



**Iran missed OIC meeting due to lack of cooperation by Saudis** **2**



**Elections manifest excellence of national security** **3**



**Jahanbakhsh wins Match of the Day goal of the month** **11**



**Polish troupe performs “Silence” on child victims of wars at Fajr** **12**

# Zarif, Borrell discuss nuclear deal



See page 2

## Steel ingots, products export up 46% in 9 months on year

**TEHRAN** — Iran's export of steel ingots and steel products has increased 46 percent during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2019), IRNA reported on Monday citing the data released by the Association of Iranian Steel Producers.

The released data put the country's export of steel ingots and steel products at 7.797 million tons during the nine-month period.

As reported, steel ingot export has risen 38 percent to 5.069 million tons

in the nine-month period of this year, from 3.675 million tons in the same time span of the past year.

And the steel products export registered a 27-percent rise to 2.828 million tons in this year from 2.148 million tons in the previous year's nine-month period.

As previously reported, production of steel ingot rose four percent in Iran during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year from the same period of time in the previous year. **→4**

## ‘Deal of century’ shows Iran is not enemy of Arabs: Zarif

**TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Monday that the so-called U.S. “deal of the century” shows that Iran is not an enemy of the Arab world.

Politicians and analysts say that through the deal of the century the Trump administration is formally giving the Palestinian lands to Israel.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has called the U.S. proposal the “slap of the century”.

“A procedure has been started since 10 years ago to portray Iran as the main threat

in the region in order to make the Arabs accept the Zionist regime's demands,” he said during a speech at the AJA University of Command and Staff, known as DAFOOS in its Persian acronyms.

Zarif said when the Zionist regime was making arrangements for the Oslo and Madrid peace processes in 1991, the former ambassador of the Zionist regime's to Iran during the Shah regime had said that “they have decided to replace Arabs with Iran for animosity and make peace with Arabs”. **→2**

## OIC rejects Trump’s Middle East plan

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has rejected U.S. President Donald Trump's so-called “deal of the century” on the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The OIC convened in Jeddah on Monday to discuss the plan Trump unveiled alongside Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House on Tuesday.

The 57-member organization said it “calls on all member states not to engage with this plan or to cooperate with the U.S. admin-

istration in implementing it in any form”.

The deal would, among other contentious things, enshrine Jerusalem al-Quds as “Israel's undivided capital” and allow the regime to annex settlements in the occupied West Bank and the Jordan Valley.

All Palestinian groups have angrily rejected the plan, while Israeli groups of different political persuasions have enthusiastically embraced it, hailing it for offering them more than they expected. **→10**



## ARTICLE

**Mahnaz Abdi**  
Head of the TehranTimes  
Economy Desk

## FTA with EAEU, a turning point for Iran’s trade

**A**fter several years of negotiations, Iran and Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) finally reached a free trade agreement (FTA) in 2018 based on which about 862 commodity items are subject to preferential tariffs.

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

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

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

Iran's signing the agreement with the bloc has increased the country's exports to the EAEU member states significantly, which is a turning point for the Islamic Republic to boost its export under the sanctions time.

According to the official data, Iran's exports to EAEU countries has climbed 216 percent in value and 522 percent in weight during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2019) from the same period of time in the past year.

As reported, the country has exported 783.2 million tons of commodities worth \$454.3 million to Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan during the mentioned nine-month period.

Iran-EAEU free trade agreement is also an opportunity for Iran to reach its goal of boosting exports to its neighbors, something that the country is seriously pursuing.

The report on Iran-EAEU nine-month trade indicates that among the EAEU members, Iran's highest growth of trade has been with its neighbor Armenia, as the country's export to Armenia rose 169 percent and its imports from the neighbor increased 49 percent during the mentioned period of time. **→4**

## “Qasida of the White Cow”, mediocre movie with big questions

By Samaneh Aboutalebi

**TEHRAN** — Numerous films of Iran's post-revolution cinema have considered social issues such as women's rights, addiction, poverty, the younger generation's problems and lex talionis.

Productions on lex talionis — the law of “an eye for an eye” applicable in Iran — have always provoked controversy.

“Beautiful City” by Asghar Farhadi, “Corridor” by Behruz Shoeibi, “Lanturi” by Reza Dormishian,

“A House on 41st Street” by Hamidreza Qorbani, “Life Hanging” co-directed by Hossein Amiri Dumari and Pedram Puramiri and “Yalda, a Night for Forgiveness” by Masud Bakhshi are some of the movies on the subject.

“Qasida of the White Cow” by Behtash San-aeiha is the latest case, which is competing in the 38th Fajr Film Festival currently underway in Tehran.

The film is about Mina, a young woman who lives along with her deaf child while her husband

has been executed for a murder charge a year ago. She tries to get her life together, take good care of her child and make both ends meet. However, her life gets more sorrowful when she finds out that her husband was innocent.

While most of the films on the subject promote forgiveness rather than revenge, this film brings up a very frightening question: Since the sentence is irreversible — after all, no one can return from death — what if the person executed

was actually innocent? **→12**

## World Cancer Day: national plans to improve patients’ lives

By Faranak Bakhtiari

**TEHRAN** — Iran has developed several national cancer control programs since the Iranian calendar year 1392 (March 2013- March 2014), for reducing prevalence and mortality while improving the quality of patients' lives, deputy health minister has stated.

Reza Malekzadeh made the remarks on the occasion of the World Cancer Day, February 4. Organized by the Union for International

Cancer Control (UICC), World Cancer Day is an opportunity to rally the international community to end the injustice of preventable suffering from cancer.

Year 2020 marks the midway point of the 3-year ‘I Am and I Will’ campaign, which acknowledges that everyone has the capacity to address the cancer burden.

The incidence of cancer in men and women in Iran is 163 and 140 per 100,000, respectively,

which is below the world average (219 and 183 for men and women), Malekzadeh stated.

In the world and in Iran, cancer prevalence will almost double over the next two decades, which is higher in developing countries than in developed ones, due to increased life expectancy and the aging population, he said.

He went on to add that another reasons contribute to cancer are unhealthy lifestyles and environmental factors, IRNA reported on Monday. **→9**

## Contradictory reports as Turkey claims bombing Syrian troops

Turkey says it launched airstrikes against Syrian troops advancing in the last terrorist bastion in Idlib, with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan claiming the raids were in response to attacks on Turkish forces.

Erdogan said Monday Turkey's F-16 warplanes were involved in the attack against 40 points in Idlib, claiming that 30-35 Syrians were “neutralized” in the aggression.

The alleged attack came after Turkey beefed

up its presence in the region and warned of a military offensive if the ongoing operation by Syrian government forces against foreign-backed Takfiri militants continues. Turkey's Defense Ministry said four Turkish soldiers were killed and nine others injured in intense shelling by Syrian government forces in Idlib earlier Monday.

Erdogan said, “We have responded in kind to these attacks and will continue to do so, whether it is with our artillery or mortars.”

“We are determined to continue our operations for the security of our country, people and our brothers in Idlib,” he told reporters in Istanbul.

The Turkish president said Ankara had urged Moscow which supports the Syrian army in the offensive “to stand aside” in the escalating conflict.

Russia's Defense Ministry said the Turkish military came under fire from Syrian government forces because Moscow had not been warned about Turkey's operations in Idlib. **→10**



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## “Silence, the Cochlea” director wants to bring the deaf under spotlight

**TEHRAN** — “Silence, the Cochlea” is not the sole Iranian movie produced to attract people's attention to the problems facing the deaf, but director Behrang Dezfulizadeh has said that he is seeking once again to bring hearing impaired people under the spotlight by this film.

“The deaf are only being regarded during one week of the year that is dedicated to hearing impaired people. With this film, I want to raise people's understanding of the deaf,” he said at a press conference on Sunday during the 38th Fajr Film Festival. **→12**



## PERSPECTIVE

**Azadeh Abbaszadeh**  
Director of “Down Syndrome”  
cellular-molecular research  
center of Iran

## Iceland: a genocide in silence; hidden anti-47 army

**L**ook at these numbers and votes: Approved with 48 votes in favor, 12 abstentions, and 0 against. After counting the votes and adopting this resolution, known as United Nations General Assembly Resolution 217, they called it the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Iceland, as a country in favor of the resolution, signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This resolution was signed about 70 years ago and today, Iceland is considered as the only country in the world which has eradicated Down syndrome people. Is eradication of Down syndrome people who are a part of society any different than genocide? Did Iceland fail to read Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

“... All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood ...”

Today, Iceland is blocking the free birth of people. These chromosomally different people are prevented to be born in Iceland. Based on their approved protocols, health policies, and established laws, Iceland has eradicated and massacred people with Down syndrome.

In a part of Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is stated that “... and everyone has the right to life...”

Iceland has acted as if Down syndrome people do not deserve life. Do you know that from 2015 no Down syndrome person has been born in Iceland? (Except for two cases where the results of maternal pregnancy screening tests were wrong and they were told that their fetuses did not have Down syndrome).

The way Iceland treats Down syndrome people was only carried out by Hitler many years ago. Hitler was the operational commander of the T4 project, referred to as the largest massacre of people with disabilities, cerebral palsy, and a variety of neurological disorders. **→9**



## Ayatollah Khamenei says it is essential to protect revolutionary fervor

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on Monday that it is essential to protect the revolutionary fervor and give space to young clerics.



“Enemy plans to identify effective points of the revolution and harm its fundamental principles and the seminary schools are among the targets,” he said during a meeting with members of the supreme council of the seminary schools.

The Leader attached great importance to finding the young clerics’ talent and capacities.

“In various areas, sometimes great jobs and initiatives are done by the youth. In the area of seminary school, there are talents who should be identified,” he noted.

## Iran among world’s top five producers of anti-armor missiles: Deputy defense minister

**(Press TV)** — Iran’s deputy defense minister says the country is currently among the world’s top five producers of anti-armor missiles, while enjoying a vast capacity for manufacturing Cruise missiles and other defense hardware.

“The Islamic Iran currently stands among the world’s top five producers of anti-armor missiles,” Brigadier General Qassem Taqizadeh said while addressing a ceremony in Tehran on Monday.

“At the same time, we have attained a very high capacity with regard to manufacturing various kinds of satellites, Cruise missiles and other types of military equipment,” he added.

The top military official noted that Iran’s defense industry was totally dependent on other countries before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, but that trend changed after the revolution and the country now enjoys a high place in the world with regard to development of its military industries.

He pointed to Iran’s progress in the fields of manufacturing precision-guided missiles and smart air defense systems, saying that the domestically-built Bavar-373 missile defense system, which has a range of 120 kilometers and can reach an altitude of 27 kilometers, is one of the most important defense achievements of the country after the victory of the Islamic Revolution.

Iran unveiled the state-of-the-art surface-to-air Bavar-373 missile defense system, designed and manufactured by the country’s experts, in August 2019.

It is a mobile missile defense system designed to intercept and destroy incoming hostile targets. The system employs missiles that have a maximum range of 300 kilometers.

The system is capable of simultaneously detecting up to 300 targets, tracking 60 targets at once and engaging six targets at a time.

Iran has repeatedly said its military might poses no threat to other countries, and that its defense doctrine is based on deterrence.

Also in his remarks, the Iranian defense official said the country had no place in space technology before the Islamic Revolution, adding, “We are currently among the world’s top eight countries in the field of space technology.”

Head of the Iranian Space Agency (ISA) Morteza Barari said on Saturday the country is preparing to launch its new domestically-developed scientific observation satellite in the “coming days.”

Barari told AFP that the manufacture of the Zafar (Victory) satellite “began three years ago with the participation of 80 Iranian scientists.”

The 113-kilogram satellite will be launched by a Simorgh carrier 530 kilometers (329 miles) above the Earth, where it will make 15 orbits daily, said Barari.

## Iraq calls on EU to help de-escalate tensions between Iran, U.S.

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali Al Hakim on Monday voiced his country’s concern over the consequences of rising tensions between the U.S. and Iran for the region, calling on the European Union states to do their best to prevent more tensions.



In a joint press conference with his Belgian counterpart Philippe Goffin in Baghdad, Al Hakim said, “In the meeting with the Belgian foreign minister, we talked about the existing differences between Iran and the United States. We exchanged views over the necessity of avoiding any war (in the region) and its negative impacts on Iraq and the whole region.”

“It is necessary that the European Union embarks on increasing efforts to narrow down tensions between the U.S. and Iran,” Al Hakim further said.

Goffin arrived in the capital Baghdad for an official visit to Iraq on Monday.

# Zarif, Borrell discuss nuclear deal

Rouhani says if EU observes its JCPOA commitments Iran will reverse its nuclear decisions

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell met in Tehran on Monday, discussing the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the JCPOA.

Borrell visited at a time that the fate of the JCPOA hangs in the balance.

Zarif and Borrell held two rounds of talks on Monday.

It was the first trip to Tehran by Borrell who replaced Federica Mogherini. He was accompanied by a delegation in his visit to Tehran.

In a separate meeting with Borrell, President Rouhani criticized the European Union for failing to honor its commitments under the JCPOA when the U.S. quit the deal and reinstituted sanctions on Iran.

In May 2019 Iran started to reduce its commitments to the JCPOA at bi-monthly intervals in response to the abrogation of the pact by the U.S. coupled with the European Union’s inaction to shield Iran’s economy from sanctions.

Rouhani said, “The Islamic Republic of Iran is still ready to cooperate with the European Union for resolving issues, and at any time that the other side (EU) fully observes its commitments Iran will also return to its commitments.”

Rouhani said the JCPOA was the fruit of 12 years of negotiations but its implementation has faced serious hurdles due to the U.S. unilateral exit from the agreement.

The Iranian president went on to say that his country has been fully committed to the inspection of its nuclear activities by the International Atomic Energy Agency and this policy will continue “otherwise we face a new condition.”

Rouhani also described European countries as Iran’s traditional partners and said



Borrell: ‘I am sorry that the European sides have failed to fulfill their commitments’

Tehran attaches great importance to Europe.

The president also expressed hope that Iran-EU relations would expand through the efforts of the European Union high representative.

**■ Borrell: I will use all my energy to keep the JCPOA**

In his meeting with Rouhani, Borrell also said he will use his utmost efforts to keep the nuclear deal alive.

“As the High Representative of the European Union Foreign Policy I will use my utmost energy to create a strong interaction in line with protecting the JCPOA,” Borrell said according to a translation of his remarks.

The European chief diplomat said efforts should be made to remove hurdles on the way to implement the nuclear accord.

Borrell also said, “I am sorry that the European sides have failed to fulfill their commitments.”

The top European official also called Iran an influential country which can play an important role in establishing peace, stability and security in the region. “For this purpose, development of cooperation with Iran has always been important for the European Union,” he said.

