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# Global action needed to fight coronavirus outbreak

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## Domestic steel consumption surplus to reach 10m tons

**TEHRAN** — Head of Tehran Iron and Steel Traders Union says the country's domestic steel consumption is expected to reach 17 million tons in the current Iranian year (ends on March 19), and considering the production plans there will be a 10 million-ton surplus this year, IRNA reported.

"Today, our country has reached a position in terms of steel production that, in addition to meeting the needs of the domestic

market, can also export to target markets," Hamidreza Rastegar told IRNA on Saturday.

Earlier this week, Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) announced that based on the latest report released by the World Steel Association (WSA) Iran's crude steel output has increased 46.7 percent in January while the global average growth rate stood at 2.1 percent. **→4**

## Russia cites Syria agreement but Erdogan sounds belligerent

Russia says it has agreed with Turkey to ease tensions in Syria's embattled Idlib province, the last major terrorist stronghold in the war-torn country.

In a statement released on Saturday, the Russian Foreign Ministry said that Moscow and Ankara had during high-level talks reached a consensus on reducing Idlib tensions.

"On both sides, the focus has been on reducing tensions on the ground while continuing to fight terrorists recognized by the United Nations Security Council," the statement read. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, however, said that he had asked his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, to step aside in Idlib and leave Ankara to deal with Damascus alone. **→10**

## Afghanistan's Taliban, U.S. sign peace deal

U.S. officials and Taliban representatives have signed a final peace deal after months of negotiations in Qatar's capital to end the United States's longest war, fought in Afghanistan since 2001.

Saturday's agreement, signed in Doha in the presence of leaders from Pakistan, Qatar, Turkey India, Indonesia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, will pave the way for the United States to gradually

withdraw its troops.

The two sides have long wrangled over the U.S. demand for a ceasefire before the final peace agreement was signed.

Earlier on Saturday, the Taliban ordered all its fighters to halt fighting and "refrain from attacks".

Mohammed Naeem, a Taliban representative in Doha, described the deal as "a step forward". **→10**



## REPORT

**Fatemeh Salehi**  
Mehr News Agency  
journalist

## The Idlib battle shows Turkey's real face

Current developments in Idlib province in northwestern Syria are obviously a series of violations of international law and the United Nations Security Council resolutions by the Turkish troops and officials as the world is witnessing a double-standard policy by Ankara toward the crisis in that part of the war-hit Syria.

Though Turkey has been claiming that it has been implementing the agreements approved by the trilateral committee between Turkey, Iran and Russia, evidences show that Turkey has only been using terrorist groups as a tool to materialize its own objectives in Idlib.

Obviously, occupying the Syrian territories and ruling over the seized lands are among the most important objectives of the Ankara officials who have been continuously denying.

As soon as the Syrian resistance forces kicked off their large-scale operation to liberate Idlib province from the militants' occupation, the Turkish officials showed their real face and openly targeted the Syrian Army positions.

The Turkish assaults on the Syrian Army positions angered the Russians who finally decided to give a crushing response to the Turkish occupiers. The Russian raids killed a sum of 70 Turkish military personnel and injured tens more. The Turkish troops' attacks and the Russians' retaliatory response triggered a fresh round of tensions between the two involved sides.

Now, the Turkish officials' real objective, which is nothing but a shameful scandal, is laid bare as Ankara's allies, including the U.S. and NATO, are assisting Turkey over the Idlib dispute.

Actually, Ankara needs to revise its policies as it should have fully realized that Damascus and Moscow are quite serious to liberate Idlib from the militant groups that have been supported by the Turkish troops directly and indirectly in recent years.

Of course, any direct military confrontation between Russian and Turkish forces in Idlib seems unlikely, as Russia has proved that it knows well how to interact with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. **→10**

## World changed after martyrdom of Lt. General Soleimani: Colombian analyst

**TEHRAN (MNA)** — The Colombian analyst Carlos Santa Maria said in an interview that Not only Iran but also the world has undergone a transformation after the martyrdom of Lt. General Soleimani.

