatar Joint Chamber of Commerce, who insisted that trade balance between the two countries could have further been in Iran's favor if the pandemic had not caused a closure of shipping lines.



Mousapour said that the spread of the disease in Iran had also affected tourism activities between Iran and Qatar as well as a suitcase trade which normally accounts for a major share of exchanges between the two countries.

Reports in recent months have suggested that Iran and Qatar have plans to increase the size of joint investment projects, especially those in the energy sector.

In mid-April, Iran's Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian and Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry Ali bin Ahmed Al Kuwari agreed on cooperation in energy and investment spheres between the two countries during a video conference.

As the next meeting of Iran-Qatar Joint Economic Committee, which was scheduled to be held in Iran's Isfahan City in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin (March 20-April 19), was canceled due to the coronavirus outbreak, the two ministers, who are the co-chairmen of the committee, discussed areas of bilateral cooperation through video conference.

The two sides also stressed that the meeting of the joint economic committee will be held as soon as the coronavirus pandemic ends and then seriously follow up the objectives of bilateral trade.

Meanwhile, they decided that until then both sides pursue the discussed issues through more video conferences.

In a joint press conference with Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani in Tehran in January, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said that Iran has stood and will stand beside Qatar in the future.

"At a juncture of time, certain regional countries imposed restrictions on Qatar, but Iran stood beside Qatar and will stand based on its duties as a neighbor," Rouhani added.

He said that the two countries have a very good relationship in various areas of economy, science, and culture.

For his part, the Qatari emir said that Doha will never forget Tehran's help in difficult days.

"We praise the Islamic Republic of Iran's stance in recent years, especially when Qatar was under blockade," the emir said.

Sheikh Tamim also called for the expansion of relations.

SATBA inks 15-year power purchase deal with Iran's only biogas power plant

1 → The mentioned plant, which is one of the largest wastewater biogas plants in the world, has a nominal annual electricity generation capacity of 44 gigawatts as well as 140 terajoules of thermal energy, which is equivalent to the power supply of a six-acre residential town, according to Mesrzadeh

The output of this power plant is going to save the country 100,000 barrels of crude oil (400,000 cubic meters of gas) per year, the official said.

This power plant is also going to reduce the annual greenhouse gas emissions by about 150,000 tons which is equivalent to the carbon dioxide absorption of 2,000 hectares of jungles.

Biogas is the mixture of gases produced by the breakdown of organic matter in the absence of oxygen (anaerobically), primarily consisting of methane and carbon dioxide.



Biogas can be produced from raw materials such as agricultural waste, manure, municipal waste, plant material, sewage, green waste or food waste, and it is a renewable energy source.

According to PAVEN, currently, the power generation capacity of renewable power plants across the country has reached nearly 800 megawatts and the volume of private investment in this sector has exceeded 124 trillion rials (over \$2.95 billion).

The bulk of electricity generation from renewables, around 85 percent, comes from solar and wind plants, while biomass and other types of plants account for over once percent of the total output.

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

Construction of Iran's biggest mineral port terminal to begin soon

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) has said that the project for the construction of the country's biggest mechanized mineral terminal at the southern Shahid Rajaei Port is going to kick off in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021).

"One of the most important projects invested by the private sector is the Shahid Rajaei Port's mineral terminal; this project is currently under investor studies and its implementation will begin soon this year," PMO portal quoted Mohammad Rastad as saying.

According to the official, a 50-trillion-rial (about \$1.19 billion) build-operate-transfer (BOT) contract was signed last September between the MPO and private sector for the construction of the mentioned terminal.

The contract's period is 33 years, Rastad added.

Referring to the country's plan for exporting 55 million tons of steel products by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (starts in March 2025) and the positive impact of this terminal in accelerating loading and unloading operations at

the port for achieving the mentioned goal, he added: "This terminal is a base for our future plans."

Regarding the total investment by the private sector in projects related to the development of port infrastructure and equipment, the PMO head stated: "The amount of private sector investment in our ports is currently about 158.2 trillion rials (about \$3.76 billion), mainly attracted in recent years."

According to Ali Hassanzadeh, the PMO deputy head, the construction of Shahid Rajaei Port's new mechanized mineral terminal will allow vessels with a capacity of 150,000 tons to berth at the port.

Currently, vessels with a capacity of 60,000 tons are able to berth at Shahid Rajaei Port.

Enjoying the most modern container terminals and port equipment, Shahid Rajaei accounts for 85 percent of the total loading and unloading at the Iranian ports.

Given its significant role in the country's import and export of products as well as transit and transshipment via Iran, the development of the port has been among the most



important development projects in the country.

Back in July, Rastad had announced that the third phase of Shahid Rajaei's development plan, is going to go operational by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021).

Number of certificates for export-bound Halal products to reach 50 in this year

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The number of certificates for the export-bound Halal products is planned to reach 50 in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), the head of Institute of Standards and Industrial Research of Iran (ISIRI) told IRNA on Friday.

Nayereh Pirouzbakht put the number of the issued certificates at 45 in the previous year, and said the figure is planned to rise this year in line with the promotion of exports.

"Today, Halal certificates are wanted from our exporters by many countries like Russia, Armenia, and Uzbekistan, and we intend to expedite the process of issuing this certificate in order to speed up the process of exports", the official noted.

Halal food has become a lucrative business in the global economy over recent years and as announced by the World Halal Council (WHC) this industry is globally worth over \$2.5 trillion.

While at the first glance, such great capacity seems to be held majorly by the Muslim countries, due to some negligence mainly in proper and on-time investment making, the largest part of Halal market's



profit goes to some non-Muslim nations that have recognized this sector's demands soon and taken the market share on time.

The world's Muslim population is now 1.8 billion people who need foods prepared based on their religious rules and beliefs, and Halal industry's growing trend in the global markets indicates that the Muslim countries, that are the major source of demand for Halal products, should play some more active role to be also the main source of supply in this sector.

Like the other Muslim countries, Iran holds a small share in the global Halal market. Such a minor part indicates that

the country should make more investment and take more effective steps to promote its status in this profitable market.

The head of the Institute of Standards and Industrial Research of Iran says that while Halal products valued at \$700 billion are supplied to the global markets per year, Iran's share of this export market is very low.

There are already 250 Halal brands in the world, and Muslim countries like Malaysia and United Arab Emirates (UAE) hold some big shares of the market, while Iran that all of its produced foodstuffs are Halal, has lagged behind in exporting its products to the global markets.

While Iran should elevate its status in the Halal industry, in general, moving toward this objective is now more necessary, as the country is trying to replace its oil income with other sources of revenues mainly with non-oil exports under the sanctions which are targeting Iran's oil sector.

Zhila Yazdani, an official with ISIRI, believes that if Iran takes five percent of the Halal market in the world, it can earn an income up to 2.5 folds higher than its oil revenue.

Given the country's high potentials in this field, it's obvious that there is a promising outlook for Iran's presence in this lucrative market.

Realizing the urgent need for a more and stronger presence in the world's Halal market, the country is taking fruitful steps to achieve this target.

To facilitate the condition for those active in this sector inside the country, Iran launched an integrated Halal system in the past Iranian calendar year.

Launching this system, which integrates activities of the related organizations including Agriculture Ministry, Institute of Standards and Industrial Research of Iran, and Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), leads to reducing production costs and time of permit issuance besides more facilitation in this regard.

While Iran is a country where 100% of foodstuffs are Halal, it can easily achieve a huge share of the world's Halal market, something that not only expands the country's sources of income but also leads to higher employment and economic growth.

Govt., private sector discuss industrial sector challenges

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The 69th meeting of the dialogue council of the government and the Tehran Province's private sector was held at the place of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) to discuss issues and challenges faced by the country's industrial units.

Issues and problems related to the businesses in the field of express transportation, challenges of the industrial parks in Tehran Province, and the currency problems of agricultural machinery manufacturers were among the issues discussed at the mentioned meeting, the portal of TCCIMA reported.

At the beginning of the meeting, the representative of the association of express transport companies underlined some of the problems faced by the member companies of this association like the problems regarding the issuance of licenses for postal services.

Later on, infrastructure problems of Tehran industrial



parks such as water, electricity, and gas supply issues were raised by the managing director of Tehran Industrial Estate Company.

Saber Parnian noted that 38 industrial parks have been

registered in Tehran Province, 19 of which are currently operational.

He referred to the latest situation of these industrial parks in the capital and underlined the measures taken for the improvement of these parks.

Elsewhere in the meeting, the chairman of the Manufacturers Association of Tractors, Combines, Machines, Supplies, and Equipment (Atmak) pointed to some of the problems and challenges that the members of the association are currently facing.

Hamidreza Nami stated that the government allocated foreign currency with lower exchange rates to some of the equipment manufacturers in this sector, but since the previous Iranian calendar year this industry was excluded from the categories which received government currency supports.

"Currently, companies in this sector have to pay huge amounts for supplying their needed foreign currencies, which is beyond the financial capacity of these companies," he said.

Iran's exports fall 39% following coronavirus pandemic

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Head of Iran Export Confederation Mohammad Lahouti has said that the country's non-oil exports have declined about 39 percent due to the restrictions caused by the coronavirus pandemic, Tasnim news agency reported.

According to Lahouti, the government had about \$41 billion of non-oil exports on the agenda for the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20), and so far the figures for the first five months of the current calendar year (March 20-August 21) indicate that the exports have fallen about 39 percent compared to the

previous year.

Referring to the president's remarks on cutting economic dependence on oil, the official said: "The president has announced a reduction of 10 percent in the country's economic dependence on oil, which is unprecedented."

Today, the country's economy is based on non-oil exports, which is of particular importance, he stressed.

"A country, which for years relied solely on the oil, is now facing conditions that have forced it to break its dependence on oil and to move toward a non-oil economy," he added.

According to Lahouti, Iran is the only oil-rich country in the world where the budget dependence on oil revenues has fallen to about 10 percent.

This success is due to the fact that in recent years, on one hand, non-oil exports have been seriously promoted, and on the other hand, industrial, agricultural, and mining infrastructures have developed, and finally, investments in the petrochemical industry are now paying off, the official said.

"All these factors have led us to increase our non-oil exports from \$7 billion a decade ago to over \$40 billion last year", he added.

In late June, Iran's previous Acting

Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Hossein Modares Khiabani had said the ministry has it on the agenda to export \$41 billion worth of non-oil commodities in the current Iranian calendar year (March 2020-March 2021).

Referring to the negative impact of the coronavirus outbreak on the country's trade in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-May 20) the official noted: "There was a deep gap between exports in the first two months of this year which was reduced in the third month, and we are compensating for the backlog caused by the coronavirus."

Gas extraction from 3rd platform of South Pars phase 13 started

ENERGY TEHRAN — Platform 13C, the third platform of phase 13 of Iran's South Pars gas field's development project, officially started sending gas to the refinery on Friday, August 21. Public Relations Department of Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC), which is in charge of developing the gas field, announced.

Payam Motamed, the operator of phase 13 of developing South Pars, put the gas sent from this platform to the onshore refinery at 400 million cubic feet.

According to Motamed, this platform is connected through an 18-inch pipeline to Platform 13A, and the gas extracted from the 13C is sent to the 13A through the mentioned pipeline after which it is transmitted to the refinery.

He said that the Platform 13C of South Pars, along with all its accessories, including jacket, communication tower, and torch structure, weighs about 7,000 tons.

This platform was built in Bushehr Yard and the installation and commissioning



stages of this platform were all carried out by domestic experts and engineers.

Motamed put the current capacity of phase 13 offshore platforms at 43 million cubic meters (mcm) per day and said that

28.5 mcm of this figure is related to the two platforms of 13B and 13D from the first phase of this project which started operating two years ago.

"The new platform has added 14.2 million

cubic meters to the previous 28.5 mcm," he said.

Mentioning the 13A platform, which is the last platform of phase 13, the official said: "This platform is the last link in completing the production chain in the South Pars Phase 13 development project, and after completing its development the gas extraction capacity of this phase will reach 56 million cubic meters."

Platform 13C was installed on its designated offshore spot in early March. The first platform of phase 13 (namely 13B) was installed on its designated offshore spot in early December 2018 and the mentioned platform along with the second one (13D) became operational in late January 2019.

South Pars gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, covers an area of 9,700 square kilometers, 3,700 square kilometers of which, called South Pars, are in Iran's territorial waters. The remaining 6,000 square kilometers, called North Dome, are situated in Qatar's territorial waters.

Karoun Petchem plant fosters diversity of product portfolio

TEHRAN (Shana) — Karoun Petrochemical Plant's product portfolio was further diversified with the unveiling of the KLM100B (L) grade of isocyanate chain.

The KLM100B (L) grade of isocyanate chain was unveiled on Wednesday, August 19, by Alireza Sedighizadeh, CEO of Karoun Petrochemical Company, at the Persian Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (PGPIC).

This item is produced for the first time in the Middle East in order to meet the needs of producers

in the mid- and downstream industries to complete polyurethane production value chain.