France, Germany and the United Kingdom, the three European states signatory to the JCPOA, issued a joint statement on January 14 announcing they have formally triggered the JCPOA dispute resolution mechanism which could bring the Iran nuclear issue before the UN Security Council.

Borrell said on January 24 that he had

## Iran says missed OIC meeting due to lack of cooperation by Saudis

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Foreign Ministry said on Monday that Saudi Arabia intentionally delayed issuing visa for Iranian diplomats so that they would not be able to attend an emergency meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on the so-called U.S. “Deal of the Century” plan for Palestine.

“Following the Saudi government’s sabotage for participation of the Iranian delegation in the OIC emergency meeting in Jeddah, and Tehran’s reaction (to Riyadh’s lack of cooperation), Saudis sent a message on Sunday night that visa for the Iranian delegation would be issued. Practically there was no any possibility for our delegation to attend the meeting on Monday morning,” Abbas Mousavi wrote spokesman wrote on his Twitter account.

On Sunday night, Mousavi issued a message saying Saudi authorities had not issued visa for the Iranian delegation and therefore Iran filed a complaint with the OIC stating that Saudi Arabia is misusing its position as the host for the organization’s headquarters.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced the general provisions of the plan at the White House with Israeli Prime

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at his side on Tuesday.

The White House claimed that the plan was the most serious, realistic, and detailed plan ever presented, one that could make Israelis, Palestinians, and the region safer and more prosperous.

“This Vision is just the first step and provides the basis for historic progress toward peace. The United States hopes this Vision will lead to direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians,” it added.

During an emergency meeting in Egypt’s capital on Saturday, the Arab League completely rejected the plan, saying it would not lead to a just peace deal.

In a statement, the pan-Arab bloc said it “rejects the U.S.-Israeli ‘deal of the century’ considering that it does not meet the minimum rights and aspirations of Palestinian people.”

Sabah Zangeneh, the former Iran’s representative at the OIC said on Saturday that the so-called peace plan does not enjoy international support.

Zangeneh described the deal of century as “dangerous” which can throw international order into disarray.

Expressing concerns over the consequences of the plan, he said, “Apparently, this plan is supposed to boost economy in the region. However, in fact, it will cause challenges to regional economy.”

In a series of tweets, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif castigated the plan.

“The so-called ‘Vision for Peace’ is simply the dream project of a bankruptcy-ridden real estate developer,” Zarif said.

The foreign minister added the plan was a “nightmare for the region and the world and, hopefully, a wake-up call for all the Muslims who have been barking up the wrong tree.”

Zarif also said the plan is “sleepwalking into a catastrophe” and likened it to “highway to hell”.

The foreign minister also said Muslims must “wake up” to this plot as the United States has proven that it has never been an “honest broker” in mediation between the Palestinians and the Zionist regime of Israel.

“We Muslims need to wake up: The U.S. never was—and can never be—anything resembling an honest broker.”

## ‘Deal of the century’ shows Iran is not enemy of Arabs: Zarif



There is an assumption in our region that security can be bought. This is the main impediment to the Hormuz peace plan,” Zarif pointed out.

At the United Nations summit in New York in late September 2019, Iran formally unveiled the proposal for regional security, officially called the Hormuz Peace Endeavour (HOPE).

“Based upon the historical responsibility of my country in maintaining security, peace, stability and progress in the Persian Gulf region and Strait of Hormuz, I would like to invite all the countries directly affected by the developments in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz to the ‘Coalition for Hope’, meaning Hormuz Peace Endeavour,” President Hassan Rouhani told the UN

delegates.

Zarif has invited all regional states to join Iran’s initiative for securing the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

In a tweet in September, Zarif said the initiative entails “dialogue, confidence-building, freedom of navigation, energy security, non-aggression, and non-intervention”.

In a post on his Twitter account on October 15, Zarif renewed Iran’s call to all countries bordering the Persian Gulf to join Tehran’s initiative to “forge a blueprint for peace, security, stability, and prosperity” in the region.

**■ ‘Participation in elections will prove failure of Trump’s policy’**

After his speech to high-ranking officers, Zarif told reporters that the people’s participation in parliamentary elections on February 21 will prove that Washington must stop maximum pressure and admit the failure of Trump’s policy and lift sanctions and return to the 5+1 group.

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

Many analysts and think tanks believe that the maximum pressure policy has failed.

## FM says Swiss humanitarian channel does not show U.S. good intention

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Monday that a Swiss humanitarian channel, a payment mechanism to enable humanitarian goods to be delivered to Iran, does not show the United States’ good intention.

“This is a small step taken by the Swiss government’s effort and we appreciate it. However, it does not show the United States’ good intention,” he told reporters on the sidelines of a meeting at the AJA University of

Command and Staff.

He also said that the International Court of Justice has ordered the U.S. not to prevent shipment of food and medicine to Iran, however, Washington’s policy is still exerting pressure on the Iranians.

A humanitarian channel to bring food and medicine to Iran has started trial operations.

“On 27 January, an initial payment for the shipment of medicines to Iran was approved in the form of a

trial run,” said a statement published on the website of Switzerland’s embassy in Tehran.

“The aim of the Swiss Humanitarian Trade Arrangement (SHTA) is to ensure that exporters and trading companies in the food, pharmaceutical and medical sectors based in Switzerland have a secure payment channel with a Swiss bank through which payments for their exports to Iran are guaranteed,” the statement added.



# Iran dismisses as ‘insufficient’ Swiss-U.S. humanitarian channel

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Tehran says a Swiss-U.S. “humanitarian” channel set up to enable medicine import to Iran is insufficient, reminding that the U.S. is originally banned by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) from subjecting Iran’s much-needed medical supplies to sanctions.

“Medicine and foodstuffs were never subject to sanctions in the first place, so that they can now create a channel with such a show,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Monday at a press conference.

“We do not recognize any such so-called humanitarian channel,” Mousavi said, according to Press TV.

U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, in May 2018 and restored the previous sanctions against Iran and ordered new ones.

Tehran has described the U.S. government’s sanctions as “economic war” and “economic terrorism”.

Iran says sanctions on its central bank will prevent it from providing medicine to its citizens.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in late 2019 that the United States’ sanctions and economic war on Iran have targeted the ordinary people’s health and livelihood.

“There was a time when such warfare was used to simply limit the activities of some countries. However, new warfare of the United States and what Trump has called the ‘economic war’ have targeted the ordinary people’s livelihood and health,” the chief diplomat lamented.

Health Minister Saeed Namaki said back in December 2019 that the United States lies when it says pharmaceuticals and medical equipment are not subject to its sanctions on Iran.

Meanwhile, under Washington’s pressure, Britain, France, and Germany have stopped their transactions with the Islamic Republic. However, on Thursday, Switzerland



launched the so-called Swiss Humanitarian Trade Arrangement (SHTA), claiming it was aimed at facilitating the medicine trade, reportedly using the Central Bank of Iran’s credits. Swiss officials have, however, refused to clarify how such transactions would continue if the CBI ran out of credit with Swiss banks.

Back in October 2018, The Hague-based International Court of Justice? the UN’s principal judicial body, issued a ruling ordering the U.S. to halt its unilateral sanctions on “humanitarian” supplies to Iran. The verdict came following a lawsuit lodged by Iran in July of the same year.

In his Monday press conference, Mousavi said Washington is well aware that as per the ruling, it bears an obligation not to block such transactions, adding that these “conditional waivers” from the sanctions will not result in the U.S. war crimes passing into oblivion.

The medicine supplies, he added, were bound to enter the country a year and a half

ago, but their imports were blocked by U.S. obstructionism.

The Swiss company tasked with facilitating the transactions “has been paid to do so,” he said, noting, “Our expectations far exceed such measures. And their obligations are hundreds of times more than what they are offering.”

He added that the Islamic Republic welcomes all efforts that are aimed at reducing the pressure faced by the country, but still Switzerland’s initiation of the SHTA, falls short of the expectations.

Zarif also said on Monday that the Swiss channel is insufficient, drawing attention to the ICJ ruling in this regard.

The top diplomat noted that the U.S. keeps pursuing the policy of “maximum pressure” and denying Iran the financial channels that enable it to import medicine.

“This is a small step and we thank the Swiss government for its efforts ... but this channel is not a sign of America’s goodwill at all,” he added.

## Trans-regional presence seen in all regional conflicts: Sayyari

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Habibollah Sayyari, the deputy army chief for coordination affairs, says the presence of trans-regional powers is seen in all regional conflicts.

“Those powers have imposed security challenges on the region by creating terrorist groups,” Sayyari said on Monday, Mehr reported.

He said the Islamic Revolution emerged in spite of all hostilities and insecurities as well as foreign interventions in the region.

The Islamic Revolution has proposed the idea that the only way to establish security in the region is through non-intervention of trans-regional powers, he remarked.

According to Sayyari, the trans-regional powers have militarized the region and orchestrated many plots against regional countries.

He also said the Islamic Republic of Iran is the biggest victim of terrorism, with more than 17,000 martyrs who lost their lives in terrorist attacks.

Therefore, he continued, the Islamic Republic and its



armed forces are the flag-bearers of the fight against terrorism.

He pointed to the U.S. assassination of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, saying the terrorist attack was a measure that once again proved that the self-described human rights proponents are in fact terrorists.

On January 3, U.S. President Donald Trump ordered strikes

that martyred General Soleimani, chief of the IRGC Quds Force, and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq’s Popular Mobilization Units (PMU).

In the early hours of January 8, the IRGC attacked the U.S. airbase of Ain al-Assad in Anbar province in western Iraq as part of its promised “tough revenge” for the U.S. terror attack.

Brian Hook, the U.S. special representative for Iran, told the Arabic-language daily Asharq al-Awsat on January 23 that Esmail Ghaani, who is successor of Lieutenant General Soleimani, could also be assassinated.

Chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) responded to the remarks, warning the U.S. and Israel that none of their military commanders will be safe should they take action against Iranian generals.

“The Americans and the Zionists beware that if they threaten our commanders with assassination and if they implement their threat, life of none of their commanders will be safe,” Major General Hossein Salami said last week, according to Mehr.

## Iran to take next nuclear step if Borrell visit proves unfruitful: top MP



**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Chairman of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee warned on Monday that Iran will take the next nuclear step if the visit by new High Representative of the European Union Josep Borrell to Tehran fails to satisfy the Islamic Republic.

“If the European envoy wants to just kill time and take concessions from us, certainly, we will not surrender to Europe’s illegitimate demands,” Mojtaba Zonnour said in an interview with the YJC, according to Fars.

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

In response to this move, on May 8, 2019, Iran announced that its “strategic patience” is over and started to gradually reduce its commitments to the JCPOA at bi-monthly intervals. At the time Iran announced if the European parties to the deal take concrete steps to shield Iran’s economy from the U.S. sanctions it will reverse its decision.

However, seeing no action by the Europeans, on January 5 Iran took the last and final step by removing all limits on its nuclear activities.

Iran’s moves are based on paragraph 36 of the JCPOA which “allows one side, under certain circumstances, to stop complying with the deal if the other side is out of compliance.”

Despite taking the last step, Iran has reminded the Europeans to fulfill their commitments in order to keep the deal alive.

“We cannot remain committed to the nuclear deal commitments alone and if the visit by the EU foreign policy chief fails to produce results, we will certainly take the 6th step to reduce our nuclear deal commitments,” Zonnour said.

Zonnour did not clarify what the 6th step would be.

On January 5, Iran announced that it is taking the last and final step to stop its commitments to the JCPOA.

Under the JCPOA signed in July 2015 between Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, Germany and the European Union, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

Zonnour also voiced pessimism over the three European countries’ resolve to pay the price of saving the JCPOA.

The U.S. Treasury Department announced on Thursday that Washington has imposed sanctions on the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) and its chief, Ali Akbar Salehi.

Iran says it will advance its nuclear program with more determination, describing as “worthless” and “ineffective” the recent U.S. sanctions.

“The Americans attempt to create a psychological atmosphere, but in reality, they will not achieve any success,” Behrooz Kamalvandi said on Sunday.

## E3 seems to be blind follower of U.S. unilateralism: legislator



**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — An Iranian lawmaker has censured blind conformance of Britain, France and Germany (the three European signatories to 2015 nuclear deal) with the U.S. unilateralism, saying the E3’s move to trigger the dispute resolution mechanism under the deal is aimed at blackmailing Tehran.

In an interview with Tasnim published on Monday, Masoud Goudarzi said that the Europeans intend to misuse the current situation by activating the dispute mechanism to prevent Iran to continue its peaceful nuclear program in accordance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

“This is a model of blackmailing,”

Goudarzi, who is a member of Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, added, “Europe was expected to make decision independently within the framework of the JCPOA without reliance on the U.S., but it seems that they are following the U.S. unilateral policies. They lack independence of the will.”

On Monday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi told a regular news briefing that the European signatories to the JCPOA intended to activate the trigger mechanism but decided against it for now after hearing Iran’s reasoning.

On Monday, the newly-appointed EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, made his first visit to Iran for talks with Foreign Minister Zarif, President Rou-

hani and Parliament Speaker Larijani. The talks were primarily expected to focus on the fate of the JCPOA.

Asked to comment about Borrell’s visit to Iran and Europe’s move to trigger the dispute resolution mechanism, Mousavi said, “Europe has not activated the trigger mechanism yet. They wanted to, but didn’t after they heard Iran’s reasoning and arguments. (Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad) Zarif wrote a 14-page letter to Mr. Borrell in which all of these reasons were explained.”

Talking to reporters before Zarif-Borrell meeting, Mousavi said Zarif’s talks with the chief European diplomat will be “frank”.

“The visit of the European Union foreign policy chief is important, and we hope that they have listened to our reasons and will cooperate with us,” he added.

The visit by Borrell is taking place as Iran has taken a series of steps to reduce its commitments under the deal in response to the U.S. withdrawal from the agreement and re-imposition of sanctions, and the Europeans’ failure to keep their end of the bargain in protecting Iran’s economic benefits against the U.S. sanctions.

In a recent interview with German weekly magazine Der Spiegel, Zarif censured the European countries for having failed to meet their commitments under the JCPOA, saying, “It’s a disaster for Europe to be so subservient to the U.S. Anybody who accepts unilateralism is helping it.”

## Today Iran is at height of its military power: General Ashtiani

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The deputy chief of staff of the Iranian Armed Forces highlighted on Monday the country’s might in any field, saying Iran’s current situation in terms of military power is better than any other time.



Addressing a large number of military personnel at the Army Ground Force at a garrison in eastern Tehran, Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani said, “Today, the current might of the Islamic establishment is more than ever.”