In an interview with Mehr News Agency, Carlos Santa Maria said, "Three factors have always been involved in the survival of revolutions, which is also true for the Islamic Revolution of Iran. The first one is patriotism. Iranian people have always defended their land, religion, and family with a special sense of patriotism. If a nation does not have such a feeling, they will lose everything. The same is true for Cuba. The Cuban people do not allow anyone to invade their territory. If this patriotic factor is not involved, all revolutions will be destroyed."

"The next factor is a very interesting tactic called "active resistance". This tactic works to strengthen the executive, legislative, judicial, and even military powers of the revolution. Military reinforcement is of utmost significance. Since the lack of this factor leads to the destruction of all nations by imperialism and the corrupt powers of the world. For example, during the Iraqi-imposed war against Iran, these powers failed to do anything. If a country is militarily powerful, no one will ever dare to invade it. The third prominent factor is the sense of dignity and honor. The anti-imperialist Iranian people maintain dignity and seek social welfare, thus they have remained steadfast in their revolutionary path", he added.

The Colombian analyst further noted, "If these three factors are present in a revolution, it is stable and will not lose efficiency. Iranians possess Awareness and knowledge along with foresight. There have always been attempts to destroy the Islamic Revolution, however, due to these qualities, none of these efforts have been successful so far."

Referring to US efforts to disappoint Iranians and lead them to failure, he said, "The United States has not benefited from anything in this field. The US has always strived to take illegal revenge against Iranian people. Washington wants this revolution to be toppled. This is when everything is going the opposite way. The US has realized its own decline and the continued progress made by the Islamic Revolution of Iran." **→7**

## Yemenis encircle strategic city in al-Jawf as Saudi countermeasures fail

Yemen's armed forces have encircled the strategic city of al-Hazm - the capital city of the northern al-Jawf province - as Saudi attempts to break Yemeni advances failed, a report says.

The Beirut-based al-Akhbar newspaper reported Saturday that the advances by Yemeni forces, led by the popular Houthi Ansarullah movement, continue towards the strategic city and that major Saudi positions surrounding al-Hazm have fallen.

A tribal source loyal to Ansarullah told al-Akhbar that advances are currently ongoing northwest of the city, adding that a Saudi counteroffensive seeking to recapture the al-Ghail region south of al-Hazm had failed.

The source added that the Yemeni forces have gained control over a number of positions over-

looking provincial government buildings in the city.

Up to 70 percent of the province is currently under the control of the Yemeni forces, he added.

According to the report, Saudi Arabia has sent dozens of military vehicles along with hundreds of mercenaries from the central Ma'rib and southern Shabwah province in a bid to push back the Yemenis advances.

Saudi Arabia has also sought to win the loyalty of Yemeni tribes against the Yemeni forces in the region by offering money, the report added. Yemen's al-Jawf province had been under Riyadh's control for up to 50 years.

Due to Saudi intervention and influence, al-Jawf province was effectively deprived of using its oil reserves, which are largest in Yemen, and attracting needed investment, it added.



## Chinese medical team in Tehran to help fight coronavirus

**TEHRAN** — A delegation of Chinese medical experts arrived in Tehran on Saturday with a cargo of aid to help combat the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, IRNA reported.

"Chinese medical team arrived in Tehran with new aid," China's Ambassador to Iran Chang Hua wrote on his Twitter account on Saturday. **→9**



## ARTICLE

**Diego Vida**  
Italian writer and director

## Coronavirus pandemic shows just another business scam worldwide

The name of Coronavirus was born last century to classify in Asia the breathing disease as the Pneumonia as well. Since 150 years ago the Pneumonia was almost impossible to cure because the antibiotic wasn't existed yet. After 1 century with the come of the antibiotics finally it was possible cure the Pneumonia disease.