Karoun Petrochemical Complex has an annual production capacity of 5,400 tons of this item. With production of this item, Iran will no longer need to import it. Last year, the country imported nearly 5,000 tons of the item.

Karoun is among the world's 3 only countries to supply MDI, TDI at the same time. 8 million tons of isocyanates are produced annually in the world.



Trump's OPEC push fails to avert U.S. oil industry breakdown

Donald Trump helped to clinch an unprecedented deal among the world's largest crude producers, but the pact hasn't stopped America's oil industry from bleeding.

The Covid-19 pandemic's devastating effect on the oil market is rippling throughout the supply chain, from explorers to the companies that provide them with workers and equipment. London-based Valaris Plc, owner of the world's largest offshore rig fleet, became the latest casualty on Wednesday. In North America alone, dozens of producers and oilfield servicers have gone bust in 2020, and Mizuho Securities USA predicted earlier this year that as many as 70 percent of U.S. shale producers may go bankrupt.

According to Bloomberg, the unprecedented drop in oil demand is not something that Trump or OPEC can fix, said Ken Medlock, senior director of Rice University's Center for Energy Studies.

"All they can really do is try to ease the pain by negotiating production cuts," Medlock said Thursday in a phone interview. "That will help keep markets as close to balance as possible."

Oil prices pulled out of a freefall after an agreement by OPEC and its allies, prodded by Trump, to rein in production. But after embarking on aggressive growth plans when



crude was trading above \$100 a barrel a few years ago, the U.S. industry is still grappling with crushing debt loads, and demand for oil and petroleum products remains well below normal as nations struggle to control the spread of the virus. Longer term, oil companies are facing investor calls to address climate change and transition away from fossil fuels.

Trump tweeted in April that the OPEC+ pact was a "great deal for all" and would "save hundreds of thousands of energy jobs in the United States." He met with oil producers at the White House and directed the Energy Department to buy crude for the Strategic Oil Reserve, but a plan to steer financial aid to drillers didn't gain traction. U.S.

producers are in dire straits just months ahead of a presidential election that could have significant consequences for the oil industry, with Trump trailing Joe Biden in most polls.

"Oil probably in the second quarter faced the biggest challenge it's ever seen with the largest demand shock that oil has ever experienced," James West, an analyst at Evercore ISI, said Wednesday in a phone interview.

U.S. shale drillers, many of which borrowed heavily to pay for drilling rights in prime areas and kept boosting output even as crude prices slumped from the highs reached in the last decade, were among the first to go bankrupt. High-profile victims so far this year included Whiting Petroleum Corp., once the largest oil producer in North Dakota's Bakken shale region, and Chesapeake Energy Corp., the archetype for America's extraordinary shale-gas fortunes. Though international oil majors like BP Plc and Chevron Corp. have stronger balance sheets, they've eliminated thousands of jobs.

Oilfield servicers and offshore rig providers soon followed shale drillers into bankruptcy. Oil contractors at sea are going bust at the fastest pace in three years as explorers spurn high-cost drilling to deal

with the worldwide slump in commodity prices. While newer deep-water projects are less expensive, they still take longer to develop than land-based shale wells and typically are more costly.

Valaris, which was created in 2019 out of the combination of Ensco Plc and Rowan Cos., joins rivals Noble Corp. and Diamond Offshore Drilling Inc. in bankruptcy. Pacific Drilling SA earlier this month said it may return to bankruptcy court for the second time in less than three years, and Transocean Ltd., the world's biggest owner of deep-water oil rigs, has said it's exploring strategic alternatives.

"Offshore drilling is structurally damaged, and recovery is not imminent," Bernstein analyst Nicholas Green wrote Wednesday in a note to investors.

Valaris's bankruptcy comes days after the Trump administration authorized a sweeping plan to sell drilling rights and spur oil development in Alaska's rugged Arctic refuge. While Trump has touted U.S. energy dominance, his record in addressing oil-industry priorities has been mixed. Even as he personally intervened to help broker a global pact to cut oil output this spring, the president trumpeted low crude and gasoline prices as a "tax cut" for consumers.

Russia overtakes Saudi Arabia to become second largest oil producer

Russia produced more crude oil than Saudi Arabia in June, beating it to the second place of the largest oil producers in the world, behind the number-one producer, the United States, data from the Joint Organizations Data Initiative (JODI) showed.

As reported by oilprice.com, in June, Russia's crude oil production was 8.788 million bpd, according to the data released by the JODI database, which collects self-reported figures from 114 countries.

To compare, production in Saudi Arabia in the same month was just below 7.5 million bpd. June was the month in which Saudi Arabia voluntarily slashed its oil production by an additional 1 million bpd for just one month, on top of the 2.5 million bpd it was supposed to cut as per the OPEC+ deal in force since May.

While Russia and Saudi Arabia are cutting production as part of the OPEC+ agreement, the United States remained the top crude oil producer in the world in



June, despite the slump in crude oil production since May in response to the low oil prices. The JODI data-

base showed that U.S. crude oil production averaged 10.879 million bpd in June, up from 10 million bpd in May, which saw the lowest U.S. monthly production since late 2017.

The U.S. became the world's biggest crude oil producer, surpassing both Saudi Arabia and Russia, in 2018.

The oil price collapse earlier this year forced Saudi Arabia and Russia to forge a new OPEC+ pact and cut much more production than in their previous agreement, while U.S. producers curtailed nearly 2 million bpd of production in response to the low oil prices.

The latest EIA estimates point to U.S. crude oil production dropping by an average of 990,000 bpd this year, for an average of 11.26 million bpd. Despite the fact that the estimate is a far greater loss than the EIA had expected in the previous month's forecast, the U.S. will continue to be the world's top crude oil producer, ahead of Saudi Arabia and Russia.

Official: PGSOC bypasses sanctions by relying on domestic potentials

TEHRAN (IRNA) — Persian Gulf Star Oil Company (PGSOC) has taken the approach of supplying materials, parts and equipment from domestic producers to reduce the impact of U.S. sanctions, an official with the company said.

According to Emad Zareie the main policy taken by Persian Gulf Star Oil Company managers is to support domestic producers and suppliers.



This approach has played a major role in developing production, increasing competitiveness and promoting the quality level of products, he added.

Zareie noted that sensitive parts like compressors and pumps are now made by domestic companies.

The Persian Gulf Star Refinery, known as Bandar Abbas Gas Condensate Refinery, with a daily processing capacity of 360,000 barrels of gas condensate, is aimed at producing gasoline, gas oil, gas condensate and jet fuel after being fully inaugurated.

OIP of Ramshir field's Bangshir reservoir increased

TEHRAN (Shana) — New studies on the Bangestan reservoir of the Ramshir oil field show that the average volume of oil in-place (OIP) in this reservoir is roughly 3.5 times the previous estimates and it is possible to increase production from this reservoir up to 30,000 barrels per day.

According to National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC), Ramin Roghanian, Technical Deputy of Petroleum Engineering at NISOC, said: "Due to the drilling of three new wells of 14, 22 and 23 and obtaining new petrophysical data and changing the water-oil contact level, a revision to the OIP of the Bangestan reservoir of Ramshir field was put on agenda."



Considering the suitable capacity of reservoir wells in oil production and drilling new wells, the production capacity of Bangestan reservoir can reach about 30,000 barrels per day, which shows an increase of 19,000 barrels per day compared to the previous production capacity estimates, he said.

Roghanian said this amount of production enhancement would promise a monthly income of over \$23 million for the company considering \$40/b oil.

Ramshir Fields is located 120 km southeast of Ahvaz near Zagros area.

Saudi Aramco suspends \$10 billion China oil refinery venture

Saudi Arabia's state oil company has suspended a deal to build a \$10 billion refining and petrochemicals complex in China, according to people familiar with the matter, as the company slashes spending to cope with low oil prices.

Saudi Arabian Oil Co., or Aramco, decided to stop investing in the facility in China's Northeastern province of Liaoning after negotiations with its Chinese partners, said the people, who asked not to be identified as the matter is private. The uncertain market outlook was behind the decision, they said.

Aramco declined to comment. China North Industries Group Corp., or Norinco, one of the partners, didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment. No one answered a call to Panjin Sincen, the third partner, outside office hours, or responded to an email.

The oil-price crash and the virus's impact on energy demand have changed the calculations for energy companies' projects around the world. Aramco plans deep cuts to its capital spending as it tries to maintain a \$75 billion dividend amid low crude prices and rising debt. The kingdom -- Aramco's main recipient of those dividends -- is suffering a major squeeze on its public finances.

The joint venture was signed when Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was in Beijing in February last year -- and at the time was seen as a landmark deal with a key ally. Saudi Arabia wanted to increase market share in Asia and also has encouraged Chinese investment in the kingdom.

The Saudis were set to team up with Norinco and Panjin Sincen to form an entity called Huajin Aramco Petrochemical Co. The kingdom was going to supply as much as 70% of the crude for the 300,000-barrel-a-day refinery.

The Chinese side will press ahead with the project, which also includes an ethylene cracker and a paraxylene unit, according to the people. And the joint venture remains an option for the future, they said.

Refiners have taken a hit as the virus curbed demand globally and margins have been squeezed. That's changed the investment case for the refining business. Saudi Aramco had also been in talks with Indonesia's state energy company Pertamina earlier this year over a refinery expansion project, but negotiations ended without an agreement and Pertamina is looking for another partner.

Valaris, world's largest offshore rig owner, declares bankruptcy

Valaris Plc became the latest casualty of the global slump in oil prices, filing for bankruptcy Wednesday as the world's largest offshore rig owner by fleet size seeks to restructure a roughly \$7 billion debt load.

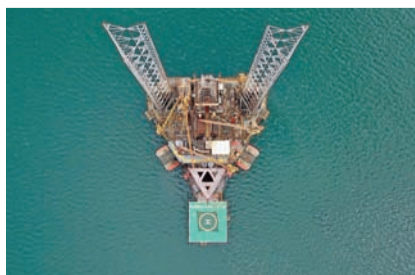
The Chapter 11 filing in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Texas comes after the company said it could be forced to seek creditor protection after skipping bond payments, Bloomberg reported.

Valaris has entered into a binding restructuring support agreement with about half of its noteholders and received \$500 million in debtor-in-possession financing, the company said in a statement. The company listed total assets of about \$13 billion

and total debts of about \$7.85 billion in its bankruptcy petition. Under the restructuring proposal, the Valaris will cancel shares and will swap for equity its revolving credit facility and unsecured notes.

"The substantial downturn in the energy sector, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, requires that we take this step to create a stronger company able to adapt to the prolonged contraction in the industry," Valaris Chief Executive Officer Tom Burke said in the statement. The company plans to continue serving customers uninterrupted throughout the bankruptcy, he said.

The restructuring agreement, which will cut more than \$6.5 billion of debt, will convert Valaris's existing credit facility and



unsecured notes to equity, according to the statement. Existing note holders agreed to backstop \$500 million of new notes.

London-based Valaris, which was created in 2019 out of the combination of Ensco Plc and Rowan Companies Plc., joins rivals Noble

Corp. and Diamond Offshore Drilling Inc. in bankruptcy. Pacific Drilling SA earlier this month said it may return to bankruptcy court for the second time in less than three years, and Transocean Ltd., the world's biggest owner of deep-water oil rigs, has said it's exploring strategic alternatives.

The offshore industry has struggled since oil prices plunged to less than \$30 a barrel in 2016 after reaching more than \$100 in mid-2014. While newer deep-water projects are less expensive, they still take longer to develop than land-based shale wells and typically are more costly, leaving them at a disadvantage as crude plummeted further earlier this year amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

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UAE-Israel agreement will threaten the national security of the region: Qatari analyst

BY Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — Saleh Gharib, a Qatari analyst, is of the opinion that the new peace agreement between the UAE and Israel, which is known as the Abraham Accord, will threaten Arab countries and Iran's interests by bringing Israel to the region.

"The normalization agreement between the Emirates and Israel will destabilize the region and threaten Israel's national security," Gharib tells the Tehran Times.

Under the agreement, which was brokered by U.S. President Donald Trump and announced on August 13, Israel has promised to suspend the annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank.

However, just hours after the announcement Benjamin Netanyahu said he remained committed to the annexation plan.

The announcement of the agreement has sparked a bitter row in Arab social media.

"This is not in the interest of the region and its stability to bring Israel to the region and threaten the national security of Arab countries and Iran," says Gharib.

While the world, and the Arabs in particular, was astonished by the accord, some questions were raised regarding the agreement and its content, including details of normalization of relations, recognition, and cooperation between the UAE and Israel in a variety of areas.

Gharib says the Emirates' move to normalize ties with Israel was not a surprise to him as he has been visiting and monitoring countries of the region, including the Emirates.

"Israel has been present in the Emirates for a long time; for example, its presence in the GITEX Dubai and Dubai Airshow and also in Abu Dhabi exhibitions, but under the names of British companies," Gharib reveals.

Regarding Emirates-Israel close cooperation, he points to the assassination of Mahmoud al-Mabhouh in a hotel room in Dubai on January 19, 2010.