He added that the country’s power is now sustainable.

In relevant remarks, the Army Ground Force commander, citing military experts, said on Saturday that the Iranian army was the fifth most powerful ground force in the world.

“Iran’s Ground Force is the 5th most powerful ground force in the world,” Brigadier General Kiomars Heidari said as he visited a military training center in Tehran.

Iran has conducted major military drills in recent years to enhance the defense capabilities of its armed forces, testing modern military tactics and state-of-the-art equipment.

In November 2019, the ground force staged large-scale military drills, codenamed “Zolfaghar-e-Velayat”, in northwest Iran to boost the combat readiness of its units. It covered a vast strategic area in the region.

Various divisions of the ground force participated in the drill, which was focused on practicing the transfer of rapid reaction units via ground and air from across the country to operation zones. The enlisted units also displayed their efficacy to enhance their readiness in responding to operational requirements and threats through day and night.

## Elections manifest excellence of national security: Shamkhani

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), has said elections are a manifestation of expansion and excellence of Iran’s national security.

“Protecting and safeguarding the elections are a national duty,” Shamkhani wrote on his Twitter account, Mehr reported on Monday.

“The elections are a manifestation of Republicanism and Islamism of the establishment. The Leader of the Revolution has said repeatedly that both of these emphasize people and people’s vote,” he added.

The parliamentary elections, the 11th of its kind since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, will be held on February 21.

The Iranian parliament has 290 members who are elected by the people for four-year terms.

Article 99 of the constitution states that the Guardian Council “is responsible for supervising the elections of the Experts Assembly, the President of the Republic, the Islamic Consultative Assembly, and referrals to the public vote and referendum.”

President Hassan Rouhani has said a competitive situation can pave the ground for a high turnout in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

## Indonesians enjoy full security in Iran: Indonesian envoy

**TEHRAN (MNA)** — Indonesian Ambassador to Iran Octavino Alimudin said on Monday that Iran is highly secure and they do not have any political or security problems in the country.

He made the remark on Monday in a meeting with the governor of Gilan province in Rasht.

“Improving the level of relations between the two countries can lead to the expansion of scientific and cultural fields,” said Alimudin, referring to the close relationship between Iran and Indonesia.



“The presence of the Indonesian team at the Namjoo Weightlifting Championship shows that we are completely safe in Iran and have no political or security problems,” he added.

“Our country will be able to transfer Indonesian goods to Commonwealth Independent States (CIS), as well as to send Indonesian tourists through Bandar Anzali in Gilan Province,” he noted.

Referring to the 2018 Asian Games which was held in Indonesia, Alimudin said, “We are ready to use the techniques of Iranian players, especially in the field of self-defense.”

Expressing hope that Gilan will soon be linked to one of Indonesia’s cultural and commercial provinces, he added, “We should ramp up efforts to expand ties between Iranian and Indonesian business delegations especially in the fields of fisheries, agriculture, and tourism to overcome sanctions.”



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	438881.5
IFX	5437.00

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,550 rials
GBP	55,295 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$56.73/b
WTI	\$51.93/b
OPEC Basket	\$1,580.45/oz
Gold	\$1,591.40/oz
Silver	\$17.85/oz
Platinum	\$958.80/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

‘Transportation fleet in urgent need of modernization’

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian transport and urban development minister said on Monday that the modernization of the country’s transportation fleet should continue in the form of a smart movement and bureaucratic processes should be minimized in this regard.

Speaking at the ministry’s fifth transport and logistics council meeting, Mohammad Eslami said: “the transport ministry has fulfilled all its commitments regarding the completion of a comprehensive transport system.”



Chaired by the Minister of Transport and Urban Development, the meeting was held with the aim of discussing major issues in the ministry, including the condition of transport and fuel management headquarters, the progress of the country’s comprehensive transport system, maritime logistics and smart ports, as well as weather forecasts for future disaster management.

In the meeting, Eslami noted that as having smart systems and smart management are necessities in today’s society, specific development indicators must be extracted in this regard.

“The Transport, Housing, and Urban Development Research Center should also consider development drivers while moving away from traditional approaches in its futures research on transportation subjects,” he stressed.

Elsewhere in the gathering, Eslami approved the country’s maritime logistics and ports report.

Back in September 2019, the Iranian deputy transport minister said the National Development Fund (NDF) of Iran has allocated \$1.6 billion for renovating the country’s transportation fleet.

“Upon President Rouhani’s directive, National Development Fund will soon provide nearly \$1.6 billion to renovate the transportation fleet,” Shahram Adamnejad said in a gathering of the country’s professional transport organizations.

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

Urgent steps needed to revive South Africa’s economy: Minerals Council

Urgent steps are needed to revive the South African economy, Minerals Council South Africa Chairperson Mxolisi Mgojo said on Monday.

Speaking on the first day of the four-day Investing in African Mining Indaba, he said the Minerals Council was ready and willing to work with the government.

“We believe that the time has come to be more assertive in conveying our position,” said Mgojo, who is also CEO of diversified mining company Exxaro Resources.

Needing urgent addressing, he said, were security of electricity supply and electricity running costs, corruption at State power utility Eskom and State-owned transport company Transnet, controlling public spending and controlling crime.

“We cannot stress the urgency enough,” he emphasized at the early morning media conference in which Mining Weekly participated. Minerals Council South Africa CEO Roger Baxter said that mining was inextricably linked to the economy and did well when the economy did well.

Baxter decried what he described as an “unprecedented deterioration” in security and a rise in crime, with gold plants attacked in Gauteng and North West and cable theft resulting in inadequate rail capacity.

“We are not a military organization,” said Baxter in reference to large groups of AK47-carrying criminal groups attacking mining operations.

He said South Africa was experiencing its longest economic downturn since 1945 and having to cope with massive public debt. “Effectively, South Africa is going backwards,” he said, while conversely a rising economic tide would lift all boats.

(Source: miningweekly.com)

Steel ingots, products export up 46% in 9 months on year

**1 →** Some 15.398 million tons of steel ingots were reportedly produced during the nine-month period of the present year.

Also, production of steel products in the country has increased six percent to stand at 10.141 million tons in the first nine months of this year.

According to the Iranian deputy industry, mining, and trade minister, the country’s steel products output is going to reach 28 million tons by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2020).

Jafar Sarqini has also announced that the Industry Ministry is planning to increase the exports of steel products to 12 million tons by the end of the year.

The value of the exports of such commodities is expected to reach \$9 billion by yearend, the official has said.

The country has also defined 16 development projects in the steel sector which are aimed to boost Iran’s output of steel products by 17.3 million tons in a course of five years.

These projects are for constructing production units each with the capacity



of 600,000 tons, while some other projects have been also defined to set up some units with under 500,000-ton capacity that to-

gether with the 600,000-ton capacity units will add 19.1 million tons to the country’s annual steel products output.

FTA with EAEU, a turning point for Iran’s trade

**1 →** According to the head of Iran-Armenia Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Iran’s agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union has had a significant impact on the country’s trade relations with Armenia.

Hervik Yarijanian said last month that the two sides are applying tariff discounts offered based on the agreement and there has been no problem in this regard.

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

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

The agreement’s fruitful effects are also considerable in Iran’s trade with its other neighbor, Russia, and as the head of Iran-Russia Joint Chamber of Commerce, Hadi Tizhoush Taban, is anticipating the value of trade between the two neighbors can hit \$2 billion by the end of current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2020) which will be 17.5 percent

higher than the figure of the previous year.

While the FTA has facilitated Iran’s trade with EAEU member states, it should be considered that it is a limited agreement valid for three years, so traders should take the most advantage of the current condition.

Although, the interim agreement is planned to come to a fully-functional agreement between the EAEU and Iran, as the minister for trade of the Eurasian Economic Commission has said that the temporary agreement between Iran and EAEU can be turned into a permanent one after three years.

Making the remarks during a seminar on Iran’s trade and cooperation with Eurasia held in Tehran on December 1, 2019, Veronika Nikishina also expressed the willingness of the union’s member states’ businesspeople for trade with Iran and said, “They were interested in trade with Iran even when there was not such a trade agreement on reduction of tariffs, in a way that the exports of Iranian products to these countries rose 27 percent in 2018.”

The interim agreement has created a good opportunity for Iran to expand its presence in the regional markets and if



the country reaches a permanent agreement with the union, it can grab a foothold in the Eurasia region.

A permanent agreement can open a new chapter not only for Iran’s trade status but for its transit role in the region; therefore, while creating necessary infrastructure, the country should recognize the requirements and demands of the Eurasian target markets to meet them.

High surge in stock markets

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE) witnessed a jump of its main index, TEDPIX, on Monday as the index rose 10,664 points to 438,881, IRNA reported.

Over 7.307 billion securities valued at 42.563 trillion rials (about \$1.01 billion) were traded at TSE.

The first market’s index rose 8,330 points and the second market’s index climbed 19,094 points on Monday.

TEDPIX rose 15,928 points, or four percent, to 427,139 during the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

Also, the value of trades climbed 16 percent to 16.418 trillion rials (about \$390.9 million) at TSE in the past week.

As previously reported, TSE witnessed the highest ever weekly rise of its main index, TEDPIX, in the Iranian



calendar week ended on January 17, which was the last week of Iran’s tenth calendar month of Dey.

On Monday, also Iran’s over-the-counter (OTC) market known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB) witnessed a surge of its main index, IFX, as the index jumped 121 points to 5,537.

As reported, some 2.074 billion securities worth 18.712 trillion rials (about \$445.5 million) were traded at this market.

9 airport projects to go operational during “Ten-Day Dawn”

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Nine major airport infrastructure projects will be inaugurated across Iran during the Ten-Day Dawn which marks the 41st anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, Mehr news agency reported, quoting an official with Iran Airport Company (IAC).

According to Mohammad Zahmatkeshan, the IAC’s Director General for Civil and Airports Development, over 2.37 trillion rials (about \$56.5 million) has been funded for the mentioned projects.

With these projects going operational, some 11,900 square meters of terminal spaces and 123,750 square meters of airport operating space will be added to the country’s airports, according to Zahmatkeshan.

Isfahan, Sari, Lorestan, Shahroud and Jahrom are among the airports in which some of the mentioned projects are going to be inaugurated.



Back in August 2019, 25 major infrastructure projects were inaugurated at nine different airports across Iran on the occasion of the Government Week (August 24-30).

Ardabil, Isfahan, Tabriz, Mashhad, Mehrabad, Orumieh, Shahroud, Bushehr and Zanjan airports were among the airports in which the mentioned projects went operational.

Also in June 2019, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani inaugurated a new passenger terminal within the Imam Khomeini International Airport in southern Tehran.

Hong Kong’s economy contracts for first time in decade

Hong Kong’s economy contracted for the first time in a decade in 2019 as violent anti-government protests and trade tariffs between Washington and Beijing took more steam out of the economy in the final quarter of last year.

The worst is yet to come, with no end in sight to the protests in the Chinese-ruled city and a new coronavirus outbreak in mainland China.

The “coronavirus outbreak will probably keep the city in recession for a while longer,” said Martin Rasmussen, China economist at Capital Economics.

Hong Kong, which has so far seen 15 confirmed cases of the virus, has taken measures to reduce the flow of visitors from China where the death toll has risen to 361.

The city’s retail and tourism sectors rely heavily on spenders from the Chinese mainland.

The economy shrank by a seasonally adjusted 0.4% in

October-December from the previous quarter, versus a revised 3.0% contraction in July-September.

On an annual basis, the economy shrank 2.9%, compared with a revised 2.8% fall in the third quarter.

For the whole of 2019, real gross domestic product contracted by 1.2%, the first annual decline since 2009.

The “coronavirus is grabbing the headlines, but the protests haven’t gone away,” said Iris Pang, Greater China economist at ING, who expects the economy to contract by 4.5% this year and return to mild growth in 2021 “if the virus is contained.”

“Retail, catering, tourism, mass transportation are all suffering.”

ANZ analysts predicted a 1.4 percentage point negative impact on Hong Kong’s first quarter gross domestic product from the effects of the virus, making it the worst-hit region

in Asia outside mainland China.

**■ Hong Kong’s first-quarter growth**

Capital Economics expects the virus to shave off 2 percentage points off Hong Kong’s first-quarter growth.

It was always going to be tough for Hong Kong to navigate 2019, with the U.S.-China trade war bound to hurt one of the busiest trading hubs in the world.

But protests have scared tourists and shoppers and often paralyzed transport, shaking its remaining key pillars of growth.

In the past week, restaurants and shopping malls have been almost deserted, with people avoiding unnecessary exposure to large crowds and staff at many large companies working from home to protect themselves from catching the virus.

(Source: freemalaysiatoday.com)

Germany ran world’s largest current account surplus in 2019: Ifo

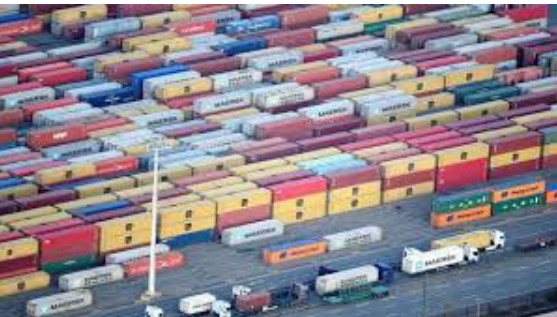
Germany’s current account surplus remained the world’s largest last year despite trade tensions, the Ifo economic institute said on Monday, in an estimate likely to renew criticism of Chancellor Angela Merkel’s fiscal policies.

The Ifo estimate, seen by Reuters ahead of publication, put Germany’s current account surplus — which measures the flow of goods, services and investments — at some \$293 billion in 2019.

It is the fourth successive year that Germany’s current account surplus has been the world’s largest, with Japan’s the next largest at \$194 billion, according to Ifo calculations.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Commission have for years urged Germany, Europe’s largest economy, to do more to lift domestic demand and imports as a way to reduce global economic imbalances and stimulate growth elsewhere.

Since his election, U.S. President Donald Trump has



also criticized Germany’s export strength.

Germany’s current account surplus can mainly be attributed to the fact that far more German products and services are sold overseas than imported to Europe’s largest economy.

Merkel said last year: “We are proud of our cars and so we should be.” But she added that many were built in the United States and exported to China.

Ifo economist Christian Grimme said the German surplus increased last year by almost 16 billion euros to some 7.6% of gross domestic product (GDP).

“Stronger exports to the U.S. due to the stronger depreciation of the euro and increased exports to the UK, where demand recovered somewhat, saw total German exports rise sharply again in the second half of the year,” he said.

“By contrast, imports expanded very weakly in the summer half of 2019 - the ongoing industrial recession in Germany severely curbed imports of intermediate goods.”