Now a days this illness hit many people for the following causes like pollution, smoke, virus, flu, cold, bronchitis, and the patients affected by terminal diseases like COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease a second lethal terminal disease forcing patients to use oxygen therapy till they die), Cancer, Leuchemia and several immune deficiency like Asma either.

According a diagnosis Pneumonia need the following therapy, on the first 2 weeks the antibiotics do their job over and over together the Aereoosol as the other medicines properly injected to erase this acute stadium after that a patient begin to feel better himself but still in danger to get once again this disease then for other 2 weeks there is a convalescence, so in 1 month it is possible get fine completely though on the first weeks the patient will breath feeling weak himself just recovering totally in 2 weeks more.

Unfortunately for a chronicle ill and the all terminal ill a complete recovering takes months but in some cases they die during the therapy. Pneumonia or Coronavirus is an obstructive pulmonary disease, so in rare cases it is possible die but is still possible get cured too.

Certainly not providing in time to do a proper therapy just increase the chances to risk to die but this last case it is refer to some people affected by terminal ill or in elderly age or those people that didn't pay attention to cure since the appearance of this disease.

A simple cough can become a bronchitis and later a strong Pneumonia, so it is recomanded to use antibiotics and also the Aereoosol this one a good solution to prevent it either. **→7**



## Rouhani says Iran ready to host trilateral Syria summit as Idlib war raging

Intensification of tensions in the region will benefit no side, Rouhani tells Erdogan

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — In a telephone conversation with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday afternoon, President Hassan Rouhani announced that Tehran is ready to host trilateral summit between Iran, Turkey and Russia as the battle in Idlib is raging.

“Trilateral cooperation at different levels is of special importance and as has been announced earlier Iran is quite ready to host the next round of the trilateral summit,” Rouhani said, according to the presidential media office.



Rouhani noted that the lives of the innocent people in Idlib province should be protected and at the same time the terrorists in the region must be purged.

“In view of the gathering of dangerous terrorists and the need to protect the lives of innocent people living in the region, the issue of Idlib is very complicated. On one hand, the lives of innocent people should be protected, and on the other hand, terrorists should be uprooted,” Rouhani said in his phone talks with Erdogan.

Rouhani went on to say that the Astana process engineered by Iran, Russia and Turkey for resolving the Syrian conflict must not be undermined.

The Iranian president went on to say that the intensification of tension in the region will not benefit anyone, insisting on Tehran's long-held policy that Syrian conflict must be resolved through dialogue.

“Surely, the intensification of tension in the region will benefit neither side, and we must resolve the issues through dialogue and do not allow the Astana process to be weakened.”

## Rouhani to Qatari emir: Global action needed to fight coronavirus outbreak

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani, in a phone conversation with emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani on Saturday, urged the entire nations worldwide to enhance cooperation to overcome the coronavirus outbreak.

“Today, outbreak of the coronavirus has turned into a global problem, therefore, the entire nations and governments around the world should stay with each other to overcome the epidemic disease as soon as possible,” Rouhani underscored in his phone call.

He further pointed to traffic of passengers between the two countries and said, “A special health protocol should be drafted based on which we can normalize flights between the two countries.”

The Qatari emir, for his part, said, “The Qatari government and people are with the Iranian nation and government. We do not withhold any cooperation and assistance in line with countering coronavirus.”

The World Health Organization (WHO) has upgraded the global risk of the coronavirus outbreak to “very high” - its top level of risk assessment.

But the UN body said there was still a chance of containing the virus if its chain of transmission were broken.

WHO head Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus also stressed that fear and misinformation were the biggest challenges to overcome, BBC reported on Friday.

More than 50 countries have now reported cases of coronavirus.

At a press conference in Geneva, Dr. Tedros said that most cases could still be traced, and there was no evidence of the virus “spreading freely in communities”.

His colleague, Dr. Mike Ryan, head of the WHO's Emergency Health Programme, said that the risk level was intended to serve as a “reality check” for governments, since healthcare systems were still unprepared.