The assassination of al-Mabhouh, a co-founder of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, is a vivid example of coordination between the Emirates and Israel, according to the Qatari journalist.

"We were asking how this happened, as Dubai has a control camera on every road that monitors every move. However, the assassination team entered and killed al-Mabhouh



and left the Emirates without being stopped by the security authorities at Dubai Airport," Gharib states.

The Qatari writer criticizes former Dubai Police Chief Lieutenant General Dhahi Khalifa who had said, "We spotted the assassination team. There is a video that shows them at the passport checkpoint at Dubai Airport."

The analyst asks: "If they had had this information, why didn't they arrest the assassination team when they knew that the Palestinian leader would be murdered?"

Gharib says this means that there is a coordination between Israeli and Emirati security authorities, even if it is done secretly.

He adds, "Meetings were held between the two sides in secret, including when Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed met Netanyahu in Washington and had to enter the hotel stealthily so that no one would see him, as well as his visit to the Zionist regime."

However, now Abu Dhabi has publicly announced normalization of ties with Israel which many Arabs consider a major betrayal to the Palestinian cause. It also will undermine the decisions of the Arab League.

Responding to a question about the advantages of the Abraham Accord for the Trump administration, Gharib says, "It is support for Trump because they know that he will not win the next election, as well as Netanyahu, given what Israel suffers from internally."

He predicts some other Arab countries

in the Persian Gulf, including Saudi Arabia, will normalize ties with Israel. He also says Bahrain and Sudan are on the way to follow the example of the UAE.

Asked about if the normalization agreement would give Israel legitimacy or may guarantee the survival of some rulers in Arab sheikhdoms, Gharib says, "The Emirates' normalization of ties with the Israeli regime and the countries that are going to establish a relationship with Israel, especially Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, is considered an attempt by their princes to strengthen their status."

The analyst says in these three countries (the UAE, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia) the crown princes plan to ascend the position of king. For example, he says, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed is now the crown prince of Abu Dhabi, and in light of the health condition of Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, he is the one who runs the state.

He says Saudi Prince Muhammad bin Salman (MBS) is also pursuing such a policy. "Prince Muhammad bin Salman wants to suppress his rivals and take the power after his father King Salman, but the international community cannot accept him due to his human rights record. Murdering Jamal Khashoggi, trying to assassinate al-Jabri and imprisoning political activists, have forced him to make more concession to the American president before he leaves the White House, and this normalization is an attempt

to legitimize them to stay in power."

On whether countries like Saudi Arabia and Emirates prioritize normalizing relations with their neighbors rather than Israel, Gharib says the UAE's pursuit of normal ties with the Israel is surprising.

"The Emirates is hostile to a neighboring country, Qatar, but allows Israeli citizens to visit the country and exchange flights with Israel."

Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt broke off ties with Qatar three years ago, accusing it of "supporting terrorism." They closed off their land, airspace, and territorial waters to Qatar.

Saudi Arabia also prohibits the Qatari citizens from Umrah and Hajj pilgrimages or visiting their families in Saudi Arabia. Bahrain has also put in place visa requirement for the Qatari citizens.

"They are also hostile to the Islamic Republic of Iran while establishing a close relationship with the real enemy, which is the Zionist regime," Gharib laments. "Iran, Turkey, and Qatar are Muslim countries, while the Emirates rushing to cooperate with the real enemy, Israel, rather than with Iran or Turkey."

Gharib says this is not in the interests of the region and stability to bring Israel to the region, threatening the national security of the neighboring countries and provoking Iran.

Regarding possibilities of a change in the policies of Persian Gulf countries that insist on aligning themselves against Iran and Turkey, the political analyst believes that after the UAE's agreement with Israel, the policies of those countries will greatly change against Iran and Turkey. "Consequently, Israel will cooperate with them or act to help them carry out their policies in the region."

Regarding the timing of the Abraham Accord, Gharib points to the upcoming American elections and President Trump's efforts to be re-elected, saying this hastened the signing of the agreement between Israel and the UAE.

"Otherwise, we did not find any reason to sign such a disastrous agreement, as Israel is far from the Emirates, and there were no problems between them," he opines.

"The UAE did not make proposals in favor of the Palestinian cause, but it signed a humiliating agreement. It is a concession to the U.S. administration because they know well if Trump fails to reach the White House, they will fall," concludes Gharib.

How can a plonker like Pompeo know anything about the Ayatollahs?

By Kevin Barrett

Iran's Foreign Minister Zarif has said that the Trump administration has once again disgraced itself by going to the United Nations and trying to trigger the snapback provisions of the JCPOA nuclear agreement with Iran that the U.S. actually left. And the entire world is laughing at the United States and at Trump and Pompeo for their grotesquely irrational attempt to say that the U.S. can trigger snapback because it's somehow still in the deal, even though Trump made such a huge show of leaving the deal shortly after he assumed office.

So, Trump and Pompeo say "we're in the deal, even though we're out of the deal." And the whole world is having none of it. And so Pompeo is crying and throwing a tantrum claiming that the entire world is siding with "the Ayatollahs."

Well, maybe that's true. And maybe that's because the "Ayatollahs" are obviously right about this. The Ayatollah is the highest level of the Shia clergy in Iran. They are very well educated. Even people who don't come anywhere near reaching the level of Ayatollah are vastly better educated than people like Donald Trump and Mike Pompeo.

Anyone who goes through the elementary religious scholarship training in Iran, even at the elementary level, gets very rigorous classical education based on the classical Greek trivium with logic, rhetoric, and public speaking and then on to higher levels.

So, the Ayatollahs are some of the best-educated people in the entire world. People who didn't know that should read the book *Mantle of the Prophet* by Roy Mottahedeh, one of the very best and most influential books in English on the Islamic Revolution of 1979.

So, you don't really have to be at the level of an Ayatollah - at the level of the best classically educated people in the entire world - to know that based on elementary logic, you can't be in the deal if you left the deal and you're out of the deal. But apparently, people like Trump and Pompeo don't understand that.

And frankly, Pompeo is a pathetic representative of the educational level and the intellectual level of American Christians. There are some very bright and very brilliant American Christians, of course, people like... the Process School of Theology led by people like John Cobb and David Ray Griffin. But the right-wing Zionist Christians, by and large, are a bunch of grade schools flunk-outs. Even their so-called universities are a joke. And their leaders like Mike Pompeo—he couldn't get out of kindergarten in the Iranian religious scholarship training. And maybe that's why he's trying to force this blatantly irrational position on the entire world. And then, when the world laughs him out of the United Nations, he rolls on the ground and beats the ground with his fists and cries and has a temper tantrum.

The United States is becoming more and more of an inter-



national embarrassment. And whatever happens in the next election, it's going to take a long time for us to recover what reputation we previously had in the world. As an American, I'm embarrassed to have people like Trump and Pompeo representing me. And frankly, I'll be happy to admit that the Ayatollahs are vastly more qualified to use elementary logic and make decisions, including political decisions, than idiots like Pompeo.

Kevin Barrett is an American author, journalist, and radio host with a Ph.D. in Islamic and Arabic Studies. He has been studying the events of 9/11 since late 2003.

(Source: Press TV)

Libya: from Haftar's offensive to ceasefire promise

Libya's rival administrations on Friday announced a ceasefire, more than a year after warlord Khalifa Haftar launched an offensive to seize the capital Tripoli from the UN-recognized government.

Fighting in Libya's nearly decade-long conflict has, since April 2019, killed hundreds and displaced some 200,000.

Here is a timeline.

Haftar orders advance

On April 4, 2019, Haftar orders his troops to advance on Tripoli, seat since 2016 of the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA), which he claims is backed by "terrorist" groups.

Haftar supports a rival administration based in the eastern city of Tobruk, and his forces already control the country's main oil fields in the south.

The increase in tensions comes several days before a national conference, long under preparation at the United Nations, to establish a political way forward for the chaotic country.

The next day, the UN Security Council calls on Haftar's forces to halt their advance.

On April 7, the GNA announces it has launched a counteroffensive.



On April 19, the White House says U.S. President Donald Trump recognized Haftar's "significant role in fighting terrorism and securing Libya's oil resources."

In a blow to the ambitious commander's campaign, GNA forces retake the town of Gharyan on June 26, the main supply base for Haftar's forces southwest of Tripoli.

International involvement

On November 27, Turkey and the GNA sign a deal covering military cooperation and maritime boundaries, allowing Ankara to claim rights over areas coveted by other countries including Greece.

A UN report on December 10 accuses

several countries of breaching a 2011 arms embargo by supplying both camps.

On January 5, 2020, Turkey announces the deployment of Turkish troops to Libya.

Fragile ceasefire

Turkey and Russia broker a ceasefire that comes into effect on January 12.

The next day in Moscow, GNA chief Fayez al-Sarraj signs the deal - but Haftar leaves a day later without doing so.

Mercenaries

UN experts confirm in early May that mercenaries from the Wagner Group, a Russian paramilitary organization said to be close to Russian President Vladimir Putin, are fighting in Libya in support of Haftar, alongside Syrian fighters from Damascus.

Pro-Turkish Syrian fighters have also been sent to help the GNA, Ankara confirms in February.

Since then hundreds of Russian mercenaries have been evacuated from the Tripoli front.

Government takes back control
On May 18, the unity government says its forces have seized the strategic Al-Watiya air base, 140 kilometers (90 miles) southwest of Tripoli, the latest setback for Haftar.

The relationship between great powers in the epidemic control stage: Not a zero-sum game

1 → Today, if the superpower merely emphasizes political hegemony and attempts to protect itself in isolation but does not use its comprehensive strength to help other countries fight against the epidemic and boost the global economy, spreading the virus and recession would have a boomerang effect on itself. An irrational and unpredictable superpower cannot eternally sustain its original centripetal forces.

Propaganda war undermine the confidence of mutual trust

Currently, the active form of confrontation is the propaganda war. The superpower actively selects opponents in diplomatic situations, use fierce words, unfounded accusations, and fabricated information to discredit the so-called opponents' political system and ideology. On the one hand, the propaganda war is to cater to superpower's rising domestic populism; on the other hand, it is to shirk its responsibility to solve the fragmentation of society's problem. Beneath the superficial hostile policy lies a fading hegemony that is no longer confident and tolerant.

Groundless propaganda war will not really destroy a country's hard power, but really damages the country's credibility, and more seriously, it will destroy the psychological foundation of state-to-state cooperation. The goodwill and mutual trust between civilians are the basis for long-term, stable, and effective cooperation between countries.

Artificially create tensions deteriorate the pre-existing security situation

China's staged success in the battle against COVID-19 has contrasted with the failure of those reckless and indulgent anti-epidemic policies in the U.S. As far as China is concerned, in the recent epidemic control stage, China is obviously facing hostility from the United States and some rich Western countries. Many of them deny China's achievements in fighting the epidemic, stigmatize China and demonize China by blaming China for those countries' own virus control failure.

The connivance of rumors targeting specific country's technology, suppression of technology companies of specific countries, interfering with other countries' internal affairs, closure of consulates, expediting arms sales, etc., measures created unnecessary tension worsened relations between great powers, complicated the political situation.

Healthy relations between great powers need political wisdom

Responsible great powers should have forged the idea that the world is a community of shared future, and have confidence in responsible global community members, who believe that it must jointly deal with risks, jointly maintain peace and stability, and jointly create opportunities for economic development, rather than inciting conflicts and confrontations. The cold war mentality is not helpful in solving this serious crisis. Promoting the new cold war will cover up more important global issues, such as social injustice, racism, child hunger, and so on.

China believes the international community should proceed with globalization. However, the 'Five Eyes Alliance', which includes five Anglo-Saxon nations, has been engaged in decoupling, erecting walls, and deglobalization that will harm active international exchanges and cooperation that could have saved more lives. Development requires international cooperation, while the decision of who are close friends and how to cooperate are more sophisticated of political wisdom.

To avoid zero-sum games between great powers, we must be aware of the red line of interests that the other side will not compromise. A great mature power does not take the initiative to launch confrontation, but will not be afraid of injustice as well. The Chinese nation has never been driven down by adversity. What's more, the United States or the "Five Eyes Alliance" simply cannot represent the entire international community.

Dr. Yuan ZHANG is Professor and Director of the Religion in the Middle East (West Asia) Research Program of the Middle East (West Asia) Studies Institute (MESI) of Shanghai International Studies University (SISU).

U.S. police declare 'riot' as protesters, officers clash in Portland

U.S. protesters have gathered outside a federal building in the restive city of Portland, Oregon continuing their daily demonstration against racial inequality and police brutality.

Protesters had gathered on early Saturday morning outside the Portland Police Bureau's (PPB) North Precinct when the Portland Police Department declared the demonstration was a riot.

"Multiple" arrests were made, and police fired projectiles to disperse the demonstrators gathered outside the North Precinct Community Policing Center.

Police said in a statement that service vehicles had been damaged, traffic blocked and bottles and eggs thrown at officers.

One officer had suffered a laceration to her leg, another officer's ankle was sprained, and several others sustained various "bumps and bruises," according to a police statement.