The European Commission, the EU’s executive, considers a current account surplus of 6% as sustainable over the long-term when measured by the size of a country’s economy.

(Source: reuters.com)



# OPEC should take action to calm the stressed market: Zanganeh

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said on Monday that OPEC nations should try to balance the oil market which has tumbled as the worries over the impacts of the coronavirus continue to grow.

Speaking on the sidelines of a meeting with the representatives of the Iranian Oil, Gas and Petrochemical Products Exporters' Union (OPEX), Zanganeh mentioned the possibility of an extraordinary OPEC ministerial meeting due to the coronavirus worries, saying: "Following the spread of the virus in China and the subsequent halt in some factories, and the country's transportation industry, oil consumption in China has been negatively affected and caused demand for crude oil to fall significantly."

"In talks that I had with the OPEC president, I emphasized that if there was to be a gathering before the scheduled



meeting in March, all members should be prepared to reduce their production," he said.

"But if we have to negotiate the matter in an extraordinary meeting and then decide, there would be no need to hold an early meeting and the 178th gathering should be held on the previously scheduled date that is March 4-5," he added.

Mohamed Arkab, Minister of Energy of Algeria has been chosen as OPEC periodic president for one year, with effect from 1 January 2020, while Diamantino Pedro Azevedo, Angola's Minister of Mineral Resources and Petroleum has been set as alternate president, for the same period.

In the 177th OPEC meeting which was held in early December 2019 in Vienna, OPEC+ nations decided that their production cuts would be increased by 503,000 barrels per day (bpd) as of January 1, 2020, from 1.2 million bpd to 1.703 million bpd.

## NISOC indigenizes manufacturing of over 1,000 oil equipment items

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** — Managing Director of National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) says his company has successfully indigenized the knowledge for the production of over 1,000 oil equipment items over the past 12 months, Shana reported.

Speaking in a ceremony on the occasion of the Ten-Day Dawn (anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution) on Saturday, Ahmad Mohammadi said: "since the past [Iranian calendar month of] Bahman (ended on February 20, 2019) up to date, we have managed to indigenize over 1000 necessary items in the oil industry in collaboration with the private sector."

According to the official, this success is an indication of the country's determination for neutralizing the negative impacts of the U.S. sanctions on the country's oil industry as much as possible.

NISOC has been seriously pursuing a program for supporting domestic producers in the oil industry.

Back in December 2019, the company released a list of 7500 equipment items needed in the country's oil industry, to be manufactured by domestic producers.

The list was unveiled at the opening ceremony of the 11th Khuzestan Specialized Exhibition of Domestic Manufactur-

ing of Petroleum and the 17th Drilling Industry Equipment Exhibition in the southwestern province.

Earlier that month, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Iranian Association of Manufacturers of Oil Industry Equipment said nearly 85 percent of the country's oil industry equipment is produced based on indigenized knowledge and technology.

According to Siyous Talari, Iran even has the capacity to export over \$5 billion worth of oil industry equipment and knowledge every year and the government should invest in such great potential.

In August 2019, the National Iranian Oil Company announced that many of the company's contracts with domestic manufacturers of oil industry equipment had reached over 70 percent of physical progress.

NIOC has been signing deals with capable domestic companies for manufacturing all kinds of oil industry equipment, including down-hole tools and equipment, pumps, types of drill bits, all kinds of control and safety valves, and accessory equipment, as well as various pipe types, explosion-proof electro motors, turbines, compressors, alloy steels, drilling measuring tools, and etc.



Following the re-imposition of U.S. sanctions and the problems caused by high volatility and rising exchange rates in the country's currency market, Iran's oil ministry was faced with some problems regarding the supply of necessary equipment in the oil industry, so it applied new strategies to focus more on domestic production.

## Oil extends decline as virus hits China demand

Oil prices extended their losses on Monday, dragged down by worries about lower demand in China, the world's largest oil importer, following a coronavirus outbreak there.

Brent and U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude fell for a fourth week in a row last week after airlines canceled flights to China. Supply chains across the world's second-largest economy have also been disrupted, prompting its biggest refiner Sinopec to cut output.

Brent crude was at \$56.14 a barrel by 0241 GMT, down 48 cents, or 0.9%, after losing nearly 12% in January, the steepest monthly decline since November 2018.

The U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude fell 24 cents to \$51.32 a barrel, after earlier hitting a session low of \$50.42. The front-month WTI price fell 15.6% in January, the sharpest monthly drop since May.

China's measures to support its economy might help

put a floor under oil prices in the short term, even though the outlook for oil demand remains bearish, said Michael McCarthy, chief market strategist at CMC Markets in Sydney.

The "shuttering of airports suggests that there would be at least some demand delay, if not deferred or destroyed," he said.

China's factory activity stalled in January as export orders fell, and analysts expect a big plunge in February's data as the virus outbreak hits demand in the country.

China's Central Bank planned to inject more liquidity to shore up its economy on Monday, and pledged over the weekend to use various monetary policy tools to help allay the impact of the virus outbreak.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies could bring forward a March meeting

to February to discuss the impact on oil demand from the virus flare-up.

Already, OPEC and non-OPEC's Joint Technical Committee (JTC) have scheduled to meet in early February to assess the impact of the virus, OPEC+ sources told Reuters.

OPEC's oil output plunged in January to the lowest since 2009 after several members led by Saudi Arabia over-delivered on a new agreement to cut production and as Libya's supply slumped.

"They've done a good job of managing the price, but it is unexpected that demand would be impacted by something like a pandemic," Tony Nunan, a senior risk manager at Mitsubishi Corp in Tokyo.

The "expectation is that in the next meeting that they will deepen the (production) cuts" to support prices, he said.

(Source: reuters.com)

## OPEC curbs, supply risks to buoy oil prices in 2020

Oil prices will remain supported near current levels this year as persistent geo-political risks and OPEC-led output curbs help offset growing supply from other producers, a Reuters poll showed.

The survey of 50 economists and analysts, mainly conducted before the coronavirus outbreak, forecast benchmark Brent crude to average \$63.48 per barrel in 2020. That compares with

an average of \$63.76 so far this year and last month's forecast of \$63.07.

The 2020 outlook for West Texas Intermediate rose to \$58.22 a barrel from December's \$57.70 forecast.

Oil prices surged earlier this month after a U.S. drone strike killed a top Iranian commander, but the rally was short-lived.

"Heightened tensions in the Middle East will keep upward pressure on

prices, as the risk that U.S. and Iran could accidentally enter into a direct military conflict persists," Economist Intelligence Unit analyst Cailin Birch said.

Prices are now near their lowest since October however, on fears that the coronavirus epidemic might hit global growth and oil demand, but further downside should be capped by

lower output from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

"OPEC will come close to balancing the market in 2020 and their deeper than expected cuts will provide a layer of support as oil markets remain fixated on the recent output increase with non-OPEC producers," OANDA analyst Edward Moya said.

(Source: hellenicshippingnews.com)

### Second Announcement



N.I.S.O.C

### NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 48-32-9825000

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity	Unit
01	CASING 7", 29 PPF WITH SPECIAL DRIFT 6.125". GRADE L-80-13CR, WITH N.VAM THREAD, PSL3, R-3(WITH MAX LEN:40.5 FT), AS PER API 5 CT & NACE MR0175, LATEST EDITION WITH PROTECTOR, MARKING: STANCELLING & ANTI GALLING IN ACCORDANCE WITH API SCT.BODY OF PIPES SHOULD BE COATING AND VARNISH & BOX PIPES SHOULD BE COVERAGE WITH ANCHOR PROCESS	200	LE
02	TUBING 4-1/2" 13.5 PPF, GRADE L-80-13CR, WITH N.VAMTHREAD, PSL 3, R-3(WITH MAX LEN:40.5 FT), AND WITH STANDARD DRIFT AS PER API SCT & NACE MR0175, LATEST EDITION WITH PROTECTOR, MARKING: STANCELLING & ANTI GALLING IN ACCORDANCE WITH API SCT.BODY OF PIPES SHOULD BE COATING AND VARNISH & BOX OF PIPES SHOULD BE COVERAGE WITH ANCHOR PROCESS	3840	LE

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tender are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form No.2, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 62,343 EURO or 8,919,685,960 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

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

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI IRAN, PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

### FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex

Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran

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First Announcement



**National Iranian Oil Company**  
IRANIAN OFFSHORE OIL COMPANY  
**INVITATION TO PUBLIC TENDER (Pre-Qualification)**  
**TENDER NO. 096/98/OT**  
**Provision of Subsea Engineering & Diving Services, Personnel, Equipment and Tools in the Persian Gulf**  
**1398,6921**

Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) intends to open Pre-Qualification above tender for **Three (3) Years** with the following conditions:

#### Scope of work:

Provision of Subsea Engineering & Diving Services, Personnel, Equipment and Tools in the Persian Gulf

#### Location:

IOOC Oil Fields in Persian Gulf

#### Performance Period:

3 Years

#### Other item shall be considered:

- 1: Ability of submission Bid Bond as in the amount of Iranian **Rial 32,198,071,000** and for Iranian Bidders and **EURO 219,992,000** for Foreign Bidders.
- 2: Ability of submission **10%** of total Contract Price value as Performance Guarantee and deduction **10%** from each invoice as Good Performance Guarantee.
- 3: Bidder should be in the Core Business of diving, subsea construction and possess the required main assets such as IMR DSV to fulfill the Tender's subject independently without MOU or Backup letters from a third party for their main assets.
- 4: Proposals shall be submitted with no condition, incomplete, ambiguous or adverse of Package specification in due date.
- 5: Article of Association for Company Perusal.

Bidders who have ability and are willing to participate in the Pre-qualification are requested to submit a written request to Contract Department, within Ten Days from Second Announcement by representative.

Closing Date for submission of the Pre-Qualification Documents shall be up to 14 days after the deadline of receiving Pre-Qualification Documents. Place and time of submission and opening of proposals will be stated in Tender Documents.

Address for willing to participate and submission Pre-Qualification: **5<sup>th</sup> Floor, #12, Khakzad st., Vali-e-Asr Ave., after Balal Mosque, before Modarres Crossroad, Tehran, Iran.**

Telephone: +98 21 23 94 25 11 Fax: +98 21 22 66 42 34

Note: Additional information is available at IOOC website address: [www.iooc.co.ir](http://www.iooc.co.ir)

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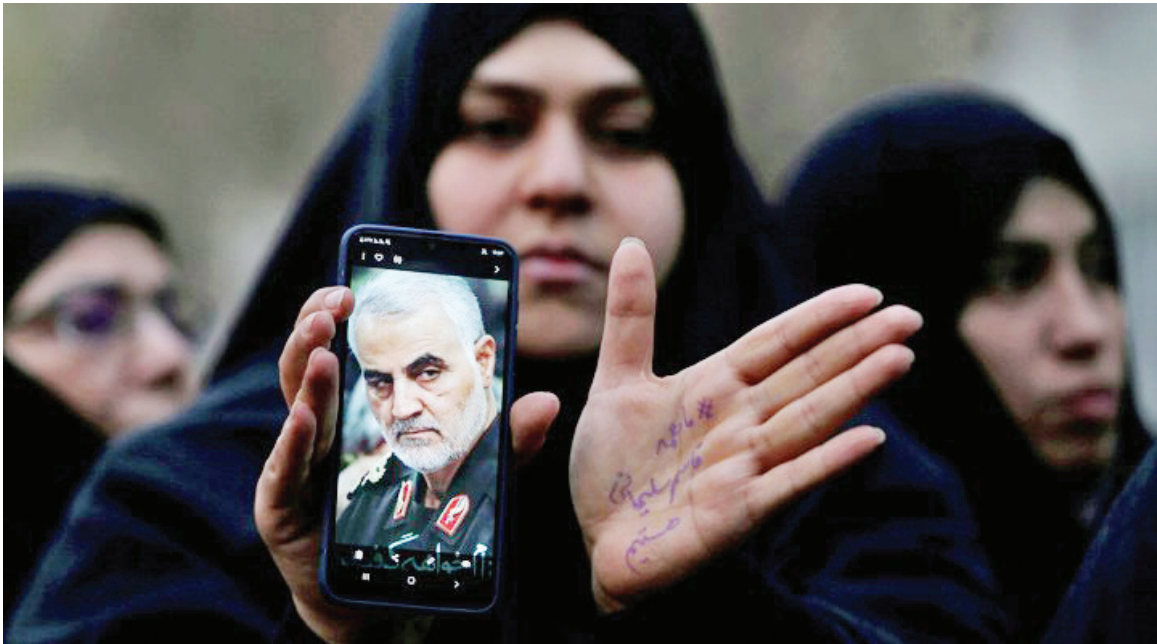
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## Afghanistan and the U.S.-Iran confrontation

**By Kori Schake**

So far, the current American administration has not been trigger-happy. The United States didn't respond



American allies around the Persian Gulf are fuming that the U.S. didn't respond more forcefully to the attacks on Saudi Arabia and to neutral shipping, thereby raising

In short, the administration's policies have created some potentially useful turmoil with respect to Iran. But they do not appear to be advancing the United States toward its objectives—and the U.S. is incurring significant reputational, military, and security costs in the process.

*(Source: The Atlantic)*

That seems to also be the case in Iraq

No regional state should ever adhere to this irredeemably flawed and deeply harmful practice in US foreign policy. It would bring no peace or stability by even the loosest definition of the word. Countries in the region should remain assertive and defy American meddling in their affairs, and instead invest more in regional cooperation and dialogue.

(Source: Times of Central Asia)



## Picks of top Iranian handicrafts on show at Fajr festival

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** – A select of top Iranian handicrafts are being showcased at the 4th Fajr national handicrafts festival, which officially opened to the public on Sunday at the National Museum of Iran in downtown Tehran.

The opening ceremony of the festival was attended by the deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian, the museum's director Jebrael Nokandeh, several cultural officials, a host of craftspeople and master artisans, as well as tens of enthusiasts, ISNA reported on Sunday.



“A total of 250 works, selected from 400 submitted ones, are on show at this year's Fajr festival. The handicrafts include traditional personal ornamentations, illuminated manuscripts, marquetry, pottery, ceramics, needlework, kilim carpets, wood-turning, and painted bones,” Mahmoudian said.

The Fajr handicrafts festival routinely honors its winners of various fields with exquisite handicrafts, cash prizes or honorable mentions.

Handicrafts exports of the country reached \$289 million in the past Iranian calendar year (ended March 20, 2019) showing three percent growth year on year, according to data announced by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts. The exports included traditional ceramics, pottery vessels, hand-woven textiles, glasswork, woodwork, metalwork, embroideries, personal ornamentations, as well as precious and semi-precious gemstones.