Dr. Ryan also stressed that current data information does not suggest the virus has become a global pandemic.

“If we say there's a pandemic of coronavirus, we're essentially accepting that every human on the planet will be exposed,” he said. “The data does not support that as yet and China has clearly shown that that's not necessarily the natural outcome of this event if we take action.”

Tedros reiterated that the spread had the potential to become a pandemic, but cautioned against unnecessary panic. “Our greatest enemy right now is not the virus itself, it's fear, rumors and stigma.”

The virus first emerged in China in December last year and is now spreading in Europe and across the Middle East, sparking fears of a global pandemic. The virus is spreading rapidly in the region, with cases recorded in many countries.

The Iranian authorities have ordered the closure of schools, universities and cultural events in a bid to contain the outbreak. This is while free masks are being distributed among the people, with priority given to cities that have reported coronavirus cases.

According to the latest data, totally 593 Iranian nationals have been infected by the virus, out of which 43 patients have lost their lives.

According to the Health Ministry, the health condition of a sum of 73 infected patients have improved.

The virus has affected 24 provinces in Iran.

Globally, more than 80,000 people have been infected. About 2,800 have died - the vast majority in China's Hubei province.

# Russian Council of Muftis lauds Ayatollah Khamenei for backing Palestinian legitimate rights

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The head desk of the Russian Council of Muftis has appreciated Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei for supporting the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.

In a meeting with the Iranian Ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali, Ravil Gainutdin said that they have always welcomed friendly relations with Iran, Fars reported.

Gainutdin said that he, along with the members of the Tehran-based World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought, has met Ayatollah Khamenei in Tehran, adding Russian Muslim journalists and religious scholars make regular visits to Tehran, Mashhad, and Qom to attend international conferences.

He suggested that constructive relationship in areas of politics, economy, and culture should be increased between Russia and Iran.

The Russian Muslims support such ties, which have already proven effective in solving the Syrian crisis, council chairman added.

Gainutdin said that the Americans and Europeans are worried about the unity between Tehran and Moscow and that the U.S. sanctions on Iran, Russia, China, and



Turkey are because they see the unity between these three countries as threat to

their hegemony.

The religious leader of Russian Muslims

## Iran issues South Korea travel warning amid coronavirus fears

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The Foreign Ministry, in a travel advisory issued on Saturday, urged Iranians not to visit South Korea over fears of exposure to the coronavirus.

“The compatriots who have returned from South Korea in the past two weeks, should take pre-cautionary measures according to the Health Ministry's instructions,” the ministry's advisory read.

It added, “Those compatriots who are resident of South Korea should observe the entire healthcare advices if they cannot leave South Korea. They should avoid traffic to the polluted areas (areas that have seen a surge of infections by the coronavirus strain).”

The ministry further called on the Iranian compatriots to observe all healthcare instructions issued by the South Korean Health Ministry and try to leave the country if the outbreak goes worse.

South Korea has reported more than 800 new coronavirus cases, bringing the country's total infections to 3,150, the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) was quoted by the Guardian as saying on Saturday.

The country first said there were 594 new cases but later reported that an additional 219 new cases had been confirmed.

Together they logged a record daily increase in infections since South Korea confirmed its first patient on January 20. Another person is confirmed to have died from the virus, bringing the death toll to 17.

South Korea has urged its citizens to stay indoors and warned it is facing a “critical moment” in its battle against the coronavirus.

The South Korean Vice-Health Minister, Kim Kang-lip, said, “We have asked you to refrain from taking part in public events, including a religious gathering or protest, this weekend. Please stay at home and refrain from going



outside and minimize contact with other people.”

As many as 476 of the new cases were from south-eastern Daegu city, the site of a church at the center of the outbreak. Health authorities have run tests on more than 210,000 members and 65,000 trainees of the church.

## Iran dispatches passenger ship to Sharjah to bring compatriots home

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The managing director of the Ports and Maritime Organization announced on Saturday that a large passenger ship was sent on Friday to the port city of Sharjah to bring back the Iranian tourists.