The protest was the latest in a string of protests that have been held on a daily basis since the May 25 police killing of George Floyd, a 46-year-old African-American man, who died after a white police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

Protests, including in Portland, have at times erupted into arson and violence, and federal officers sent into the North-western city have repeatedly clashed with crowds targeting the federal courthouse there.

Donald Trump, who has ordered law enforcement agencies to crack down on protesters, tweeted Saturday morning that he would send the national guard to Portland if requested.

"Another bad night of Rioting in Portland, Oregon. A small number of Federal troops there to protect courthouse and other Federal property only (great job!). Wanting to be asked by City & State to STOP THE RIOTS. Would bring in National Guard, end problem immediately. ASK!" he said.

Trump has repeatedly described Portland protests as "lawlessness," and praised the role of federal law enforcement officers during the rallies.

Last month, he announced "a surge of federal law enforcement into American communities plagued by violent crime."

A glimpse of Muharram mourning rituals across Iran: Gel Mali

(Part 4/8)

Another ritual that is on Iran's national heritage list is Gel Mali. The ritual is held every year in Lorestan province on the day of Ashura.



People gather in the main square of the city. Some men make a pool of mud from sand, rose water, and water. Then all the attendees spread the mud all over their bodies. Sad melodies and eulogies are chanted during the event. Then people begin to march all over the city covered with mud.

The origin

Covering with mud is one of the rituals of people in Lorestan province by which, mourners show their royalty to Imam Hussein (AS). Besides, after Ashura, the survivors were sad due to the loss of their loved ones and covered with mud. In this way, they convey the message that we are all in love with Imam Hussein (AS).

Soaked in history and culture, Lorestan is one of the lesser-known travel destinations mainly for its raw beauties and scenic landscape. It is also gateway to the sweltering plains below in adjoining Khuzestan province.

Eulogist observes symbolic social distancing in Muharram mourning

HERITAGE TEHRAN — Iranian eulogist Mahmoud Karimi, known for his enthusiastic eulogies for Shia Imams (AS) and their households, conducted a mourning ceremony in a working-class neighborhood in downtown Tehran on August 20, 2020.

Karimi managed to symbolically observe social distancing rules contrary to routine Muharram rituals where attendees are usually jam-packed. His initiative was called a "Mobile Tekyeh" by some mourners talking to the Tehran Times.



During Muharram, a part from mosques, each neighborhood sets up its own establishment for the ceremonial processions of the month known as Tekyeh (or Tekkiyeh), which are venues for gathering of mourners known as 'heyat' (literally meaning group or delegation) who honor the life of Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions who were martyred in the Battle of Karbala in 680 CE.

Tekkiyeh (stemming from the word eteka, meaning backup or reliable) was historically a staying place for visiting pilgrims and dervishes who relied on the goodness of the benefactors for daily sustenance. Today Tekkiyehs, however, are specific locations for mourners who meet and participate in religious gathering after which they head out on the streets in groups known as dasteh (literally meaning cluster) to parade a dramatic mourning.

Tourism projects worth \$50m to be inaugurated in northeast Iran

HERITAGE TEHRAN — A total of thirteen tourism-related projects, worth 2.1 trillion rials (\$50 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials), are scheduled to come on stream in the northeastern Khorasan Razavi province on the occasion of the Government Week (August 23-30).

The projects include hotels, apartment hotels, guest houses, recreation centers, eco-lodge units and tourism complexes in different cities across the province, IRNA quoted Abolfazl Mokaramifar, the provincial tourism chief, as saying on Saturday.



The mentioned projects will generate job opportunities for over 290 people, the official added.

Before the coronavirus puts everything on lockdown, the provincial capital of Mashhad played host to thousands of travelers and pilgrims who come from various Iranian cities, neighboring countries, and even across the globe to visit the imposing, massive holy shrine complex of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Imam of the Shia Muslims.

Almost 40 million Iranian pilgrims and travelers visited the city during the last Iranian calendar year (ended March 19).

Dozens of five-star hotels and hostels are dotted around the holy shrine. The city has also the highest concentration of water parks in the country, and it also embraces a variety of cultural and historical sites that are generally crowded.

A peek into cemetery tourism in Iran

→ 1 Needless to say that the UNESCO tagged Persepolis and its neighbor necropolis Naqsh-e Rostam are must-see destinations in southern Iran when it comes to cemetery tourism. Both bear absolutely majestic rock-hewn tombs where Persian Achaemenid kings are laid to rest. There are gorgeous bas-relief carvings above the tomb chambers with the kings standing on thrones supported by figures representing the subject nations below.

Over the past couple of decades, countless archaeological surveys have been yield ancient tombs, cemeteries many of which bear fresh evidence of ancient burial rituals and entombed objects dedicated to the afterlife.

In a most recent finding, which conducted just a week ago, the remains of 13 ancient skeletons, 11 of which human

remains, were discovered at olden water ducts of Persepolis, shedding new light on the way of life in the ceremonial capital of Achaemenid Empire.

In another amazing discovery, made in 1993, miners in the Douzakh Salt Mine of Zanjan Province, accidentally came across a mummified head that was very well preserved to the extent that his pierced ear was still holding the gold earring. The hair, beard, and the mustaches were reddish, and his impressive leather boot still contained parts of his leg and foot. In the following years, another "salt man" was also discovered one after another at the ancient salt mine. Based on academic studies, their textiles belong to the Achaemenid era (550-330 BC) and the Sassanid period (224 CE–651).

Over the past two months, the discovery



A traveler looks at a massive rock-hewn tomb where a Persian Achaemenid king is laid to rest at the necropolis of Naqsh-e Rostam in southern Iran.

of the skeletons of two Parthian ladies at the ancient Tepe Ashraf in Isfahan has been cemented a hypothesis that another ancient cemetery is being found within the city, offering valuable clues to uncover the obscure history of pre-Islamic Isfahan.

In cemetery tourism, contrary to popular belief, it is you yourself who will be the protagonist of a hot dialogue of past and present during visits to centuries-old tombs or cemeteries instead of listening to a curator of an exhibition!



1953 Citroen to go on show in Tehran

TOURISM TEHRAN — A 1953 Citroen, belonging to a Switzerland-based Iranian couple, is planned to go on display for the first time at the Sa'adabad Cultural-Historical Complex in northern Tehran.

The car has been registered as a historical and classic car in Switzerland and has been exhibited in several museums in this country. It has also participated in all major world classic rallies.

However, it was seized at Bazargan border customs to get a license plate, when it was brought to Iran by its owners to go on display for a short time in 2011.

After several years, when the owners could not clear the car through customs, it was to put on the auction according to the law.

Eventually, with the efforts of the office of the museums and historical properties at the tourism ministry in collaboration with the Touring and Automobile Club of Iran, the deserted car has recently been handed over to the tourism ministry.

Sprawled on about 110 hectares of a mountainside parkland, the Sa'adabad complex was once a royal summer residence during the Qajar era (1789–1925) and its subsequent Pahlavi epoch (1925–1979).

Iran to resume flights to Iraq after COVID-19 halt

TOURISM TEHRAN — Flights from Iran to the Iraqi city of Basrah will be resumed today, following a temporary suspension over the outbreak of the coronavirus, a senior Iranian aviation official has said.

Wearing masks and following health protocols during the flights as well as carrying a health certificate with a negative coronavirus PCR test result is mandatory for travelers, IRIB quoted Maqsood As'adi-Samani as saying on Saturday.

Although issuing visas on arrival for tour-

ists has been suspended, Iraqis with Iranian spouses and their children, Iraqis residing in Iran or those seeking medical treatment in Iran, as well as students and businessmen can travel to the country.

Over the past couple of months, many countries, including the Islamic Republic, imposed travel restrictions to help curb the spread of novel coronavirus. In this line, incoming and outgoing flights have been suspended, and road travels restricted to a great extent.

The pandemic has taken a huge toll on



Iran's civil aviation sector with reports showing that airlines lost hundreds of millions of dollars because of flight cancellations during the busy New Year travel season in late March.

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

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

9-year-old Iranian woodturner certificated to run museum

TOURISM TEHRAN — Parsa Qazi, a 9-year-old Iranian talented crafter, has been granted the certificate to run a private museum dedicated to the art of woodturning.

By launching the museum, Qazi intends to present his art and knowledge to other children under the supervision of his parents.

The certificate of the Mobile Museum of Friendship of Nations Culture was unveiled during a ceremony on Wednesday, attended by the director of museums and historical properties at the tourism ministry Mohammadreza Kargar and the ICOM-Iran director Seyyed Ahmad Mohit-Tabatabaei.

The museum is planned to be a place for displaying Iranian

handicrafts as well as training them, said Mohammadreza Kargar on the sidelines of the ceremony.

In the past, museums were thought to be large buildings, but now museums are operating in a variety of forms, the official added.

For the time being, over 120 private museums, which are dedicated to cultural heritage, are active across the country.

According to data compiled by the tourism ministry, over 8.5 million visited Iran's heritage museums and historical sites during the past New Year (Noruz) holidays (ended on April 2, 2019), while this year's Noruz holidays coincided with the outbreak of the coronavirus and the closure of museums.



Muharram rituals: flagpole-carrying in Shahroud

By Seyed Hossein Hosseineddqi

(Part 1/2)

In Muharram culture, Shia Muslims perform the ritual of carrying flagpoles to commemorate the memory of Holiness Abol-Fazl Al-Abbas (PBUH), the faithful flag bearer of the Karbala plain.

In the past, flags and banners were considered as the symbol of a group, corps, or division, and usually, the task of maintaining it was the responsibility of the bravest men of this group.

The fifth day of Muharram every year in the city of Shahroud is dedicated to Hazrat Abol-Fazl Al-Abbas, the brother of the third Shia Imam, Imam Hossein (AS), and the flag-waving ceremony is held on this day.

The flag is one of the signs of mourning for those who move in front of the delegation during the procession. This sign consists of three parts: a wooden base, a metal body of a tray like a heart in the shape of a net, made of brass, and a steel protrusion approximately ten centimeters wide and one meter or longer.

According to locals, this sign is a symbol of the flag carrying the flag of Karbala incident, Hazrat Abol-Fazl Al-Abbas. Dressing the flagpole with black, green, etc. fabrics on this day is done by Sadat (those who are from the generation of Household of the Prophet of Islam) and the old servants of Aba Abdullah Al-Hossein in the houses of the owners of the flagpole and the neighborhood of Vali Abad castle.

For this purpose, some of the servants of Tekiyeh (a religious place) Shahroud Bazaar have gone to the houses of the owners of



the flagpole in the area this morning, and in each house, after saying the phrase "Ya Allah" as a permission to enter the house and praying for their deceased, to a place they leave again.

Between morning and noon on the same day, the houses that have the flagpole are full of women and girls who go to the shrines to seek help or to make vows. It is very common to tie handkerchiefs or scarfs to the flagpole and to bless cloth and other items in this regard.

With the announcement of the noon call to prayer, the mourners offer prayers in Bidabad and are served for lunch. After an hour, some residents of Bidabad neighborhood formed a mourning committee and first went to the house of the late Karbalaie (a title for someone who has visited the Holy Shrine of Imam Hossein) Mir Abedin and after praying for the happiness of the deceased, to take the flag appointed to the Baba Ali clan, they set out for his house.

In front, a white flag is carried by a mourner. Behind the flag, several young people play the trumpet. With the presence

of the group in front of the delegation, the flagpole is carried by several young people of the same Baba Ali clan along with other mourners to Tekiyeh of Bidabad.

Vowers whose houses are in the path of the procession present their loaf sugar to the mourning committee. Some women also greet mourners by smoking Sepand (plant seeds that burn to ward off evil eyes) in charcoal fireplaces. After the presence of the mourners in Tekiyeh of Bidabad and a brief reception, they leave for Tekiyeh of Bazaar. There, too, the flagpole of Tekiyeh of Bazaar, which is known as the oldest flagpole of the city, is placed separately in front of the group by the youth, and thus the flagpoles are carried in a line according to its antiquity.

The next places are Aqa Mosque, Tekiyeh of Shariat, and Sheikh Ali Akbar Mosque. Along the way, three mourning signs called Amari, which resemble a tent, join the mourning procession. Amari is carried from the sky as a sign of Hodah or palanquin, which carries Holiness Zahra (PBUH), the beloved daughter of the Prophet of Islam, or according to another belief, Holiness Zainab, the granddaughter of the Prophet of Islam. After the delegation arrives at the beginning of Shabdari Street, the mourners are divided into two groups.

Some people who are the bearers of the flagpole have gone to Vali-Abad castle and in this place, the work of dressing the flagpole is done by Sadat and the old servants of this ceremony. Others went to the Tekiyeh Yazdis living in Shahroud and Haj Reza Ali and returned to the place of mourning with the flags of those Tekiyehs. In Vali-Abad castle district, the detached

body of the flagpole is connected to each other and the work of dressing (tying the fabric around it) is done. Putting apples on the tabs of the flagpole is very common on this day, and in the end, apples are divided between the flagpole bearers and the mourners with the intention of healing and blessing.