## Southwest Airlines goes the extra mile for young boy

You might think that airline employees are monochromatic subservients just following the company handbook.

You'd be wrong. Virtually all airline workers go out of their way for their customers, as evidenced by this cute story from Southwest Airlines.

When a little boy left behind his beloved teddy bear on a Southwest Airlines flight over Thanksgiving, airline employees scoured the plane, the departure gate and, later, the lost and found in New Orleans.

They came up empty and apologized profusely to young Grayson and his mother, Chrissy Mulligan. But after Chrissy wrote about the missing bear on Facebook and got 21,000 shares after asking for help in locating the plush toy, something strange happened.

Her pleas made it back to Southwest Airlines' corporate headquarters, which reached out to Chrissy and asked if Grayson would like a new teddy bear named Jack. When Mom said yes, an elaborate plan of action was put into place.

Did Southwest mail the new toy to Grayson? Oh, no, no, no.

Before boarding his flight to Grayson's home, Jack the Bear made a tour of Southwest's aviation facilities and documented his adventures, and then chronicled his flight in a customized story-book for Grayson.

“Hi, Grayson!” Jack says in the picture book. “It's been a busy holiday season here at Southwest Airlines, and I'm almost done with my work here. Guess what?! I get to come live with you! I'm so excited about meeting my new best friend. I wanted to share some pictures of what I do at Southwest, and my trip to meet you!” (Source: MSN)



## ROUND THE GLOBE

### Medieval city of Rhodes

From 1309 to 1523 Rhodes, the largest island of the Dodecanese, was occupied by the Knights of St John of Jerusalem who had lost their last stronghold in Palestine, in Acre, in 1291.

They transformed the island capital into a fortified city able to withstand sieges as terrible as those led by the Sultan of Egypt in 1444 and Mehmet II in 1480. Rhodes finally fell in 1522 after a six-month siege carried out by Suleyman II.

The medieval city is located within a 4 km-long wall. It is divided with the high town to the north and the lower town south-southwest.

Originally separated from the lower town by a fortified wall, the high town was entirely built by the Knights. The Order was organized into seven “tongues”, each having its own seat, or “inn”.



The inns of the tongues of Italy, France, Spain and Provence lined the principal east-west axis, the famous Street of the Knights, on both sides, one of the finest testimonies to Gothic urbanism. To the north, close to the site of the Knights' first hospice, stands the Inn of Auvergne, whose facade bears the arms of Guy de Blanchefort, Grand Master from 1512 to 1513.

The original hospice was replaced in the 15th century by the Great Hospital, built between 1440 and 1489, on the south side of the Street of the Knights.

The ramparts of the medieval city, partially erected on the foundations of the Byzantine enclosure, were constantly maintained and remodelled between the 14th and 16th centuries under the Grand Masters.

(Source: UNESCO)

# Iran leads the world in handicraft hubs

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Iran ranks first globally in the number cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council (WCC), deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian said on Monday.

China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next, she added, IRIB reported.

In late January, cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and village of Qassemabad were designated by the WCC- Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran's number of world crafts cities and villages from ten to 14.

Shiraz was named a “world city of [diverse] handicrafts”. Celebrated as the heartland of Persian culture for over 2000 years, the southern city was one of the most important cities in the medieval Islamic world and was the Iranian capital during the Zand dynasty (1751–1794).

Malayer was made a global hub for woodcarving and carved-wood furniture. Located in west-central Hamedan province, the ancient city is home to over 4,000 furniture workshops in which more than 8,000 wood masters and some 25,000 crafters are engaged. It was named a national city of woodcarving earlier in the year 1395 (ended March 2017).

Zanjan gained the title of a “world city of filigree”. The art consists of curling, twisting, or plaiting fine, pliable metal threads and soldering them at their points of contact with each other and, if there is one, with the metal groundwork. Filigree, delicate, lacelike ornamental openwork composed of intertwined wire threads of gold or silver, widely used since antiquity for jewelry.

Qassemabad village, which is nationally known for its traditional costumes, was also promoted to a world hub of handicrafts. Chador Shab, a kind of homemade outer-garment for women, was, however, the main subject for the WCC assessment for the village.

Handicraft exports from Iran reached \$146 million since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year, Mahmoudian said last December. “Iraq and



Zanjan gained the title of a “world city of filigree”.

Persian Gulf littoral countries are among the main target markets for Iranian handicrafts,” she added. Handicraft exports from the country reached \$146

million since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2019), tourism ministry announced in December.

## ISCARSAH expertise to help restore Ilkhanid mausoleum in Iran

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** – The International Scientific Committee on the Analysis and Restoration of Structures of Architectural Heritage (ISCARSAH) will launch a project to restore the Ala ud-Daula Simnani mausoleum, which dates back to the Ilkhanid era (1256–1353).

Located in Semnan, north-central Iran, the mausoleum has been selected as one of flagship projects in the country, CHTN reported on Saturday.

Born in Semnan, Ala ud-Daula Simnani, full name Shaikh Abu-Al-Makarim Rukn-ud-Din Ala ud-Daula Ahmed Bin Muhammad Bin Ahmed Bayabanki Simnani (1261-1336) was a Persian writer and a teacher of Sufism.

In 2018, Iran tourism body announced that a select of 13 historical monuments across the country would be investigated by delegations of ISCARSAH experts, according



to CHTN.

ISCARSAH was founded by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), which is a non-governmental organization dedicated to the conservation of the world's monuments and sites.

Members of ISCARSAH are composed of internationally renowned engineers, scientists, architects, specialists, and educators with representation from Europe, Asia, Australia, North and South America.

Late in December, an official with Iran tourism ministry announced some 2,500 historical buildings and structures are in need of restoration across Iran.

Iran expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots, including 22 ones that have been placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

## Scientists have found a 330-million-year-old shark's head fossilized in a Kentucky cave

Kentucky's Mammoth Cave National Park is a long way from the ocean, but newly discovered fossils suggest the area was once teeming with sharks.

Scientists have identified the remains of 15 to 20 different species of sharks deep in the cave, including part of the head of a great white-sized monster that's partially protruding from a wall, paleontologist John-Paul Hodnett told CNN.

The sharks lived about 330 million years ago in what is known as the Late Mississippian geologic time period, when much of North America was covered by oceans. When they died, their remains were encased in sediment that eventually became the limestone where the cave formed.

“There's hardly ever any any record at all of sharks teeth coming from these rocks. So that was exciting, Hodnett said. “So this is a brand new record of sharks from a particular layer of time.”

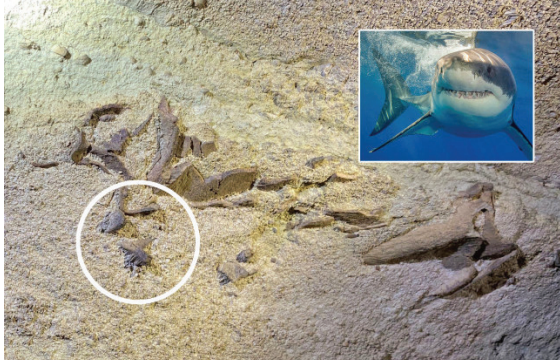
Mammoth Cave scientists Rick Olson and Rick Toomey were mapping a remote part of the cave when they started seeing shark fossils, according to Vincent Santucci, senior paleontologist with the National Park Service.

They sent photos of their find to Hodnett, because he's an expert on Paleozoic sharks. He works at Maryland's Dinosaur Park, a fossil site near Washington, DC, and does support research for the National Park Service.

There were quite a few shark teeth in the photos, Hodnett said, but he also saw cartilage that he thought might be a shark's skeleton. That's pretty rare because cartilage is softer than bone, so it's not often preserved.

When the scientist visited the cave in November, he realized he was looking at something much bigger.

“It turns out is actually not a skeleton, it is actually



just parts of the head. And the head itself is pretty big,” Hodnett said.

You can see the part of the shark's jaw where it would have attached to the skull and the end that would have been its chin, Hodnett said. Some of the middle of the jaw isn't visible, but he estimated that it would have been about 2 1/2 feet long.

By studying its teeth, Hodnett was able to determine that the fossil was part of a species called *Saivodus striatus* that was about the size of a modern great white shark -- about 16 to 20 feet long.

He said they don't know how much of the shark is still entombed in the rock.

“It's super exciting, but not exactly the most easy thing to study,” Hodnett said. “Caves are a very special environment, so it's not ideal to be removing big chunks

of rock out of it and damage the internal environment by doing this.”

Getting to this part of the cave is a challenge of its own. Hodnett said they had to crawl on hands and knees for about a quarter mile to reach their prize.

“It's gonna be very hard to bring the appropriate equipment in there to properly excavate the specimen out of the cave,” he said.

Hodnett said he is still studying the fossil specimens he has collected from the cave, but he's already learned a lot. He estimates that he's found the fossils of about 150 different sharks from 15 to 20 different species.

Most of the fossil record from the Late Mississippian period was found in Europe, so this could answer a lot of questions about what was going on then in North America.

“We literally just scratched the surface, and the sharks are just coming out from that scratch,” Hodnett said. “So, hopefully, with more field work, we'll get another good batch of specimens to kind of help get at least some more rich diversity.”

The researchers plan to present their preliminary findings in October at a meeting of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology.

Santucci said the fossils were found in a remote part of the park that people can't visit without special permission, but they don't want to reveal the exact location.

Eventually, he said, they'll display the fossils in the park and online. But, he says, the project is just getting started.

“It's amazing how quickly we've already found some interesting stuff,” Santucci said.

(Source: CNN)

## Coronavirus death toll spikes to over 360 in China, exceeding SARS fatalities

China's death toll from a new coronavirus jumped above 360 on Monday, surpassing the number of fatalities from its SARS crisis two decades ago, with dozens of people dying in the epicentre's quarantined ground zero.

The 57 confirmed new deaths was the single-biggest increase since the new coronavirus was detected late last year in the central city of Wuhan, where it is believed to have jumped from animals at a market into humans.

The virus has since spread to more than 24 countries, despite many governments imposing unprecedented travel bans on people coming from China.

The World Health Organization has de-

clared the crisis a global health emergency, and the first foreign death from the virus was reported in the Philippines on Sunday.

In China, all but one of the 57 new deaths were reported Monday in Wuhan and the rest of Hubei province, most of which has been under lockdown for almost two weeks to stop people from leaving and transmitting the virus.

The national death toll reached 361, exceeding the 349 mainland fatalities from the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak of 2002-03.

SARS, caused by a pathogen similar to the new coronavirus and also originating in

China, killed 774 people - with most of the other deaths in Hong Kong.

The virus is also having an increasingly heavy economic impact, shutting down businesses across China, curbing international travel and impacting production lines of major international brands.

Stock markets in Shanghai and Shenzhen plunged by nearly 9 percent on Monday morning as investors returned from a Lunar New Year holiday that had been extended to stop people travelling around China.

The scale of the plunge was remarkable even by the standards of China's notoriously volatile share markets, indicating deep concern

over the economic impact of the epidemic.

Markets in the world's second-biggest economy had closed on January 24 for the week-long Lunar New Year holiday, but in that time the viral epidemic that started in Wuhan has spread globally. They were scheduled to reopen on Friday but the government extended the holiday to help deal with the virus.

Stock markets worldwide have sunk as major corporate names froze or scaled back their Chinese operations, threatening global supply chains that depend heavily on the country.

(Source: France 24)



# World Cancer Day: national plans to improve patients' lives

**1 →** National cancer control program was developed using the experiences of other countries, in particular the World Health Organization's recommendations and the experts' opinions, he said, explaining, the program sets out the Ministry of Health's roadmap up to the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025-March 2026).

The purpose of the program is to reduce cancer prevalence and mortality while improving the quality of patients' lives, which can serve as a model for other countries, especially in the Eastern Mediterranean region, he added.

To determine the infrastructure and manpower needed over the next 6 years, the cancer preparation program was designed which determines the type of centers, equipment and their distribution throughout the country using geographic information system (GIS), he noted.

He went on to say that the result of this program is two important documents, namely, "development of national cancer care network" and "development of cancer human resources", which resulted in the establishment of the early diagnostic centers.

It also improved Iran's position in terms of coverage, quality, and timeliness by modifying cancer registration processes, conducting numerous workshops and national reports, he highlighted.

Along the way, the national cancer screening system played an important role, which improves the quality of registration by online receiving of pathology centers' information, he also added.

In addition to producing educational packages and videos to promote public knowledge, the Ministry implemented face-to-face training programs on early cancer prevention and diagnosis for PHC patients, he further said.

Also, every year, on the occasion of World Cancer Day, national and regional plans and campaigns are launched to raise awareness and gain support for cancer control, with the participation of medical universities and NGOs and charities, he explained.

He also noted that one of the most important measures has been to increase the quality of patients' lives, balance treatment costs, diagnose and treat cancer according to world-class standards.

To this end, the Ministry, in collaboration with scientific associations and based on the results of questionnaires sent to a panel of experts, developed 12 cancer medicine guidelines, he added.

Malekzadeh further emphasized that insurers



**Cancer is the second leading cause of death globally, accounting for an estimated 9.6 million deaths, or one in six deaths, in 2018. Lung, prostate, colorectal, stomach and liver cancer are the most common types of cancer in men, while breast, colorectal, lung, cervical and thyroid cancer are the most common among women.**

report that the use of these guides has reduced medicine consumption by about 10 percent.

Guidelines have been developed for common cancers such as breast, stomach, colon, lung and prostate, he said, adding, to improve the quality of services, the "Chemotherapy Service Management Guidelines" were also announced and implemented.

In research and production of effective cancer science, Iran has been the most successful country in the Middle East, North Africa and among the Islamic countries over the past decade, he stated.

The Comprehensive Cancer Registry Program, which covers about 100 percent of the population, is

now being published in collaboration with the medical universities with its detailed annual reports, he announced.

Supportive and palliative care is also an important program which holds training courses for general practitioners and nurses has been started, Malekzadeh concluded.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death globally, accounting for an estimated 9.6 million deaths, or one in six deaths, in 2018. Lung, prostate, colorectal, stomach and liver cancer are the most common types of cancer in men, while breast, colorectal, lung, cervical and thyroid cancer are the most common among women.

## Iran receives medicine under Swiss financial mechanism

**SOCIETY d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Some 180,000 packages of medicine needed for cancer patients and transplant operations entered Iran on Sunday following the implementation of Swiss payment mechanism.

Swiss Ambassador to Tehran Markus Leitner said at a news conference on Sunday at the embassy in Tehran that the new humanitarian channel would be operational within the next two to three weeks.