On Tuesday, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) suspended flights from and to Tehran over coronavirus outbreak in Iran.

“To bring back the Iranian passengers from the Persian Gulf littoral states, we sent a passenger ship with 550 seats capacity to Sharjah on Friday as the first step,” Mohammad Rastad told the IRIB news agency.

On Friday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi announced that his country was paving the way for the Iranian nationals residing in the UAE to return home from Dubai or Abu Dhabi.

“The Foreign Ministry and its representatives in Abu Dhabi and Dubai have been continuously in contact with Iran Civil Aviation Organization's officials, the United Arab Emirates Foreign Ministry and the Emirates embassy in Tehran to gain flight permit for the country's airliners,” Mousavi told reporters after the UAE unilaterally and surprisingly halted flights to and from Tehran.

“According to the latest information, a basic agreement has been reached for issuing flight permit and the flights will be carried



out soon,” he added.

Mousavi underlined, “We use all our capacities to return our compatriots to home.”

According to Al Jazeera, the UAE suspended all flights to and from Iran for at least a week on Tuesday over the outbreak of the new coronavirus after its spread was announced across multiple Middle East nations.

The UAE, home to long-haul carriers Emirates and Etihad, remains a key international

transit route for Iran's 80 million people.

The UAE's General Civil Aviation Authority made the announcement on Tuesday via the country's state-run WAM news agency, just hours after Dubai International Airport, the world's busiest for international travel, said there would be restrictions on flights there.

“All passenger and cargo aircraft travelling to and from Iran will be suspended for a period of one week, and could be up for

extension,” the authority said.

“The decision is a precautionary measure undertaken by the UAE to ensure strict monitoring and prevention of the spread of the new coronavirus.”

Emirates, the government-owned carrier based in Dubai, flies daily to Tehran. Its low-cost sister airline, FlyDubai, flies to multiple Iranian cities, as does the Sharjah-based low-cost carrier Air Arabia.

The virus first emerged in China last year and is now spreading in Europe and across the Middle East, sparking fears of a global pandemic. The virus is spreading rapidly in the region, with cases recorded in many countries.

The Iranian authorities have ordered the closure of schools, universities and cultural events in a bid to contain the outbreak. This is while free masks are being distributed among the people, with priority given to cities that have reported coronavirus cases.

According to the latest data, totally 593 Iranian nationals have been infected by the virus, out of which 43 patients have lost their lives.

According to the Health Ministry, general health condition of a sum of 73 infected patients grew better.

The virus has affected 24 provinces of the country.

## Pakistan reopens borders with Iran after a week of closure

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Pakistan on Saturday reopened its border crossings with Iran after it closed them due to coronavirus outbreak in the region including Sistan-Baluchestan province in southeastern Iran.

Islamabad reopened the border crossings to bring a sum of 300 passengers back.

The Pakistani passengers had traveled to Iran but faced border closure after novel coronavirus spread across the country, including the border province of Sistan-

Baluchestan.

Islamabad has not announced that whether it will close the border again.

The virus first emerged in China last year and is now spreading in Europe and across the Middle East, sparking fears of a global pandemic. The virus is spreading rapidly in the region, with cases recorded in many countries.

The Iranian authorities have ordered the closure of schools, universities and cultural events in a bid to contain the outbreak. This is

while free masks are being distributed among the people, with priority given to cities that have reported coronavirus cases.

According to the latest data, totally 593 Iranian nationals have been infected by the virus, out of which 43 patients have lost their lives.

According to the Health Ministry, general health condition of a sum of 123 infected patients have improved.

The virus has affected 26 provinces of the country.

## Iran, IFRC discuss ways to combat coronavirus outbreak

**TEHRAN**— Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for International and Legal Affairs Mohsen Baharvand and Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Jagan Chapagain exchanged views about ways to fight against the novel coronavirus epidemic.