With the presence of another flagpole of Shahroud neighborhoods, around four o'clock in the afternoon, some of the elders of Tekiyehs, while whispering Mohtasham Kashani's poems such as "What is this revolt again", move in front of other mourners. In front of them, a white flag is carried by one of the servants of the Tekiyeh of Bazaar. This flag is attributed to Hazrat Abol-Fazl (AS) and its white color indicate his departure to bring water and not war.

When the group that recites Mohtasham's poems arrives at the beginning of the alley of castle Seminary, a group of young people hit their hands on their chests and form long queues by saying O Abbas, O Abbas.

These people hit the chest with one hand and hold the other person's back with the other hand. In this way, the mourners are connected to each other like chains. Behind the group of O Abbas, O Abbas, who beat their chests rhythmically, are most passionate and interested young people who flagpoles are carried in a line according to its antiquity. Meanwhile, the flagpole of Tekiyehs Bazaar, Baba Ali, and Bidabad are often carried high in front of other flagpoles.

(Dr. Seyed Hossein Hosseineddqi is a faculty member at the Islamic Azad University)

Hamoun wetlands restoration project started

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — The Euro-d e s k pean Union and the UN Development Programme started a joint project in cooperation with the Department of Environment of Iran to revive Hamoun wetlands in the country over the course of five years.

Representatives of the European Commission's department for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) and the UNDP attended an online meeting on Saturday for starting the project titled "improving the comprehensive management of natural resources for the rehabilitation of the wetland ecosystem and supporting alternative living in local communities in the Hamoun wetlands".

The European Union has earmarked €10 million for the project, aiming to focus on the role and connection of people's lives on Hamoun wetlands as well as Hamoun's life on people's lives and at the same time be able to work on the protection of this wetland along with improving the living standards of the people around it.

The project will promote integrated natural resource management for the restoration of



the wetland ecosystems and support alternative livelihoods development for the local communities in the Hamoun wetlands through enhancing capacities and coordination among

local entities for improved management of Hamoun Wetlands, sustainable land, and water management, and climate-smart agriculture and alternative livelihoods.

A look at Iran's map shows the extent of desert areas and the scarcity of water. The wetlands have always been a unique ecosystem of critical local, national, and international importance with ecological and socio-economic values. However, due to the acceleration of climate change, mismanagement of water resources, the use of traditional irrigation systems by local farmers, and lack of a formal agreement between Iran and Afghanistan, the once fertile wetlands have dried up drastically in the past two decades.

Years of natural and man-made disasters have severely impacted the nature and the livelihoods across the Hamoun wetlands. Many local businesses stopped their activities, leaving people without jobs. Crops have been compromised due to lack of rain and water, increasing the level of food insecurity. Sandstorms last longer causing a higher rate of respiratory and heart diseases. People leave their homes in search of areas that can provide for better livelihoods.

Flamingos land in international Kani Barazan wetland

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — Over d e s k 1,500 flamingos landed in the international Kani Barazan wetland, located in the northwestern province of West Azarbaijan.

Over the past few days, our colleagues have observed several hundred flocks of migratory flamingos entering the wetland to rest and feed, the chief of Mahabad city's department of environment, Farouq Sokhanvar, said.

Every year in this season, migratory flamingos migrate from Lake Urmia to the surrounding wetlands such as Kani Barazan, he added.

Regarding the water condition of the international wetland, he said that due to the cooling temperature and the reduction of water evaporation, the water level is currently in good condition and it is predicted that more migratory birds will fly to the wetland in the coming weeks.

He went on to note that currently, in addition to flamingos, thousands of migratory birds like coots, ferruginous duck, white-headed duck, gray herons, terns, marbled ducks, little cormorant, great white pelican, stilt, and red-breasted goose live in the wetland.

Moreover, rare bird species such as white-tailed lapwing, white-headed duck, and marbled duck are also seen from the endangered birds' list, he said.

The Kani Barazan international wetland has become one of the most important birds wintering ground for birds due to its nutrition diversity, security, and favorable



water resources, which welcomes a large number of migratory bird species each year.

The wetland is located south of Lake Urmia and 30 kilometers north of Mahabad. Being part of the southern ecology of Lake Urmia, this wetland covers an area of 910 hectares.

Birdwatchers call it Iran birds' paradise being the first bird-watching site of Iran. The best time for bird-watching in the region is from mid-January to mid-February.

Interestingly, the local residents voluntarily assume the responsibility of protecting this wetland and its wildlife from poaching.

Due to its topography and mass canals, the wetland is mainly frequented by water birds including the spotted eagle, ruddy shelduck, black-winged stilt, great crested grebe. According to the estimates, there are 75 kinds of aquatic species identified in the wetland, belonging to 11 broader categories of birds.

\$152m more earmarked to Lake Urmia restoration

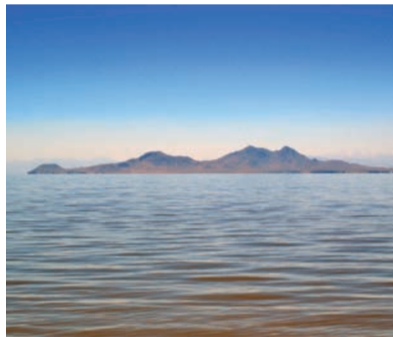
ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — A new d e s k budget amounting to 6.4 trillion rials (nearly \$152 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) will be allocated for the Lake Urmia revival, which will be spent on completing semi-finished projects, head of the Lake Urmia Conservation Program has announced.

Completion of the third phase of Urmia wastewater treatment plant and the first phase of Tabriz wastewater treatment plant, as well as the water transfer project of Kani Sib Dam to Lake Urmia and important agricultural projects such as pressurized irrigation, are among the projects that will benefit from the fund, Farhad Sarkhosh said.

Referring to the hot season and high evaporation of water in the catchment area of the lake, he said that the lake's surface has now reached 2,869 square kilometers.

He pointed out that the water volume of Lake Urmia has reached 3.6 billion cubic meters, he added that the level of the Lake has increased to 1271.36 meters.

Lake Urmia, located in the northwest of Iran, was once the most extensive permanent hypersaline lake in the world. Unsustainable water management in response to increasing demand together with climatic extremes has given rise to the lake's depletion during the last two decades. The lake's restoration program was established in 2013 and aims to restore the lake within a 10-



year program.

At the beginning of Lake Urmia Restoration Program in 2013, the Lake's level was about 1270.32 meters, 1783 square kilometers in surface area, and 1.14 billion cubic meters in volume, which indicates a 50 percent increase in the lake's surface area in comparison to the current water level.

Achieving sustainable rehabilitation requires countless efforts, such as preventing the lake's water flow from entering the agricultural land. Lake Urmia's condition stabilized with a positive trend due to heavy rainfall, but there is a fear that this trend will be reversed by drought in the coming years.

The above normal levels of rain came to help conservation measures to preserve the Lake Urmia, however, it still needs 9.5 billion cubic meters of water to reach its ecological level of 1274.10 meters.

Iran exporting nanoproducts to 45 countries

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iran is currently exporting d e s k its nanoproducts to more than 45 countries around the world, according to statistics published in the Nanotechnology Products Database.

Since July 22, 684 nanoproducts have been produced by 30 Iranian companies, 259 of which received nanoscale certification.

Of these 684 nanoproducts, 215 were related to equipment and 469 were related to goods. These products are exported

to more than 45 countries, such as Australia, China, South Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, the European Union and countries in the region also were part of the export destinations.

The growth trend in the number of nanoproducts has been very significant over the past 7 years.

In order to create transparency in the market for nanoproducts and consequently improve the quality of these products and increase consumer confidence, and finally, to develop the market for nanomaterials and products,

the Iran Nanotechnology Initiative Council grants nanoscale certification.

Nanoscale certification is granted to products whose manufacturer, in addition to complying with the mentioned technical requirements, complies with other production and commercial requirements contained in the company's regulations (including manufacturing or operation license, active quality control unit, presence of experts in the company, etc.).

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Camera traps picture Asiatic cheetah, Persian leopards in Semnan

An Asiatic cheetah and three Persian leopards have been observed through camera traps in Shahrood county in north central Semnan province, Amir Abdous, the provincial department of environment chief, has announced.

"Cameras have recently captured photos of an Asiatic cheetah and three Persian leopards around watering troughs," he said.

All are mature and physically healthy, which is so precious, Abdous further highlighted, Mehr reported on Wednesday.

Referring to ten camera traps installed in the area by the environmentalists to determine the exact distribution of the species, he said that Asiatic cheetah and Persian leopard are two invaluable species which are endangered despite being among umbrella and flagship species.

تصویر برداری همزمان از سه پلنگ و یک یوزپلنگ در شاهرو

مدیرکل حفاظت محیط زیست استان سمنان از تصویربرداری سه پلنگ ایرانی و یک یوزپلنگ آسیایی در پارک ملی توران شاهرو خبر داد. امیر عبدوس در گفتگو با خبرنگار مهر، تأکید کرد: تصاویر ضبط شده از سه قلاده پلنگ توسط دوربین تله‌ای در کنار یکی از آبشخورهای این پارک ملی تهیه شده است، تصاویر شاهد سلامت و وضعیت جسمی مناسب این گونه دارد.

مدیرکل محیط زیست استان سمنان گفت: نصب ده دوربین تله‌ای توسط یکی از عکاسان و دوستداران طبیعت در توران همچنین ثبت تصویر یک قلاده یوزپلنگ آسیایی را نیز به دنبال داشت، تأکید کرد: پویایی جمعیت جانوران وحشی در یک زیست بوم در گرو حفظ گونه‌های شاخص آن زیست بوم به‌خصوص گونه‌های چتر و پلنگ است و پلنگ به عنوان گونه چتر و یوزپلنگ به عنوان گونه پرچم در این پارک ملی نقش بسزایی در پویایی جمعیت سایر گونه‌ها به‌خصوص طعمه‌های خود دارند.

Iranian three-cylinder euro-6 engine to hit market soon

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — An Iranian knowledge-based d e s k company will supply the domestic market with the first three-cylinder euro-6 engine by the end of the current Iranian month (September 22), Sourena Sattari, the vice president for science and technology, told the Tehran Times in an interview on Saturday.



The production of this engine is the largest investment in the country's car manufacturing industry in the last decade, Sattari highlighted.

Low-consumption and high-powered car engines will be mass-produced in the Caspian industrial estate in Qazvin city by the end of this year, he stated.

A straight-three engine, also known as an inline-triple, is a reciprocating piston internal combustion engine with three cylinders arranged in a straight line or plane, side by side.

In these engines, cylinder number one fires, then 180° later cylinder number two fires, and then 180° later cylinder number three fires. There is no power stroke on the final 180° of rotation.

Inline three-cylinder engines are not limited to propelling motor vehicles. They may also be used in general industrial applications. The full text will later be published.

TEHRAN'S RENOWNED HAY'ATS

Hamedaniha Hussainiya: wearing costumes of Saqqas (water-carriers)

From the first day of the lunar month of Muharram, Hamedaniha Hussainiya holds mourning ceremonies for twenty days. The hussainiya is located on Rey Street after the Rey Bridge. A special ritual is held on Ashura and Tasua at this place. On the ninth day of Muharram (Tasua), the men who are members of the hay'at (religious foundation) wear the costume of water-carriers and go to another hay'at near Sirus intersection (Hamedaniha Abbasieh Hussainiya).

As two hay'ats are from the same ethnics, they get together to hold mourning rituals. In this special ritual, the men in water-carrier costumes turning around the place for several times, reciting some eulogies for in commemoration of Abbas ibn Ali (AS), brother of Imam Hussein (AS) known as the water-carrier in Ashura incident. In the end, the eulogist in Abbasieh recites a poem and the ceremony ended.

On Ashura, Hamedaniha Hussainiya hosts the mourners in water-carrier costumes from Abbasieh hay'at toward Rey Street. The Hussainiya has some guests who are not originally from Hamedan city but those who like this type of mourning. Sheikh Hossein Ansarian is amongst speakers on Ashura at this place.

The reason for being special: special ritual on Tasua and Ashura*

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 7) (Source: saadifoundation.ir)

Letter /re/ has the sound /r/, like r in ray. *ر

It only joins the preceding letter:

door, in /dar/ *دَر

Letter /ze/ has the sound /z/, like z in zoo. *ز

It only joins the preceding letter:

desk, table /miz/ *میز

Letter /ze/ has the sound /z/, like s in measure. *ژ

It only joins the preceding letter:

Japan /zāpon/ ژاپن

● Exercise 2. Practise the letters:

ذ ر ز ژ د ذ ر ز

Letter /sir/ has the sound /s/, like s in sun: *س

professor /ostād/ *اُستاد

Letter /sir/ has the sound /s/, like sh in she: *ش

student /dānešju/ *دانشجو

● Exercise 3. Join the letters and read the words:

- ا + س + ت + ا + د
- ا + ی + ن + ج + ا *
- پ + ن + ج + ر + ه *
- د + ا + ن + ش + ج + و
- ه + س + ت + ی + د *
- ن + ی + س + ت + ی + د *

Letter /sad/ has the sound /s/, like s in sun: صد

hundred /sad/ صد

Letter /zād/ has the sound /z/, like z in zoo: وض

ablution /vo'zu/ وضو

Thousands rally in Yemen against UAE-Israel normalization deal

Thousands of Yemenis have taken to the streets in the southwestern city of Ta'izz to protest against a recent agreement between the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Israel to normalize relations.