He added that pharmaceuticals, food and medical equipment were always exempted from U.S. sanctions. However, the sanctions were re-imposed on Iran in 2018, so, financial institutions - not just in Switzerland - were reluctant to trade with Iran, IRNA news agency reported.

Last week, three payments were made through the Geneva-based bcp bank through trial operations, he stated, explaining, the deals included the supply of different medicines from a Swiss pharmaceutical company, valued at around €2.3 million.

Today, 180,000 packages of medicines needed



for organ transplant patients were imported to the country, he added.

Although food and medicine were claimed to be

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

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

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

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

Companies exclusively producing medicine for Mucopolysaccharidosis (MPS) patients, such as BiMarin Pharmaceutical Inc. of the U.S. and a South Korean company, have refused to export these drugs to Iran, threatening the lives of 335 patients in Iran.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

### Mental health screening scheme to be launched at schools

A scheme to determine the prevalence and incidence of psychiatric disorders in students will be implemented at schools across the country by the next school year (starting on September 23), director for education department at the Ministry of Education has said.

Since last year, all students on seventh to ninth grades have undergone the mental health screening, so, we decided to conduct the tests on students on all grades, ISNA quoted Masoud Shokouhi as saying on Saturday.

"The scheme will be launched by the beginning of the next school year," he added.

For the current school year, screening of mental health was carried out in February and the results were presented to consultants for in-school or individual counseling, he said.

There are several types of screening that baseline testing is done by teachers, who record their observations on the system, he explained, adding, in the next step, specialist interventions will take place whether by the school counselor or counseling services outside the schools.

### غربالگری «سلامت روان دانش آموزان» کلیه مقاطع تحصیلی از مهرماه

مدیرکل امور تربیتی و مشاوره وزارت آموزش و پرورش، اعلام کرد که از مهرماه آینده غربالگری پایه سلامت روان برای همه دانش آموزان در کلیه مقاطع تحصیلی انجام می‌شود.

مسعود شکوهی در گفت‌وگو با ایسنا، افزود: تا سال گذشته همه دانش آموزان پایه هفتم، هشتم و بخشی از دانش آموزان پایه نهم مورد سنجش قرار گرفتند. وی اظهار کرد: غربالگری پایه سلامت روان برای همه دانش آموزان از سال تحصیلی جدید آغاز می‌شود.

مدیرکل امور تربیتی و مشاوره وزارت آموزش و پرورش ادامه داد: برای سال تحصیلی جاری، غربالگری اولیه سلامت روان بهمن ماه سال ۹۷ انجام شد و نتایج آن جهت استفاده مشاورین در برنامه ریزی‌های درون مدرسه‌ای و فردی در اختیارشان قرار گرفت.

شکوهی افزود: چند نوع غربالگری داریم که غربالگری پایه توسط معلمان انجام می‌شود و معلمان مشاهدات خود را در سامانه همگان ثبت می‌کنند. در مراحل بعدی در صورت نیاز مداخلات تخصصی از سطح مشاور مدرسه تا هسته‌های مشاوره در سطوح استانی و واحدهای مددکاری در بیرون آموزش و پرورش صورت می‌گیرد.

## PREFIX/SUFFIX

### “heli- or helio-”

■ **Meaning:** sun or sunlight

■ **For example:** We have mentioned the newly hatched larv of the barnacle in connection with **heliotropism**.

## PHRASAL VERB

### Pick on somebody/something

■ **Meaning:** to behave in an unfair way to someone, for example by blaming them or criticizing them unfairly

■ **For example:** Why don't you pick on someone else for a change?

## IDIOM

### Dance to someone's tune

■ **Explanation:** If you dance to someone's tune, you do whatever that person tells you to do

■ **For example:** He is the company's major shareholder so the management has to dance to his tune.

## Iceland: a genocide in silence; hidden anti-47 army

**1 →** According to the statistics, about 200,000 of the aforementioned people were killed in this project. These people were killed in six gas slaughterhouses where victims died in the gas chambers by inhaling carbon monoxide gas for several hours upon arrival. This sentence was written on one of the most famous posters related to this project:

"Thousands of marks. This is the expense a person with a genetic disease imposes on society during his or her lifetime; dear citizen, this is your money as well."

But now, the nature of this 100% eradication of Down syndrome people in Iceland is like the T4 project and seeks eugenics at its heart, which is a very superficial conception of human heredity.

Considering this 100% abortion of Down syndrome fetuses in Iceland and the genocide of 47-chromosome people with Down syndrome, which seems to be conducted in a very clever and nonviolent way but yet shows intellectual barbarism, it can be deduced that the decision-makers in Iceland consider Down syndrome people as an unsolvable problem, an extra burden on society, and, generally, a cadre of no use; therefore, their absence is preferable to their being and along with the causes corresponding to this, they struggle to fully eradicate Down syndrome fetuses.

However, the million-dollar questions are: based on what biological and scientific evidence and under what heading is 100% of Down syndrome embryonic life aborted in Iceland? Why is not even one of these embryos allowed to experience life? Under what kind of policy? In Icelandic hospitals and under what kind of genetic counseling, 100% of pregnant mothers who have Down syndrome fetuses undergo abortions? In this genetic consultations, based on what was mentioned in a well-known news agency providing the related statistics by Icelandic genetic counselors, the number of genetic counselors was considered more than enough. Practically, the mother with Down syndrome fetus is put in a siege circle of genetic counseling which eventually leads her to choose the easiest way and abort her Down syndrome fetus.

Thus, in Iceland, instead of facing the problem, the face of the problem is eliminated and as a genetic achievement, the country is free of Down syndrome people.

Militarily speaking, Iceland does not have a permanent army; it is completely correct in terms of military information; instead, Iceland has a permanent army in eugenics and elimination of people with different chromosomes. This strong army puts an end to many lives that could not have the opportunity to live.

Except for Iceland, the other 47 countries that signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the UN General Assembly should be asked why they have been silent.

Except for Iceland, do the other 47 countries which voted in favor of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948, remember the contents of this resolution? A statement that repeatedly refers to the term human. In that statement, the term human was used and the number of chromosomes a human should have was not mentioned. This is because people with Down syndrome who have an extra chromosome are also humans and they should have all the rights listed in the original text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the right to life, dignity, liberty, equality, all personal rights, freedom of thought, freedom of speech, social rights, economic rights, cultural rights, educational rights, health rights, and so on.

100% of Down syndrome fetuses are aborted in Iceland. These people with Down syndrome are the future of Iceland who never get the chance to live and they are killed by losing their least right, which is the right to live.

47 countries alongside Iceland, which together form the signatories of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all have governments, presidents, and prime ministers composed of non-Down syndrome people. You know the good thing is that they are all human. The good thing is that we are all humans and no human can take the opportunity of life from any human.

I want to talk to the presidents of the signatories of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. If a person with Down syndrome signs a treaty, she/he will certainly stick to the commitment she/he made and this is one of their silent features.

Article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

"All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination."

## WORDS IN THE NEWS

### South Korea's diplomatic intervention

(January 08, 2003)

South Korea says North Korea should make the next move following an agreement by the United States to talk to the Communist state about its nuclear program. The American decision is being seen as a victory for South Korean diplomats who have been pushing for a compromise deal. This report from Charles Scanlon.

South Korea has **scored the first success** in its effort to find a **diplomatic solution**. It's persuaded the United States to drop its refusal to talk openly to North Korea, although the administration insists it won't re-negotiate agreements already made by the North to abandon its **nuclear program**. The South says it's now up to the North Koreans to **make the next move** because they caused the problem in the first place. The US said its regional allies have all agreed on the need for a peaceful solution. The calculation and the hope is that North Korea's nuclear program is really a **diplomatic gambit**, designed to extract economic and political **concessions**. South Korea believes that American **security guarantees** and a promise of economic aid would persuade the North **to back down**. But no-one can be sure of the North's true intentions. If it has decided to build a **stockpile of nuclear weapons** as the best guarantee of its security, then a more dangerous **confrontation** will be unavoidable.

■ **Words scored the first success:** achieved for the first time something it has been trying to do  
**diplomatic solution:** a way of removing a difficulty through discussions between diplomats rather than for example, by force  
**nuclear program:** plans for producing nuclear energy  
**to make the next move:** a move is an action you take in order to achieve something  
**diplomatic gambit:** something you do - such as implying you're doing something even if you're not - in order to gain advantage  
**concessions:** a concession is something you let someone do or have after a disagreement  
**security guarantees:** promises about protection  
**to back down:** if you back down, you decide not to do something you had threatened to do  
**stockpile of nuclear weapons:** a large store of something to be used in the future  
**confrontation:** a serious dispute between two groups with different opinions

(Source: BBC)



## UN-brokered Libya military talks begin in Geneva

The UN Special Representative for Libya began talks in Geneva on Monday with the internationally recognized Government of National Accord and members of the Libyan National Army, led by commander Khalifa Haftar, the United Nations' Geneva office said.

The so-called "Libyan Joint Military Commission" includes five senior officers from each side and is being moderated by UN Special Representative Ghassan Salamé.

(Source: Reuters)

## Poland plans to take part in European tank project: president

Poland wants to take part in a project to create a European tank, President Andrzej Duda told a news conference with France's President Emmanuel Macron during his Monday visit to Warsaw.

"We are going to talk about our participation in the project to build a European tank. We would like to take part in this project," Duda said.

Poland and France discussed cooperation in the fields of defense and energy during the visit.

(Source: RT)

## Uzbekistan resists as U.S. seeks to rally Central Asians against China

Uzbekistan on Monday gently resisted Washington's efforts to rally China's central Asian neighbors against Beijing over its treatment of Muslim minorities, a contentious issue for the region which has close economic ties to China.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is in the region to discuss the issue with Beijing's neighbors who have so far refrained from any criticism of Chinese policies.

"We want to see Central Asia as a region of stable development, prosperity and cooperation, and we would really not like to feel on ourselves unfavorable political consequences in relation to some competition in our region between large powers," Uzbek Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov said.

Pompeo's comments put the region's governments in an awkward position as they rely on China for much of their foreign trade and investment.

Speaking on a visit to the Uzbek capital, Tashkent, Pompeo said he would raise the Uighur issue with counterparts from all five ex-Soviet Central Asian nations - Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

"As I did in Kazakhstan yesterday, in my private meetings today I plan to discuss... the Chinese Communist Party's repression of Uighur Muslims, Kazakhs, and members of other minority groups in Xinjiang," Pompeo told a briefing.

On Sunday, Pompeo said Washington urged "all countries to join us in pressing for an immediate end to this repression" and provide safe refuge and asylum to those seeking to flee China.

The United Nations and human rights groups estimate between 1 million and 2 million people, mostly ethnic Uighur Muslims, have been detained in harsh conditions as part of what Beijing calls an anti-terrorism campaign.

China has repeatedly denied any mistreatment of Uighurs and says the camps provide vocational training. It describes the detainees as students.

(Source: AP)

## EU says financial relations with UK will be linked to trade deal

Access to the European Union market for Britain-based financial firms will be linked to the overall results of trade talks with London, EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier said on Monday.

Britain and the EU will lose privileged access to their respective financial markets when the Brexit transitional period expires at the end of December.

But in some sectors financial firms could remain able to operate across borders if rules are deemed to be equivalent.

But even when equivalence does exist, the EU will remain free to grant access or not to specific sectors.

"The EU will consider whether our economic partnership will be accompanied by equivalences," Barnier told a news conference in Brussels.

Equivalences "are relevant for the overall future relationship and need to be considered in that light," Barnier said, noting that those decisions were not part of his draft negotiating mandate for a trade deal with London, which he unveiled on Monday.

"It's all outlined in the political declaration already and everything is negotiated when everything is negotiated. So fish and financial services and energy, you name it, all has to be done before we sign," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told reporters.

Barnier said the assessment of sectors that might be considered equivalent will begin "immediately" and underlined equivalence decisions will be made "unilaterally".

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson called for purely "technical" assessments on equivalence regimes and urged a mechanism to discuss equivalence decisions with the EU.

"Given the depth of the relationship in this area, there should also be enhanced provision for regulatory and supervisory co-operation arrangements with the EU, and for the structured withdrawal of equivalence findings," Johnson said in a written statement on Monday.

Barnier also urged cooperation with Britain on financial services but stressed that would need to preserve the EU's "autonomy".

The EU permits the use of equivalence regimes for some 40 financial sectors, but only foreign investment banks, clearing houses and stock exchanges can have full access to the EU market, while other firms face different levels of limitations, EU officials said.

Retail banking is not covered by equivalence.

Faced with a huge, rival financial center on its doorstep, the EU began toughening up equivalence conditions ahead of Brexit specifically for foreign clearing houses and foreign investment banks that want to offer investment services to EU customers.

(Source: AFP)

# No place for Israel to be established on Palestinian lands: Hezbollah

A high-ranking official of Lebanon's resistance movement, Hezbollah, says there is no place for Israel within the recognized borders of Palestinian lands, dismissing US President Donald Trump's so-called deal of the century on the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict as "void and unsuccessful."

"The (so-called) deal of the century is a void and unsuccessful plan. Trump crafted it only for the sake of electoral gain in America and to help (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu secure more votes inside occupied Palestinian territories," Hezbollah's Deputy Secretary General Sheikh Naim Qassem said on Sunday.

He added that the Palestinian nation together with resistance movements in the region will not let the deal proceed, and will not allow the Tel Aviv regime to occupy Palestinian lands and legitimize its occupation concurrently.

"There is no place for Israel within recognized borders. The only place for Palestine to be established is the entire Palestinian soil from the river to the sea, with (the entire Jerusalem) al-Quds as its capital and not simply its eastern sector. We believe such an ideal will materialize,



but it needs some sacrifices and time," Sheikh Qassem pointed out.

"While some people have described the (so-called) deal of the century as a grave calamity, it is also such an unjust and dangerous plan that neither Palestinians nor Arab and world leaders have agreed to it, and have termed it as not viable. This proves that it is a dangerous deal and not suitable

for the resolution of the Palestinian issue," the top Hezbollah official added.

On Tuesday, Trump unveiled his so-called deal of the century, negotiated with Israel but without the Palestinians.

Palestinian leaders, who severed all ties with Washington in late 2017 after Trump controversially recognized Jerusalem al-Quds as the capital of the Israeli regime, immedi-

ately rejected the plan, with President Abbas saying it "belongs to the dustbin of history."

Thousands of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and besieged Gaza Strip poured onto the street in immediate condemnation of the plan.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has said "a thousand no's" to the plan.

"After the nonsense that we heard today, we say a thousand no's to the deal of the century," Abbas said at a press conference in the West Bank city of Ramallah, where the Palestinian Authority is headquartered.

He said the Palestinians remain committed to ending the Israeli occupation and establishing a state with its capital in east Jerusalem.

"We will not kneel and we will not surrender," Abbas said, adding that the Palestinians would resist the plan through "peaceful, popular means".

Hezbollah has called the plan a "deal of shame," said it was a very dangerous step which would have negative consequences on the region's future.

It also said the proposal would not have happened without the "complicity and betrayal" of several Arab states.

(Source: Press TV)

## Medical flights start from Yemen's Sana'a in diplomatic breakthrough

Flights carrying patients needing urgent medical attention began from the Yemeni capital Sana'a on Monday, the World Health Organization (WHO) said, a long-sought confidence-building measure in diplomatic efforts to end the five-year war.

Fifteen-year-old Abdallah Abed was one of 16 patients to be flown out on the first flight to Amman.

"I have kidney failure and I need a transplant," he said. "God willing we travel today to Jordan for treatment."

The flights took two years of negotiations to set up, the UN humanitarian coordinator in Yemen Lise Grande said from Sanaa airport, which has been closed to civilian flights since 2015.

"There are thousands of patients who need this care. This is the first flight, there will be more," she said, adding that the real solution is to end the war.

Supervised by the United Nations and World Health Organization, flights from Sanaa will go to Amman and Cairo. WHO said the majority of the patients are women



and children suffering cancer and brain tumors, or needing organ transplants and reconstructive surgeries.

"It is hoped these flights will enable the opening of regular medical 'bridge' flights for sick patients," said aid organization the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). "There is no justification for punishing very sick civilians by blocking

them from accessing medical treatment."

Re-opening the airport has been a major aim of UN-led peace talks and a key demand of the Houthi administration.

The medical flights were the result of months of negotiations and the project had received an "extraordinary" amount of diplomatic support, UN Yemen Envoy Martin Griffiths said in an address to the Security Council last month.

The United Nations has been trying to re-launch political negotiations to end the war. Separately, Riyadh has been holding informal talks with the Houthis since late September about de-escalation.

Griffiths held last-minute talks with Houthi authorities on Sunday regarding the medical evacuation plans, a diplomatic source said, adding that about 60 patients and relatives are expected to leave on flights this week.

Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, head of the Houthis' Supreme Revolutionary Committee, said 32,000 people are registered on medical evacuation lists.

(Source: AFP)

## China accuses U.S. of whipping up panic over virus as stocks tumble



China accused the United States on Monday of whipping up panic over a fast-spreading coronavirus with travel restrictions and evacuations as Chinese stocks plunged on the first day back from the extended Lunar New Year holiday.

The death toll in China from the newly identified virus, which emerged in Wuhan, capital of the central province of Hubei, rose to 361 as of Sunday, up 57 from the previous day, the National Health Commission said.

The World Health Organization (WHO) last week declared the flu-like virus a global emergency and it has since spread to 23 other countries and regions, with the first death outside of China reported on Sunday, that of a 44-year-old Chinese man who died in the Philippines after travelling from Wuhan.

Wuhan and some other cities remain in virtual lockdown with travel severely restricted, and China is facing increasing international isolation.

China accused the United States of spreading fear by pulling its nationals out and restricting travel instead of offering significant aid. Relations between the two sides had just begun to recover after a long and bruising trade war.

Washington has "unceasingly manufactured and spread panic", Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters, noting that the WHO had advised against trade and travel curbs.

"It is precisely developed countries like the United States with strong epidemic prevention capabilities and facilities that have taken the lead in imposing excessive restrictions contrary to WHO

recommendations," she added, saying countries should make reasonable, calm and science-based judgements.

■ **'No reason' for travel curbs**  
WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, speaking in Geneva, again said travel bans were unnecessary.

"There is no reason for measures that unnecessarily interfere with international travel and trade," he told the WHO's Executive Board. "We call on all countries to implement decisions that are evidence-based and consistent."

Chinese delegate Li Song said the international community needed to treat the new virus outbreak objectively, fairly and not "deliberately create panic" among the general public.

Li said China had shared information about the virus with self-ruled Taiwan, which China claims as sovereign territory, but he criticised the Taiwanese authorities for what he described as their "lies and excuses" for not attending WHO meetings.

President Xi Jinping said controlling the virus was China's most important task.

"Xi stated that the prevention and control of the pneumonia epidemic is directly related to the people's life safety and fitness, directly related to the overall economic and social stability, and directly related to China's opening," Xinhua state news agency said.

Chinese stocks closed down almost 8%, the yuan currency had its worst day since August, and Shanghai-traded commodities from oil to copper hit their lower limits. A gauge of global stocks was near seven-week lows.

(Source: Reuters)

## Contradictory reports as Turkey claims bombing Syrian troops



→ 1 Turkish air force planes, the ministry said, did not violate Syria's border and no attacks on Syrian troops were recorded. Syria's state news agency SANA, meanwhile, did not report any Turkish airstrike.

The Russian ministry's dismissal of Erdogan's claims prompted questions about what actually transpired on Monday.

The so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which is based in London, did not report a Turkish airstrike either and instead said at least six Syrian government troops had been killed by shelling.

On Saturday, Turkish-backed militants attacked positions held by the Syrian government forces northeast of Aleppo, said the observatory which is generally sympathetic to militants in Syria.

Recent major advances by the Syrian army in Idlib and assertions by state officials to continue the offensive until all dangerous terrorists are ousted from the province have seriously worried Turkey.

Damascus launched the offensive in Idlib, the last major terrorist-held territory in Syria, last August after militants stepped up attacking Syrian and Russian positions.

On Friday, Erdogan thundered from a podium in Ankara that his country would launch a military operation in Idlib if the ongoing counter-terrorism operation by Syrian government forces continued.

Idlib is dominated by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), a group that was once Syria's version of al-Qaeda.

In September 2018, Turkey and Russia signed a ceasefire deal to create a demilitarized zone in Idlib. Turkey also set up a dozen observation points in the region to uphold the ceasefire.

Under the Sochi agreement, all militants in the demilitarized zone that surrounds Idlib, and also parts of the provinces of Aleppo and west-central province of Hama, were supposed to pull out heavy arms by October 2018 and Takfiri groups to withdraw.

However, Turkey has failed to fulfill any of its obligations as Takfiri terrorists have continued to rule supreme in the regions outside the control of the Syrian government.

The Syrian offensive came after those positioned in the de-escalation zone failed to honor the ceasefire and continued to target civilian neighborhoods.

Turkey, which supports so-called Free Syrian Army (FSA) terrorists, launched two cross-border operations in northern Syria in August 2016 and January 2018, with the declared aim of eradicating Kurdish militants near its borders.

Again in October 2019, Turkish troops and its proxies launched a cross-border invasion of northeastern Syria in a declared attempt to push Kurdish militants from border areas.

Syria has strongly condemned the invasions and pledged to drive out Turkish troops from its territories by any means possible.

On Monday, a spokesman for Erdogan's ruling AK Party said Turkey would view Syrian government forces around its observation posts in Idlib as "targets".

"We expect Russia not to shield the regime or protect them because after the clear attack on our armed forces, regime forces around our posts are targets," Omer Celik told CNN Turk.

(Source: Press TV)

## OIC rejects Trump's Middle East plan

Saudi government media on Sunday urged the Palestinians not to miss "this opportunity" and to approach the deal with a positive mindset.

State-run newspaper Okaz went on as far as to say that "the Palestinian cause is no longer the Arabs' main cause".

Saudi Arabia meanwhile barred an Iranian delegation from the OIC meeting in Jeddah, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said.

Iran, he said, has filed a complaint with the OIC and chastised Saudi Arabia for misusing its position as the host for the organization's headquarters.

Iranian officials have condemned Trump's plan as a non-starter after it was officially announced last week. The Palestinian leadership has rejected the plan, saying it heavily favors Israel and will deny them a viable independent state.

(Source: agencies)



# Tehran derby among the world's greatest: Calderon

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Former **d e s k** Persepolis coach Gabriel Calderon believes that Tehran derby is among the greatest derbies in the world.

The Argentine left Persepolis in January after two parties failed to reach an agreement on financial issues.

On Thursday, Persepolis will meet archrivals Esteghlal in Tehran's Azadi Stadium in the match which was declared as the most important derby in Asia.

"I've experienced Tehran derby and I have to say it is one of the best derbies in the world. I am very happy we defeated Esteghlal in September and hope they win the match once again," Calderon said in an interview with IRNA.

"I left Persepolis but I follow the results of the team and I wish them all the best," he added.

"Tehran derby is a special match and looks much different from the other matches. I hope it will be an interesting match. In the all countries, derby is a special match with some simple rules to play," Calderon stated.

"As a coach who has played and coached for decades in several countries, I have to say Tehran derby is one of the greatest derbies in the world. However, I don't like compare it with the other matches because I think that each match has its own condition," the Argentine said.

"The Iranian people love football and I am so glad to experience the derby. Esteghlal are a strong team and it helps we see an interesting match. I like Persepolis beat Esteghlal and extend their winning streak. We built a strong team at the start of the season and Persepolis take advantage of so



many good players at the moment," Calderon went on to say.

"I was in Tehran for six months and what

matters more is the good moments that we shared with the kind people. I like to return to Iran one day to continue my job in Persepolis

or Iran national football team. The Iranian players have already proved that how talented they are," Calderon concluded.

## Iran ease past Malaysia at SAT Futsal Championship Thailand



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran B **d e s k** futsal team defeated Malaysia 5-0 at the SAT International Futsal Championship Hat Yai Thailand 2020 on Monday.

The Iranian team, who had defeated Tajikistan 3-2 in the opening match, will play Thailand B on Wednesday.

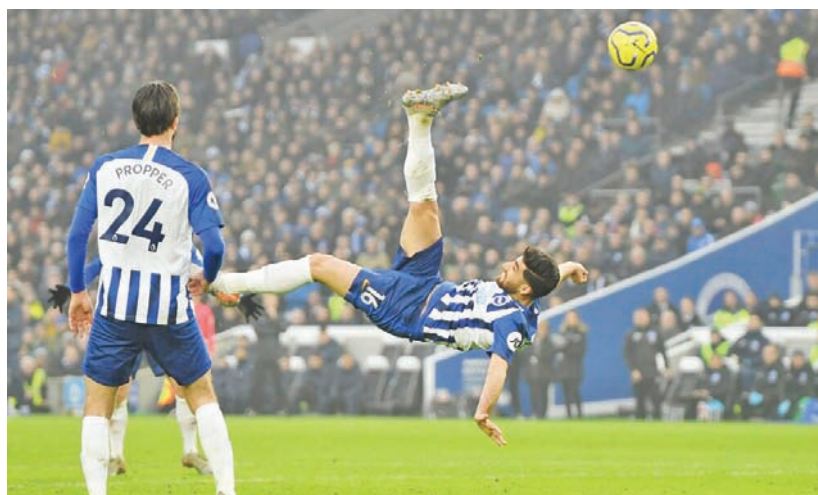
SAT International Futsal Championship Thailand 2020 is being held in Hat Yai,

Songkhla from Feb. 2 to 8.

The tournament was supposed to be played with six nations into two groups of three. Then, due to the Coronavirus concern both Turkmenistan and Kuwait withdrew from the event, being replaced by Myanmar and Thailand "B".

Finally, also Myanmar withdrew and the challenge was reorganized in a unique group of five teams.

## Jahanbakhsh wins Match of the Day goal of the month



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Bright- **d e s k** on & Hove Albion midfielder Alireza Jahanbakhsh has won Match of The Day's goal of the month.

The Iranian winger scored an overhead kick in the 1-1 draw at home to Chelsea on New Year's Day, which won the award.

His spectacular goal was one of

eight goals shortlisted.

Jahanbakhsh becomes the first Albion player to win such an award.

He is the third Iranian player to score in Premier League history (also Ashkan Dejagah and Andranik Teymourian) and the first since Dejagah in April 2014.

The winner was decided by a fans' poll.

## Eamon Zayed sends message to Persepolis fans

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Eamon Zayed, former strik- **d e s k** er of Persepolis, has sent a message to Persepolis fans ahead of Tehran derby to remind them of the hat-trick that he recorded in 2012.

On 2 February 2012, The Irish-Libyan footballer came on as a substitute in his first appearance, in the Tehran derby with Persepolis being reduced to 10 men and 2-0 behind, he scored in the 82nd minute to make it 2-1 with a right-footed curling shot. Two minutes later, he headed home an angled cross to level the game. In the 92nd minute of the match, Zayed put Persepolis into a 3-2 lead in dramatic style to be the first non-Iranian player to net a hat-trick in the Tehran derby. He was voted World Player of the Week after the Tehran derby by Goal.com.

"I just want to send a short note to commemorate today. It was eight years ago on this day that we came back famously in that Tehran derby from two goals down with only 10 men



to beat Esteghlal 3-2 and obviously it was nice to score three goals. It's the day that I'll never forget and I feel it was like yesterday. Thank you for never forgetting and continuing to make me feel a part of Persepolis history," Zayed said on an Instagram video post.

"Speaking of the derby that coming up on Thursday, which I'll be definitely watching, they are all the best in the derby, players, staff, and fans. Hopefully, Persepolis can be successful and beat Esteghlal again," he continued.

On 21 March 2012, Zayed scored a second hat-trick against Al-Shabab in AFC Champions League. This was the first hat-trick a Persepolis player had scored in the AFC Champions League.

Persepolis won the game 6-1. Zayed scored another hat-trick against Rah Ahan F.C. on 6 May 2012. Persepolis fans then began referring to Zayed as "Mr. hat-trick".

Eamon Zayed currently plays for Chattanooga Red Wolves in the USL League One.

## AFC Futsal Championship Turkmenistan 2020 postponed



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — The Asian **d e s k** Football confederation (AFC) has announced that the 2020 Asian Futsal Championship that was scheduled for Turkmenistan between February 26 and March 8 has been postponed, due to the coronavirus outbreak in the country.

The following statement released by AFC and was sent in a letter to participating countries in the 2020 AFC Futsal Championship finals:

"Following consultation with all relevant stakeholders, the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has taken the decision to postpone the AFC Futsal Championship which was scheduled for Turkmenistan between February 26 and March 8, 2020.

This move was taken because of concerns about the current Coronavirus situation and in order to ensure the safety and well-being

of all participating teams and stakeholders. The AFC will continue to monitor the impact of the virus and new competition dates will be announced when the situation stabilizes."

The 2020 AFC Futsal Championship will be the 16th edition of the AFC Futsal Championship, the biennial international futsal championship organized by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) for the men's national teams of Asia.