According to a report by al-Mayadeen news network on Friday, demonstrators chanted slogans in support of the Palestinian people and said any normalization of ties with the Israeli regime was "a great betrayal."

The Yemeni protesters said the Palestinian cause was the main issue of the entire Muslim Ummah, not just the Arab world.

They chanted such slogans as "I am a Palestinian, too!" and "I sacrifice my blood and soul for Palestine and al-Aqsa Mosque!"

On August 13, the UAE and the Israeli regime reached the deal for a full normalization of their relations. The deal was apparently brokered by US President Donald Trump.

The intended normalization has angered Muslim nations. Palestinian leaders have described the Emirates' deal with Israel as a betrayal of the Palestinian cause and a "stab in the back" of the Palestinian people.

On Thursday, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, the leader of Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement, condemned the UAE's agreement with Israel.

Former U.S. Army Green Beret indicted for 'conspiring with RUSSIAN SPIES'

A former member of the U.S. Army Special Forces has been charged with providing classified information to Russian intelligence for over 15 years and faces life in prison, the Department of Justice has announced.

Peter Rafael Dzibinski Debbs, 45, was arrested in Gainesville, Virginia on Friday and charged with "conspiracy to provide U.S. national defense information to agents of a foreign government," according to the DOJ.

He allegedly made contact with agents of the Russian military intelligence back in 1996, when he was still on active duty, and was assigned a Russian code name "and signed a statement attesting that he wanted to serve Russia" in 1997, according to the charges against him, RT reported.

Upon leaving the army in 2008, Debbs allegedly gave Russian intelligence agents information about his previous activities with the Green Berets and names of former team members so they could be approached and recruited, the indictment says, adding that the conspiracy activities lasted through 2011.

"Debbs is accused of giving Russian intelligence officers sensitive information about the units in which he once served and also providing the names of other service members so Russia could try to recruit them," said Alan Kohler, assistant director of the FBI Counterintelligence Division.

The indictment refers to the Russian agency Debbs allegedly had contact with as the "GRU," the military intelligence service that changed its name to the "GU" a decade ago. If convicted, the former Green Beret faces a maximum penalty of life in prison.

Resistance News

Hamas says Israel 'must pay the price' for attacks against Gaza Strip

INTERNATIONAL TEHRAN— The Palestinian resistance movement of Hamas has warned that Israel will "pay the price" for its aggression against the besieged Gaza Strip, after a series of ground and aerial attacks the Tel Aviv regime launched against the impoverished enclave during the past several weeks.

In a statement released on Friday, Hamas said that the Tel Aviv regime "must bear the consequences and pay the price for the continued aggression against Gaza, the tightening of the siege, the disruption of the lives of residents and the bombing of resistance facilities."

The coastal sliver, home to some two million people, has been under an Israeli-imposed crippling siege since June 2007, which has caused a decline in the living standards as well as unprecedented levels of unemployment and unrelenting poverty there.

Israel has also launched three major wars against the enclave since 2008, killing thousands of Gazans each time and shattering the impoverished territory's already poor infrastructure.

According to Press TV, for the past several weeks, the Israeli war machine has been pounding different areas of Gaza either by its warplanes or through artillery fire, claiming that the attacks were mainly in response to incendiary balloons sent by Gazans to cause bush fire in the southern parts of the occupied territories.

On Thursday night and in the early hours of Friday, Hamas allegedly fired at least a dozen rockets toward Israel, the regime's military said, adding that the attack drew three rounds of reprisal airstrikes by Israeli fighter jets, targeting underground infrastructure belonging to Hamas.

The Israeli regime every so often launches strikes against positions in the blockaded enclave, accusing resistance groups there of launching attacks.

"The resistance clarifies that it will not hesitate to wage a campaign against Israel if the escalation and bombings continue," the Hamas statement further read.

The Israeli military has already boosted the number of Iron Dome batteries in the southern parts of the Israeli-occupied territories in response to the uptick in tensions between the two sides.

It has also ordered the cessation of agricultural work in the vicinity of the border fence, which separates Gaza Strip from the occupied territories, until further notice.

Flying fiery kites and balloons has become a new mode of protest by Gazans since March 2018, when the Tel Aviv regime began a crackdown against anti-occupation demonstrations near the fence separating Gaza from the Israeli-occupied territories, killing and injuring many people.

Hezbollah will not give Israel opportunity to attack Lebanon: Naim Qassem

→ **1** Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah had previously denied accusations that his resistance movement had weaponry warehoused at the Beirut port.

He has said that the group would wait for results of the investigation, but said if it turns out to be an act of sabotage by Israel then the regime would "pay an equal price."

"Some political parties [in Lebanon] are advancing the hypothesis that Hezbollah was behind the Beirut blast, and are looking for pieces of evidence to corroborate such claims. Hezbollah will not resort to vile slanders in face of its opponents' lies, and will not be influenced by such propaganda," Sheikh Qassem highlighted.

He emphasized that Hezbollah resistance fighters are fully prepared to confront Israel's acts of aggression and to liberate the Israeli-occupied territories.

Sheikh Qassem also underscored that Hezbollah supports a new Lebanese government that can reconstruct Beirut in the wake of the mega-blast, implement much-needed reforms and better embrace various political parties.



■ 'U.S., Persian Gulf kingdoms seek Hezbollah's isolation'

There are reports that the United States and a number of Persian Gulf kingdoms

are pushing for the formation of a new government in Lebanon that will not include Hezbollah.

"America and [Persian] Gulf states,

particularly Saudi Arabia, do not want to see Hezbollah's participation in any government. Any government that includes Hezbollah's representatives will not be able to attract financial aid which Lebanon badly needs to overcome its deepening economic crisis," a senior unnamed source with Future Movement, led by former prime minister Saad Hariri, told Lebanon's English-language daily newspaper The Daily Star on Thursday.

According to Press TV, Hezbollah legislator Hasan Fadlallah said in an interview with Arabic-language al-Mayadeen television news network on Wednesday night that his group would not object to Hariri's return to the premiership, but he insisted that the party must be represented in the next government.

He recalled that Hezbollah had urged Hariri not to resign last October under the pressure of anti-government demonstrations over corruption, poor public services and years of economic mismanagement.

Fadlallah said Hariri is a leading candidate to head the next government, adding that contacts are ongoing between Hezbollah and the head of the Future Movement.

UN team meets detained Mali president as coup supporters plan to rally

UN human rights officials met overnight with Mali's ousted President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and other officials who have been held by mutineers since a military coup earlier this week, the UN mission there said Friday.

There has been no word from Keita since Tuesday, when he dissolved parliament and then resigned after being detained at gunpoint, deepening the crisis facing a country struggling to fend off an insurgency by militants, Reuters reported.

The human rights team was given access to Keita and other detainees, the UN peacekeeping mission, known as MINUSMA, said on Twitter. It provided no details on what was said or on the condition of the captives.

The streets of the capital Bamako were calm for the third straight day Friday ahead of a mass rally planned by an opposition coalition that led protests against Keita before the coup and has since embraced the mutineers.

Junta leaders have promised to oversee a transition to elections within a "reasonable" amount of time. But the military overthrow has dismayed international and regional powers, who fear it could further destabilize the former



French colony and West Africa's entire Sahel region.

A coup in 2012 helped hasten a takeover of northern Mali by al Qaeda-linked militants, and al Qaeda and Dsh affiliates are active in the north and center of the country.

A delegation from the 15-nation Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is expected to arrive soon in Bamako, after the bloc held an emergency summit Thursday aimed at reversing the coup.

The mission, led by former Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan, intends "to negotiate the immediate release of the president and also ensure the restoration of constitutional government," Jonathan's spokesman said, adding that the timing of the visit is not yet confirmed.

Syria calls on UN to end Hasakah water supply cut by Turkish forces

Syria has appealed to the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres to intervene immediately and to utilize all available means in order to stop Turkish military forces' decision to cut off water supply for thousands of people in the Arab country's north-eastern province of Hasakah.

During a telephone conversation with Guterres on Friday, Syria's permanent representative to the UN, Bashar al-Jaafari, warned about the catastrophic living conditions in the city of Hasakah and other neighborhoods, emphasizing that the water supply cut constitutes a war crime and a crime against humanity.

According to Press TV, Jaafari added that Turkish forces have been using water as a weapon against local residents, arguing that the troops in control of Allouk water station have cut off water supply to Hasakah and its countryside more than 15 times over the past few days.

The Syrian diplomat then expressed serious concerns over the "unbearable" situation in Hasakah amid scorching weather conditions and the coronavirus pandemic, hoping that the world body would intervene and stop the ongoing



tragedy in Hasakah.

Guterres, for his part, said he is aware of the situation in Hasakah and that he has already tasked the UN team in Syria as well as UN Special Envoy for Syria, Geir Pedersen, to adopt all necessary measures to resolve the matter quickly, and deliver humanitarian aid to all affected people until Allouk pumping station becomes operational again.

The UN chief noted that he will exert his best efforts by contacting the Turkish government and other relevant sides to resolve the matter as soon as possible.

Guterres went on to say he will task Pedersen with holding separate meetings with US, Russian and Turkish ambassadors in Geneva on Monday to discuss the issue.

Global coronavirus death toll tops 800,000

The number of deaths from the new coronavirus has surpassed 800,000 around the world, according to an AFP tally based on official sources at around 1100 GMT Saturday.

In total, 800,004 fatalities have been recorded globally, out of 23,003,079 declared infections.

Latin America and the Caribbean is the region the most affected with 254,897 deaths. More than half of global fatalities have been reported in four countries: the United States with 175,416, Brazil with 113,358, Mexico 59,610 and India 55,794.

India confirms 69,878 new infections - the fourth straight day above 60,000.

Brazil's COVID-19 outbreak is stabilizing and any reversal of the virus's rampant spread in the vast country would be "a success for the world", the World Health Organization said.

More than 22.9 million people have been diagnosed with COVID-19 around the world, and more than 14.7 million have recovered. More than 799,000 people have



died, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

■ **France delays launch of COVID-19 economic reboot plan to September**

The French government said on Saturday it would unveil details of its 100 billion euro (\$118 billion) plan to reinvigorate the economy in the first week of September,

instead of next Tuesday, as it focuses on preparing the new school term.

"The recovery plan is ready, the timetable for its implementation still stands," government spokesman Gabriel Attal said in a statement.

Schools are set to reopen on September 1, after most were closed during a two-month lockdown earlier this year to fight the coronavirus, and the government is working to ensure protective measures will be adequate, Attal said.

■ **Argentina joins Chinese coronavirus vaccine trial, maker says**

Argentina joined Peru, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates in approving Phase 3 clinical trials for a coronavirus vaccine developed by China National Biotec Group (CNBG), the company said late Friday.

As China forges ahead in the global race to develop a vaccine to curb the COVID-19 pandemic and as cases within China dwindle, CNBG needs research participants from other countries for testing.

U.S. protests: Police shooting death of African American sparks protests in California

→ **1** The outburst caused one officer to fire his stun gun into the man's chest, dropping him to the ground. Police then discharged pepper spray at the angry crowd to force them to retreat.

The Pasadena City Council, under public pressure, is scheduled next week to consider implementing a police oversight commission to investigate the fatal shooting of McClain.

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and the City of Pasadena are also supposed to conduct an independent third party review of the incident.

■ **Police use Taser on black woman during arrest**

In another development on Thursday, a police officer was fired in Gwinnett County, Atlanta, following an investigation into an incident that involved a white officer cursing at and using a Taser on a black woman during an arrest.

The video of the incident, which sur-

faced on a Twitter account and quickly went viral, was shared by more than 6,000 people within five hours.

Gwinnett police censured Officer Michael Oxford's conduct and said his attitude during the arrest failed to meet the department's standards for de-escalation of a situation.

"One of our core values is courtesy," Corporal Collin Flynn said in a statement. "We strive to conduct ourselves in a manner that promotes mutual respect with the community and our peers."

"The investigation in this case has shown that Officer Oxford violated our policy and did not meet our core values. For this reason, the employment of Officer Oxford has been terminated as of August 21st."

Police released body camera footage of the arrest on Friday.

■ **Portland protests enter 85th day**

The two incidents relating to the U.S.



police violence come as protesters in Portland clashed again with federal agents outside a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement building on Friday.

People in a group of about 100 sprayed the building with graffiti, hurled rocks and bottles at agents and shined laser lights at them.

Media reports said police used tear gas and crowd-control munitions to disperse the protesters. Three people were arrested.

Violent demonstrations have been taking place in Oregon's largest city for more than two months following the brutal murder of unarmed African American George Floyd in police custody in Minneapolis in May.

Gwinnett police censured Officer Michael Oxford's conduct and said his attitude during the arrest failed to meet the department's standards for de-escalation of a situation.

"One of our core values is courtesy," Corporal Collin Flynn said in a statement. "We strive to conduct ourselves in a manner that promotes mutual respect with the community and our peers."

"The investigation in this case has shown that Officer Oxford violated our policy and did not meet our core values. For this reason, the employment of Officer Oxford has been terminated as of August 21st."

Police released body camera footage of the arrest on Friday.

Brazil show green light to play Iran futsal

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Brazil futsal team have reportedly given their consent to play friendly match with Iran national team.

The Iranian futsal team were due to travel to Brazil in 2018 to meet the Selecao but they changed their mind because of financial issues.

Now, Brazil have shown interest in hosting Iran once again.

The last time the teams played each other

was in the 2016 FIFA Futsal World Cup knockout stage, where the Persians beat their rivals 3-2 on penalties.

Iran and Brazil will also want to prepare for the FIFA Futsal World Cup which will be held in Lithuania in 2021 September.

Iran football federation will hold a four-a-side futsal tournament in Kish Island, in the Persian Gulf from Sept. 13 to 23 with participation of Kuwait, Iraq, Iran and Iran U20 teams.



Iran will likely participate at the Caspian Cup - Astrakhan 2020 as part of preparation for the 16th edition of the AFC Futsal Championship. They have been drawn along with South

Korea, Saudi Arabia and Thailand in Group D of the continental competition.

Iran are the most decorated team of AFC Futsal Championship with 12 titles out of 15 editions of the games.

Milad Ebadipour becomes Polish citizen

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iranian international outside hitter Milad Ebadipour has officially become citizen of Poland.

On the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the establishment of the Belchatow club, the 26-year-old player was granted Polish citizenship by the vice-president of the Polish Volleyball Federation, Ryszard Czarnecki, before the match of PGE Skra with Jastrzebski Wegiel.

Ebadipour was born in 1993 in the city of Urmia. Since 2017, he has been a player of PGE Skra Belchatow and won Polish Championship in 2018 as well as two Super Cups (2017, 2018).

According to the regulations of PlusLiga competition, at least three domestic players must be on the pitch at any match.

The citizenship will facilitate the play-



er's travel and he still is a member of Iran national volleyball team.

Ebadipour was invited to the Iran National Team for the 2014 FIVB World League for the first time, and since then has been a key player in the team.

He will play a vital role in the Olympic Games next year, since Iran are going to win a medal for the first time ever.

Iran's Yasaman Farmani joins Belgium RCSC Charleroi

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iranian international Yasaman Farmani joined Belgian top-flight football club RCSC Charleroi.

Farmani was a member of Iranian football club Malavan last season.

She is the wife of Iran international Ali Gholizadeh. They are the first Iranian couple to play at a same team.

"I was training for a while with Charleroi and now I have officially joined the team. We will start the new season on Aug. 28 with a match against Gent, who placed third in the 201-20 season," Farmani said.

"I'm happy I can wear hijab in the team, however they refused that at first," she added.

RCSC Charleroi are owned by the Belgian FA president Mehdi Bayat and known as Zebras.



Anderlecht won the last season as well as they start as favorites to clinch the championship once again.

RCSC Charleroi are one of the new faces of the Belgian top-flight after the league was expanded to 10 teams from last season six, with Zulte Waregem, WS Woluwe and Eendracht the other teams who will be featuring for the first time.

Tehran derby to be held as planned

S P O R T S TEHRAN — The Tehran derby, between Esteghlal and Persepolis, in the Hazfi Cup semi-final, will be held on Aug. 26 as it was already scheduled.

Amir Hossein Roshanak, Hazfi Cup's chief executive, revealed that both clubs had asked the Iran Football League Organization to postpone the upcoming derby but their request was rejected.

"Esteghlal and Persepolis sent a letter to the league organization asking to delay the game in the Hazfi Cup semis, but this request was not met," Roshanak said.

Further, the official in charge of the Hazfi Cup competitions stated the reason behind the two Tehran giants wanted to play the game in a future time.

"Esteghlal and Persepolis, in their letters, requested the

postponement of the derby due to extra pressure on the players in the longest ever season of the Iran Professional League (IPL) due to the coronavirus pandemic, and also because of upcoming matches at the group stage of the AFC Champions League," he added.

The two archrivals will face on Wednesday in Tehran's Azadi Stadium behind closed doors. Tractor will also host Naft Masjed Soleyman in Tabriz a day earlier.

"Naft Masjed Soleyman and Tractor, who are not representing Iran in the AFC Champions League in the current season, believe that the decision will go against them. Finally, with the response given by the football league organization, both Esteghlal and Persepolis agreed to play the game as it was already planned," Roshanak concluded.



Brighton must figure out what to do with Jahanbakhsh this summer

It is fair to say that Alireza Jahanbakhsh's two seasons at Brighton have not worked out how either player or club would have liked. Two goals and zero assists in 36 appearances is hardly a good return for an individual who cost a club record fee of £17m in the summer of 2018.

Jahanbakhsh arrived at the Amex Stadium from AZ Alkmaar, where he had plundered 21 goals to finish as the Eredivisie's top scorer in the 2017/18 season. Given that Brighton fought off competition from Leicester, who viewed Jahanbakhsh as a possible replacement for the Manchester City bound Riyad Mahrez, the signing looked like quite a coup for the Seagulls.

History shows that bringing players in from the Netherlands is a risky business, however. For every Luis Suarez or Ruud van Nistelrooy arriving straight from the Dutch top flight to take England by storm, there is a Vincent Janssen, a Memphis Depay or a Ricky van Wolfswinkel. The step up in standard from the Eredivisie to English football is bigger than many appreciate.

Brighton themselves have been burned by it before. Six months prior to Jahanbakhsh's arrival, the Seagulls splashed out £14m for PSV Eindhoven's Jurgen Locadia. Fast forward two years and Locadia was being quietly packed off to Major League Soccer's FC Cincinnati. Elvis Manu, Danny Holla and Roland Bergkamp are other failed Dutch imports to Sussex.

Davy Propper is the Seagulls' only direct acquisition from the Netherlands who can be considered a success in the past decade. It will be interesting to see how summer signing from Ajax Joel Veltman gets on at the Amex following his £900,000 move from Ajax.

But for Jahanbakhsh, there have always been excuses for his struggles. The 2018/19 season yielded zero goals and zero assists from 24 games. Chris Hughton copped most of the blame from those looking to explain Jahanbakhsh's disappointing debut campaign - his negative tactics were apparently stifling a gifted attacking player from making any sort of impact in a Brighton shirt.

The appointment of Graham Potter last summer was meant to unleash Jahanbakhsh's potential, but if anything, he has gone backwards. Potter did not give Jahanbakhsh a Premier League start until 28 December, when Bournemouth were beaten 2-0 at the Amex. Jahanbakhsh scored the first that afternoon and followed it up three days later with a stunning bicycle kick against Chelsea, one of the contenders for the Premier League Goal of the Season award.

After two goals in two games, the hope was that Jahanbakhsh had turned a corner. He had shown Potter what he could do. The monkey was off his back and he would now kick on to deliver something approaching



his AZ form which convinced Brighton to smash their transfer record.

That has not really happened. By the end of the 2019/20 season, Jahanbakhsh had started just three Premier League matches with a further seven appearances from the bench. Most telling was that even when five substitutions were allowed in the final nine games of the season, Jahanbakhsh received just 21 minutes of game time. 20 of those came when Brighton were already 4-0 down against Manchester City and he was a token 89th minute introduction in the final day win at Burnley.

The excuse used for Jahanbakhsh's disappointing 2019/20 was that Potter did not use wingers and so there was no obvious place for him in the starting line up. This is not entirely true. Potter played 4-4-2 at times in 2019/20, albeit with pretty limited success compared to his favored 4-2-2-2 or the 3-4-3 which started the campaign. Claiming that Jahanbakhsh struggled because Brighton do not play with width also ignores the fact that the Iranian was used on the right of a front three at AZ. In Potter's 3-4-3 or the 4-3-3 he also fields on occasions, there is a role for Jahanbakhsh to fill.

Rather than positional problems, Jahanbakhsh's troubles seem to stem from the fact that Potter does not rate him. If he did, then Jahanbakhsh would feature on the bench at the very least. Potter likes to have options; he is a tactically flexible coach who will often finish a game with a different formation to which he started. If Potter liked

Jahanbakhsh, then the Iranian would not have had to wait until December for his first league minutes of the season.

You might think that a £17m forward who has managed just two goals in 36 matches would be a target for supporters' abuse and frustration. For the first 18 months of his Brighton career, Jahanbakhsh was on the receiving end of a lot of criticism. But once he scored against Bournemouth, that all changed. When his third minute strike hit the back of the net, the Iranian sank to his knees and burst into tears at the joy and relief of finally getting his first Premier League goal.

It was impossible not to want him to succeed after that. Being a Premier League footballer clearly means so much to him and his attitude has been exemplary. While other players would happily sit in the stands, picking up their hefty weekly wage while doing nothing to attempt to turn their form around - as was the case with Locadia, who seemed more intent on concentrating on his part time music career than his full time football career - Jahanbakhsh never complained about his lack of game time.

He got his head down and kept working hard for an opportunity. The media glare from football mad Iran on their one Premier League player is understandably intense and Jahanbakhsh is constantly asked about his future. His answer is always the same - he has no desire to leave Brighton as he wants to prove himself in England.

Jahanbakhsh's attitude is commendable, but the situation is now approaching the point where it might be in all parties' interests for the winger to move on. Ajax have been linked and a return to the Netherlands could help Jahanbakhsh reignite a career that does not seem to be going anywhere at Brighton. His chances of turning things around seem even more remote in 2020/21 as Potter is likely to play Lewis Dunk, Adam Webster and Ben White as a back three, reducing the need for wingers at the Amex even further.

To offload Jahanbakhsh, Brighton will need to accept that they are going to make a significant loss. No club is going to come close to matching the £17m the Seagulls paid. That may make the Seagulls reluctant to do business, especially given the hit they are set to take on Locadia should his loan switch to the MLS be turned permanent.

Despite the financial implications of allowing Jahanbakhsh to leave, Brighton should do what they can to facilitate a move if the interest is there. His professionalism and attitude has been as good as any player that the Seagulls have had on their books and if Potter does not feel that Jahanbakhsh is good enough, then he deserves to be at a club who can provide him with the sort of regular opportunities that are lacking at the Amex.

(Source: 90min)

Dragan Skocic meets Majid Jalali at PEC

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran national football team head coach Dragan Skocic met Gol Gohar coach Majid Jalali on Saturday.

The meeting took place at the Performance Elite Center (PEC) in Iran Football Federation's headquarters in Tehran.

The Croat has met with several Iranian coaches after the resumption of the Iran league competition.

Iran national football team were due to start the Asian qualifying games for the 2022 World Cup in October but the competitions were postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Iran sit five points behind Bahrain and Ira in Group C.

Nourollahi ready but Karimi doubt for Tehran derby

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Persepolis iconic midfielder Ahmad Nourollahi will be ready for the match against Esteghlal on Wednesday.

The Reds will meet their archrivals in the Iran's Hazfi Cup semifinals in Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

Nourollahi injured in the match against Saipa on Thursday. He's recovering from ankle injury at the moment.

However, Ali Karimi is doubtful for Tehran derby.

He has a strained quadriceps muscle and is doubtful for the crucial match.

The iconic defensive midfielder injured in the match against Paykan last week.

Rezaeian to replace Pouraliganji at Al-Arabi

Tasnim— Iranian international defender Morteza Pouraliganji left Qatari club Al-Arabi.

The 28-year-old player will reportedly join Chinese football club Shenzhen.

Local media have reported that his countryman Ramin Rezaeian, who currently plays for Al-Shahania, will replace him at Al-Arabi.

Pouraliganji played at Chinese club Tianjin Teda in 2015.

He represented Iran at the 2015 AFC Asian Cup, 2018 FIFA World Cup and the 2019 AFC Asian Cup.

Benevento in pursuit of Esteghlal forward Diabate: Report

Newly-promoted Italian Serie A side FC Benevento has interest to sign Cheick Diabate.

The Malian forward has recently won Iran Professional League (IPL) with 15 goals.

Diabate has joined Iranian football club Esteghlal in 2019 on a two-year contract.

Diabate was a member of Benevento in 2018 and scored eight goals in 11 appearances for the Italian team but failed to help the team avoid relegation.

Benevento won Serie B by 18 points and sealed a promotion to Serie A.

(Source: Derbyderbyderby.it)

Al Duhail clinch seventh Qatar Stars League title

Al Duhail added another silverware to their trophy cabinet after claiming their seventh Qatar Stars League on Friday, pipping Al Rayyan in a race that went down to the wire.

Al Duhail went into their final match against Al Ahli just one point ahead of Al Rayyan and Belgium-born Brazilian forward Edmilson Junior was their hero, scoring off a free-kick in the 24th minute to clinch the win they needed.