The "novel coronavirus" (nCoV) is a new virus that was first discovered in Wuhan province in China on Dec. 31. It can cause respiratory failure and be spread from person to person. As of Friday, there were more than 9,800 confirmed cases, nearly all in China, with 106 cases spread across 19 other countries, including in Europe and North America.

## Stramaccioni reveals Esteghlal departure's reason

**PLDC** — Andrea Stramaccioni has spoken on his reasons for leaving Iranian football club Esteghlal.

The Italian coach, who previously managed Inter Milan and Udinese, quit as head coach of Esteghlal FC in October over failed payments.

"In terms of football, we had an excellent performance. In the first four weeks, we were in penultimate place in the table with just two points but we won 10 successive matches and we scored the most goals," Stramaccioni said in an interview with mondoudinese.

"Hundreds of Iranians took to the streets of Tehran after we left the team and the person who had not paid us our salary, was forced to leave the team. I am proud of my team and I have to confess it was very hard to leave a team who was top of the league," he said.

"There was some incidents off the field and I don't like to talk about them. It was more political incidents," Stramaccioni concluded.



## Iran, Indonesia gold-winners of Fajr Cup's first day

**MNA** — The fifth edition of the International Fajr Cup started on Sunday in Rasht where Iranian and Indonesian weightlifters managed to collect the gold medals.

Iran's Hafez Ghashghaei and Bulgaria's Angel Rusev were the sole two contenders in the 61kg category. Ghashghaei, the 2019 World C'ships silver medalist, snatched the gold medal of the Fajr Cup with an overall of 280kg. He hoisted 120kg in snatch and 160kg in clean and jerk while Rusev, the 2018 European Youth Champion, lifted 110kg in snatch and 147kg in clean and jerk.

The 2018 World Champion Eko Yuli Irawan of Indonesia did not have a hard time gaining the gold medals of the 67kg category. He finished on 310kg, with 138kg in the snatch and 172kg in clean and jerk - well clear of Indonesia's Deni Deni on 285kg, with Turkey's Bünyamin Sezer third on 266kg.

Indonesian lifters claimed another gold, this time in 73kg by Triyatno. The 2012 Olympics silver-medalist made 136kg in snatch and 170kg in clean and jerk to finish on 306kg while Iraq's Mohammed Qaddoori had a total of 292kg made up of 130kg and 162kg.

34 male lifters from 13 countries of Iran, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Indonesia, Bosnia, Iraq, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Norway, and Turkey are participating in the event which is qualifications series for the 2020 Olympics.

Lifters of 81 and 96 kg and those of 109 and +109 kg will compete on Monday and Tuesday respectively.

## Iran third at Szent Istvan U16 Basketball Cup

**TASNIM** — Iran finished in third place at the Szent Istvan U16 Basketball Cup.

The competition was held in Székesfehérvár, Hungary from January 30 to February 2.

Iran were in Group B along with Hungarian B, NBA Academy and Stellazzurra Rome.

Group A consisted of Hungarian A, China, Bayern Munich and Real Madrid.

Iran prepare for the 2020 edition of FIBA U16 Asian Championship.

A total of 16 teams will compete in Tehran from March 23 to April 2 at Azadi Sports Complex for the Asian title.

The competition is also a qualification for FIBA U17 Basketball World Cup, which is going to be held in Bulgaria. Four first teams of the Asian event will book their ticket to the world event.

## Iranian athletes to participate at Istanbul Cup

**IRNA** — Following the World Indoor Championships' cancellation, Iran will send athletes to Istanbul Athletic Cup.

World Athletics has decided to postpone the World Championships in Nanjing, China, because of the rapid spread of the new coronavirus.

The championships were originally scheduled to take place on March 13-15 but will be postponed for March 2021. Istanbul Athletic Cup will be held from February 16 to 20 in Istanbul, Turkey.

Iran is going to send 11 athletes to the event.

## Four candidates shortlisted for Paykan job

**TASNIM** — Four candidates have been shortlisted to take charge of Paykan football team.

The Tehran-based football team are just three points above the relegation zone in Iran Professional League.

Hossein Faraki stepped down from his role following a 3-1 defeat to Shahin Bushehr on Friday.

Former Zob Ahan coach Alireza Mansourian is among the candidates to replace Faraki.

Ex-Paykan coach Abdollah Veisi is also a potential candidate.

Faraz Kamalvand, who parted company with Pars Jonoubi in December, has been shortlisted for the job.

Former Paykan striker Ali Asghar Modir Roosta also is a candidate to take charge of the team.



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Most of those who lose their wisdom, do so because of being dazzled by greed, and shutting their eyes against fact.

Imam Ali (AS)

## “Qasida of the White Cow”, mediocre movie with big questions

**1 →** The question can trouble any judge or victim’s family, who must decide whether the condemned person lives or dies. How would they live with this burden on their consciences if they condemn an innocent person to death?



A scene from “Qasida of the White Cow” by Behdash Sanaeiha.

However, just having some interesting ideas and a challenging subject doesn’t mean that you can automatically end up with a good film. To transfer a thought-provoking idea into an entertaining yet engaging movie you need more than that.

Frankly, the film is rather boring and doesn’t involve the audience in the characters’ concerns.

In short, “Qasida of the White Cow” is a mediocre film that doesn’t seem to have won any acclaim at the Fajr festival.

## NEWS IN BRIEF



“Khorshid” replaced by “Filicide” at Fajr Film Festival

**A R T** TEHRAN — Director Mohammad-Hadi Karimi’s movie “Filicide” replaced Oscar-nominated director Majid Majidi’s latest movie “Khorshid” in the official competition of the 38th Fajr Film Festival after Majidi failed to prepare the movie for the event, the organizers announced in a press release on Monday.

“Filicide” narrates the story of a family and their ups and downs over a period of 30 years.

The 38th Fajr Film Festival, which opened in Tehran on Saturday, will run until February 11.

## Author Mary Higgins Clark, “Queen of Suspense,” dead at 92

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Mary Higgins Clark, the tireless and long-reigning “Queen of Suspense” whose tales of women beating the odds made her one of the world’s most popular writers, died Friday at age 92.

Her publisher, Simon & Schuster, announced that she died of natural causes in Naples, Florida.

“Nobody ever bonded more completely with her readers than Mary did,” her longtime editor Michael Korda said in statement. “She understood them as if they were members of her own family. She was always absolutely sure of what they wanted to read — and, perhaps more important, what they didn’t want to read — and yet she managed to surprise them with every book.”

Widowed in her late 30s with five children, she became a perennial bestseller over the second half of her life, writing or co-writing “A Stranger Is Watching,” “Daddy’s Little Girl” and more than 50 other favorites. Sales topped 100 million copies and honors came from all over, including a Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters from France or a Grand Master statuette back home from the Mystery Writers of America. Many of her books, like “A Stranger Is Watching” and “Lucky Day,” were adapted for movies and television. She also collaborated on several novels with her daughter, Carol Higgins Clark.

Mary Higgins Clark specialized in women triumphing over danger, such as the besieged young prosecutor in “Just Take My Heart” or the mother of two and art gallery worker whose second husband is a madman in “A Cry in the Night.” Clark’s goal as an author was simple, if rarely easy: Keep the readers reading.

# Polish troupe performs “Silence” on child victims of wars at Fajr

**A R T** TEHRAN — Polish troupe Teatr Biuro Podrozy performed their acclaimed play “Silence”, which highlights children as the most numerous victims of wars in the Middle East, during the 38th Fajr International Theater Festival.

The festival organizers arranged two performances for the street theater, which took place in the parking area of Tehran’s City Theater Complex on Sunday and Monday.

Director Pawel Szkotak used physical theater, unusual sets, puppets, fire and music to stage the play, which had no dialogue.

The play spotlights the children caught up in wars, who are forced to flee from their homelands to find a safe haven in other countries.

“The performance heroes are the children - innocent witnesses of the death and violence - the victims of atrocities and displacement,” the troupe wrote in an introduction to the play.

“For these children and their future peace of mind, let’s try to put ourselves in their position for a while,” the troupe added.

“Teatr Biuro Podrozy asks why these people left their homes and exposed themselves for the dangers and humiliation of displacement,” they wrote.

“Silence” is a sequel to the troupe’s highly-acclaimed 1994 production, “Carmen Funebre”, about the impact of war on civilians in the Balkans.

“It seemed impossible that anything worse can happen again. However, the reality exceeded the imagination. We witness the phenomenon beyond any scale, which



A member of Teatr Biuro Podrozy acts in a scene from “Silence” in the parking area of Tehran’s City Theater Complex on February 2, 2020.

evokes concern and fear in Europe,” the introduction reads.

The Qashqai Hall of the City Theater

Complex is also scheduled to host two performances of Teatr Biuro Podrozy’s 2016 production “Bad City” today. The play has

been inspired by instances of social unrest that have occurred since the beginning of the 20th century.

## “Silence, the Cochlea” director wants to bring the deaf under spotlight

**1 →** “Assembling an all-star cast could help us in this way,” noted Dezfulizadeh whose film is competing in New Look, the festival’s section dedicated to directorial debut feature-films.

Hanieh Tavassoli, Mehran Ahmadi, Mohsen Kiai and Pedram Sharifi are the main members of the cast.

Dezfulizadeh denied the remarks of those accusing him of advertising cochlear implants in the country by his film and said, “Cochlear implant technology entered Iran in 1992. It is part of the story in the film and many hearing impaired people want to undergo the operation.

Tavassoli and some members of the cast were compelled

to learn sign language for their parts in “Silence, the Cochlea”.

Dezfulizadeh announced his plan to arrange a special screening of the movie for the deaf in the future.

Based on an official figure published in 2019, about 250,000 persons are hard of hearing or are functionally deaf in Iran.

## Iranian Theater Market opens in Tehran

**A R T** TEHRAN — The Iranian Theater Market opened on the sidelines of the 38th Fajr International Theater Festival (FITF) at Tehran’s City Theater Complex on Sunday.

The opening ceremony of the market was attended by representatives of a number of international theatrical production companies from Finland, Georgia, France, Belgium, Russia, Italy, Azerbaijan, Denmark and several other countries and some Iranian artists and cultural officials.

Addressing the guests, the director of the festival, Nader Borhani Marand, expressed his appreciation over their presence at the ceremony.

“I am very happy that despite the very difficult days we

are facing in Iran, which can happen in any country, you have chosen cultural dialogue by accepting our invitation,” FITF director Nader Borhani Marand told the guests in a brief speech at the ceremony.

He also outlined an overview of the festival for the guests and noted that the international section of the festival is non-competitive this year.

For his part, the director of Iran’s Dramatic Arts Center, Shahram Karami, said that peace, hope and friendship are Iranian artists’ message for the world.

“We hope you can help convey the message,” he added.

The theater market will be running until February 6.

The 38th Fajr International Theater Festival will continue until February 9.



Representatives of some international theatrical production companies from Iran and other countries attend the opening ceremony of the Iranian Theater Market at Tehran’s City Theater Complex on February 2, 2020.

## ‘1917’ wins best film and best director at BAFTA awards



Joaquin Phoenix poses with his award for Leading Actor for “Joker” at the British Academy of Film and Television Awards (BAFTA) at the Royal Albert Hall in London, Britain, February 2, 2020. (Reuters/Toby Melville)

**LONDON (Reuters)** — First World War drama “1917” was the big winner at the BAFTAs on Sunday, picking up seven awards including best picture and director for Sam Mendes, at a glittering ceremony that made headlines for a glaring lack of diversity among nominees.

The thrilling drama, shot in what appears to be a single take, was also honored in the outstanding British film, sound, production design, cinematography and special visual effects categories.

Britain’s top movie awards have been criticized for having all-white shortlists in its acting categories and an all-male one for director, triggering the use of the hashtag #BaftasSoWhite on social media.

BAFTA boss Amanda Berry had said she was “very disappointed” by the lack of diversity.

Joaquin Phoenix, voted best actor for his critically acclaimed transformation from vulnerable loner into confident villain in his acceptance speech.

The industry was sending “a very clear message to people of color that you’re not

welcome here”, he said, adding it “was on us” to dismantle a system of oppression.

Award presenter Rebel Wilson drew the biggest laughs and cheers of the evening when, after reading out the all-male best director list, said: “I don’t think I could do what they do, honestly I just don’t have the balls”.

Actress Scarlett Johansson, who missed out in the leading and supporting actress categories, told Reuters the all-male directing shortlist showed women were being held back and the industry had to be mindful of the issue.

“It’s pretty disappointing, especially because there were so many great films this year that happened to be directed by women,” she said.

Renee Zellweger beat Johansson to the best actress gong for her portrayal of Judy Garland in “Judy”. The two will go head-to-head again at the Oscars on Feb. 9.

It was a frustrating evening for Netflix’s “The Irishman”, Martin Scorsese’s star-studded gangster drama, which was nominated in 10 categories but left empty handed.

## Blind Bulgarian artist finds a way to keep painting



Artist Stamen Karamfilov works on a painting at his studio in the city of Plovdiv, Bulgaria, January 23, 2020. (Reuters/Stoyan Nenov - RC2GME9924MB/ File Photo)

**PLOVDIV, Bulgaria (Reuters)** — Stamen Karamfilov bends low over a canvas, adding the finishing touches to a woodland landscape - no mean feat considering the Bulgarian artist is almost totally blind.

He initially gave up all hope of painting again when he suddenly lost his sight in 2015, and at one point contemplated suicide.

Then, after the initial crisis passed, he discovered there was still a way he could put paint to canvas.

“Great experience and intuition - that’s the secret,” said the 76-year-old, grinning in the middle of his studio in the southern city of Plovdiv, surrounded by vibrant treescapes and abstracts.

He found he could still just about see the difference between blocks of color, between light and dark, through his left eye. For the rest he relied on the instinct, skill and memories built up over his long career as an artist and church icon restorer.

“I only paint on black canvases, because I can recognize the warm colors - orange, red, light green ... I go out (painting) when

it’s bright and sunny, because I can ‘see’ the shadows. When it’s dark and grey, I can’t.”

In the early stages, he stands a few centimeters away from the canvas and breaks down the image in his head into small squares.

“Then I connect it - small square to small square.” After that he coats the surface with melted, transparent wax - a classical technique that gives a smooth finish and lets him feel the lines and blocks of the image underneath.

“I can feel the relief with the touch of my fingers and I can recognize if it is a tree or the sun.” He uses a blowtorch to melt the wax and listens out for the change in the noise the flame makes when it reaches the edge of the canvas.

His work has been shown in Germany, Greece, Turkey and several Bulgarian cities. He is now preparing for the 33rd exhibition in his career and hoping to pass on the “enkaustikos” wax technique to an apprentice.

“Why not?”, he said. “I’ll turn 77 this year, so the 33rd exhibition doesn’t sound too bad.”