Al Rayyan had to be satisfied with a runners-up finish despite second half goals by Algerian forward Yacine Brahimi and Argentinean defender Gabriel Mercado steering them to a 2-0 win over Al Wakra.

Outgoing champions Al Sadd finished third, ending their 2019-20 QSL season with a 1-1 draw against Al Gharafa.

In other season-finales matches, Al Siliya shared a goalless draw with Umm Salal, Al Arabi and Qatar SC also shared the points while Al Shahaniya were relegated after a 2-2 result with Al Khor.

(Source: the-afc)

Khalilzadeh, Teymourian to vie for the ACL Goal of the Decade award

Persepolis defender Shoja Khalilzadeh and ex-Esteghlal midfielder Andranik Teymourian will compete to win the ACL Goal of the Decade award.

Looking back at the tournaments from 2010 to 2019, the-afc.com has selected 20 of the best goals scored in Asia's biggest club competition and now ask the fans to tell their favorite, which will be announced ahead of the AFC Champions League's resumption next month.

Splitting them into two semi-finals with 10 goals apiece, the-afc.com's first offering features stunning solo efforts, thunderbolts from distance and much more.

Fans voted Khalilzadeh goal as the best of the 2019 AFC Champions League with the defender showing an attacker's instinct as he expertly volleys home to put Persepolis a goal up against Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli.

With the ball in midair, Khalilzadeh shows fine agility to adjust his body and send a perfectly executed strike into the back of the net. Sadly, for the 2018 runners-up, the 2-0 win would prove the highlight as they failed to make it beyond the group stage.

Andranik Teymourian's unstoppable rocket against Thailand's Buriram United in the 2013 quarter-finals is well worthy of the acclaim.

(Source: the-afc)

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

I never revolted in vain, as a rebel or as a tyrant; rather, I rose seeking reformation for the nation of Islam.

Imam Hussein (AS)

Leader praises Afshin Ala poem denouncing Israel, UAE deal

The Leader has always recognized authors and poets by writing commendations to their books.



This combination photo shows Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and poet Afshin Ala.

Poets and literary figures from Iran and some Persian-speaking countries attend a meeting with Ayatollah Khamenei every year on the birthday of Imam Hassan (AS), which falls on the 15th of the holy month of Ramadan.

“The Alien” actor Bakhtiar Panjei named best at Hong Kong festival

TEHRAN — Bakhtiar Panjei, the actor of the Iranian drama “The Alien” (Namo), was crowned best for his role in the movie at the 44th edition of the Hong Kong International Film Festival, the organizers have announced.

Panjei, who in the film portrays a teacher dispatched along with his family to a remote area, was awarded in the Young Cinema Competition section of the festival.

“The Alien” by filmmaker Nader Saeivar had its world premiere at the Forum section of the 70th Berlin International Film Festival, which was held from February 20 to March 1.

Zheng Lu Xinyuan’s “The Cloud in Her Room” and Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese’s “This Is Not a Burial, It’s a Resurrection” were named as best films at the Hong Kong festival.

Both films also won best actress in their respective sections, Jin Jing for “The Cloud in Her Room” and Mary Twala Mhlongo for “This Is Not a Burial, It’s a Resurrection”.



Bakhtiar Panjei acts in a scene from “The Alien” (Namo).

Mosese’s film, shot entirely in the director’s native Lesotho, also picked up the FIPRESCI prize.

Best director in the Young Cinema Competition (World) went to India’s Pushpendra Singh for “The Shepherdess and The Seven Songs”.

Benjamin Ree’s “The Painter and the Thief” won the Firebird Award in the documentary competition, while the jury prize went to Emmanuel Cappellin’s “Once You Know”.

In addition, three films by Abbas Kiarostami were screened at the festival.

“In First Case, Second Case” (1979), “Tribute to the Teachers” (1977) and “Two Solutions for One Problem” (1975) were the three short films by Kiarostami presented at the restored classics section of the festival.

HKIFF had been scheduled to take place as a physical festival August 18 to 31, after being postponed from its usual March/April timing, but was cancelled in late July after Hong Kong was hit by a third wave of Covid-19 infections and went ahead with online judging for its competition sections.

Tehran center spotlights old tazieh scripts to save from oblivion

TEHRAN — The director of the Kahrobaye Tazieh Center has said that the center has put its spotlight on numerous vintage tazieh scripts to save the masterpieces that are gradually passing into oblivion.

Speaking to the Persian service of Honaronline, Majid Khosroabadi said that they plan to preserve the texts as historical heritage of the country.

“The texts have been collected from every corner of the country, some of which have not been performed for more than

50 years,” he said. “There are only four or five veteran tazieh performers who can perform these types of tazieh and if we do not record and preserve them they will fade away. We have selected 30 texts so far, and the Rudaki Foundation and the Tehran Municipality have promised to cooperate,” he said.

Khosroabadi further noted that the center was established in 2013 and has been one of the most active centers on tazieh, holding courses for young adults.

“During the previous courses, we asked teachers to find talented students and form



Sayyid al-Shuhada Tazieh Troupe gives a performance at the Rudaki Open-Air Theater in Tehran on August 21, 2020. (Honaronline/Zeinab Mahdavi)

a tazieh troupe,” he said. “About 800 young performers have so far given professional performances over the past five courses,” he added.

“This year due to the spread of coronavirus, we have decided to record tazieh teaching courses and later upload them for interested applicants on some

platforms,” he noted.

The Rudaki Open-Air Theater in Tehran has been hosting tazieh performances during the first ten nights of Muharram.

Rudaki Foundation Managing Director Mehdi Afzali has invited tazieh expert Ahmad Azizi, the head of Sayyid al-Shuhada Tazieh Troupe, to give performances.

Coronavirus moves Cinema Vérité festival online



A poster for the Cinema Vérité festival.

TEHRAN — The 14th edition of the Cinema Vérité, Iran’s major international festival for documentary films, will be organized entirely online during December due to a spike in coronavirus cases in the country over the past month.

The decision to hold the event online was made in a meeting with executives last Wednesday, the Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC), which is the main organizer of the festival announced on Saturday.

They also discussed a plan to organize a review of movies acclaimed in previous editions of the festival.

A plan to dedicate a special section to screening documentaries on the pandemic and COVID-19 was also discussed.

The organizers plan to design platforms to guarantee

the festival entries against piracy.

Earlier last week, DEFC director Mohammad Hamidi-Moqaddam announced the center’s plan to pay tribute to celebrated filmmaker Khosro Sinai who died of coronavirus on August 1.

Cinema Organization of Iran director Hossein Entezami has previously announced that the organization is searching for a safe platform to organize the 39th edition of the Fajr Film Festival online if the pandemic continues until February 2021.

He also said that there is no platform in Iran to guarantee the festival entries against piracy.

“If we cannot have a platform that ensures the safety of films during the festival, it will be impossible for us to organize the event online,” he noted.

Isfahan children’s film festival shifts to online over coronavirus spike

TEHRAN — The 33rd edition of the International Film Festival for Children and Youth will be held online during October this year due to a spike in coronavirus cases in the country, the director of the festival, Alireza Tabesh, has said.

He made the remarks on the TV program “Shahr-e Farang” broadcasted on Channel 6 on Thursday.

“This edition of the festival will be held in the two national and international sections, and the Farabi Cinema Foundation, Cinema Organization of Iran, and the Isfahan Municipality are the main organizers of the gala,” he said.

“We have had several sessions after the outbreak of the coronavirus in Iran since spring discussing the topic of holding a virtual festival, however, when we are talking about an online festival we do not intend to screen films online permanently,” he added.



A poster for the 33rd edition of the International Film Festival for Children and Youth.

He said that the films will be screened in the specific time and hour and only those who have registered on the portal of the festival can watch the films online.

“The variety of national and international films is extremely high. The only point is about several feature films in the national and international sections, which we guess might be pirated, but for sure the screenings will be coordinated under the supervision

of the producers and the filmmakers,” he explained.

“We have had several meetings with Iranian producers. We have also had meetings with several managers at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (ICT) who will be supporting the festival. Some of the events will be held live in Isfahan, while there are plans to hold virtual workshops,” he said.

“However, this is a decision made by the policy-making council of the festival, and we could not switch off the lights of a festival that is 33 years old.

We know it will be difficult, and we will need more cooperation from the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), the Ministry of Education and several other organizations to help hold the festival this year,” he concluded.

“Bille” by Inara Kolmane from Latvia was named best film in the official com-

petition of the 32nd International Film Festival for Children and Youth in the central Iranian city of Isfahan held in Isfahan in August 2019.

“Bille”, which was made based on prominent Latvian writer Vizma Belsevic’s novel of the same name, is about an extraordinary and creative little girl who tries to comprehend the confusing adult world in Europe during the Great Depression in the 1930s. She tries to prove her own value despite the lack of appreciation and love from her mother and family.

Mehdi Jafari from Iran was crowned best director for his acclaimed movie “The 23”, about 23 young Iranian volunteers who were held captive during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

The movie also received three more honors, including the awards for best film and best screenplay, in the national section of the festival.

COVID-19 postpones Tehran Auction to autumn

TEHRAN — The 13th edition of the Tehran Auction has been postponed to a later time in autumn due to a rise in the number of coronavirus cases over the past few months, the organizers announced on Saturday.

The organizers had first decided to hold the auction on September 18 after a two-month halt, however, the rise in the death toll forced them to postpone the event.

Art expert Alireza Sami-Azar, a former director of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, is the director of the auction, which organizes two sales every year.

The first sale is dedicated to classic artworks and the second sale focuses on modern and contemporary artworks.

However, this year, the organizers are planning to combine the two sales and hold one auction in autumn.

A selection of 118 lots of modern and contemporary Iranian art was offered at the 12th Tehran Auction last year.

Hossein Zendebrudi’s painting “Voute Azurée” was the most expensive work sold as it fetched 32 billion rials (over \$750,000).

The second most expensive work sold at the sale was an untitled painting from Manuchehr Yekta’s still life series, which fetched 19 billion rials (over \$450,000).

“Am I Dreaming or Am I Awake”, a painting on canvas from Farhad Moshiri’s jar series was the third most expensive work sold at the auction with 16 billion rials (over \$380,000).



Auctioneer Reza Kianian takes a bid for the sale of “Voute Azurée” by Hossein Zendebrudi during the 12th Tehran Auction at the Parsian Azadi Hotel in Tehran on January 17, 2020. The artwork was the top seller, fetching over \$750,000. (Honaronline/Mohammad Namazi)

Iranian play “Evening Melody” to go on stage at LimeFest 2020



TEHRAN — “The Evening Melody”, a play written by Iranian writer Mahsa Talebi, will be staged at the LimeFest 2020, which is currently underway in New York.

The play will be presented on stage by the New York-based Iranian director Deniz Khateri on Sunday at 2PM ET through CyberTank.

“The Evening Melody” is a short virtual performance between Iran and the U.S. Khateri has designed and produced it to experiment with the online theater medium.

It will have two performances, which happen simultaneously and the audience can watch both the Iranian version and the American version simultaneously while choosing the language they want to hear.

Deniz is experimenting with audience participation in a virtual theater, as well as the role of language and culture in theater, and how different aesthetics based on geography changes a production.

The American version will be performed by Merlix Ventura, and Sarvenaz Nankeli is the performer of the Iranian version.

Photo: A poster for “The Evening Melody”.

Emma Hornby’s “A Shilling for a Wife” available for Persian readers

TEHRAN — English novelist Emma Hornby’s book “A Shilling for a Wife” has recently been published in Persian in Tehran.

The powerful, absorbing book published by Nasle No-Andish has been translated into Persian by Ali-Akbar Qariniyat.

It is about Sally Swann who thought life couldn’t get much worse. Then a single coin changed hands.

A dismal cottage in the heart of Bolton, Lancashire, has been Sally’s prison since Joseph Goden ‘bought’ her from the workhouse as his wife. A drunkard and bully, Joseph rules her with a rod of iron, using fists and threats to keep her in check.

When Sally gives birth, however, she knows she must do anything to save her child from her husband’s clutches. She manages to escape, and taking her baby, flees for the belching chimneys of Manchester, in search of her only relative.

But with the threat of discovery by Joseph, who will stop at nothing to find her, Sally must fight with every ounce of strength she has to protect herself and her son, and finally be with the man who truly loves her. For a fresh start does not come without a price.

Mother-of-three Hornby was born in Bolton in 1983, on a tight-knit, working-class estate. History has always been her passion, in particular the Victorian era, and she grew

up with her nose buried in sagas.

Before pursuing a career as a novelist, she had a variety of jobs, from care assistant for the elderly, to working in a Blackpool rock factory. She later wrote short stories and non-fiction pieces for the Internet, print and stage, and also worked as a freelance poet.

Emma’s books are gritty historical stories set in the 1800s Bolton and Manchester, which she began writing after researching her family history. The colorful folk she unearthed gave her plenty of inspiration; like the characters in her novels, many generations of her family eked out life amidst the squalor and poverty of Lancashire’s slums.

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