During the meeting held in the Swiss city of Geneva, the two officials also held talks about plans on how the IFRC can help deliver the necessary medical supplies to Iran, including the coronavirus diagnostic test kits and the personal protective equipment used by the medical staff, according to Tasnim.

In his remarks, Baharvand said the Islamic Republic always tried to dissociate the humanitarian issues from political disputes, while the current U.S. administration, particularly its secretary of state, seeks to take political advantage of a humanitarian issue in “an immoral and unprofessional

measure”, and is even spreading lies about it.

The novel coronavirus epidemic is not confined to a specific nation and could turn into a global challenge, the diplomat said, adding that it is necessary to combat it globally.

In a statement on Thursday, the Iranian Foreign Ministry outlined the measures taken to assist the healthcare and medical sector in the battle with the COVID-19.

According to Iran's Health Ministry, the number of people who have died from the coronavirus in the country has risen to 43 and the total number of confirmed cases to 593.

Medical staff in 24 provinces of Iran have been working tirelessly over the past week to contain the novel coronavirus that has originated from China.

At least 73 patients in Iran have recovered from the disease so far.





# Tehran categorically rejects BBC Persian's coronavirus death toll

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iran's Health Ministry has categorically denied the BBC Persian's claim that at least 210 people have died from coronavirus.

Kianoush Jahanpour, head of the ministry's Public Relations and Information Center, said on Friday that the BBC Persian is seeking to take political advantage of the coronavirus outbreak.

"Coronavirus has brought suffering and infirmity upon the people of the world. However, it has turned into a source of profit for such satellite channels and others with corresponding roles in Saudi Arabian and Albanian channels," Press TV quoted Jahanpour as saying, citing IRNA. "These are seeking to satisfy [their] ignoble political goals by creating anxiety and distress among nations, and are unfortunately making their money this way," he added.

It came hours after the London-based channel cited unnamed "hospital sources" as saying that 210 have died from the virus.

"The media outlet's claim is irrelevant. This time too it has drawn a blank," the Iranian official said, adding that even the number of fatalities among those suffering from acute respiratory syndromes may not reach that high.

Jahanpour said the channel had intentionally come up with the figure to sow fear among Iranians, and reminded that it has stopped short of naming its sources.

He said the Islamic Republic viewed the issue of the outbreak as one that was tied to the public health, and would, therefore, avoid politicizing it.

The country has observed rigor and



transparency in its reports on the spread, while many others are either incapable of exactly recording their cases or would deny the number of victims for political reasons, according to the official.

"I have to tell you that Iran is the first and the only country to release its information about coronavirus without any processing and in a fully transparent manner since the beginning of the outbreak," Jahanpour told Press TV on Friday night.

The level of Iran's transparency "has taken many by surprise," including some media outlets, which are known for their

siding with Iran's enemies, and their support for the sanctions that have come to target Iranians, including Iranian patients, he stated, referring to the BBC Persian and similar media organizations.

It was "inhumane" for a media organization that claims to be professional not to name its sources, Jahanpour asserted, reiterating that the British channel's claims were "politically-motivated" and aimed at disturbing the public opinion and creating "horror" among the Iranian nation.

Iran has formed a special taskforce to confront the outbreak that first emerged

in the north-central city of Qom.

Tehran has named the body as the only reliable authority concerning either preventative measures or the correct number of the victims.

Up until Saturday afternoon, the virus that showed up in the central Chinese city of Wuhan late last year has infected 593 people in Iran and claimed the lives of 43 people across the country.

Iranian medical officials have assured that the country would, in the near future, rein in the outbreak, saying that the condition of many patients diagnosed with the virus has improved.

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has expressed preparedness to help fight the outbreak, and Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami has assigned his ministry's subsidiary organizations with the task of mass-producing liquid disinfectants and protective masks, which are currently in high demand and are being freely distributed by health centers countrywide.

On Thursday, Jahanpour said screening process had gone underway at the entrance to some cities, adding that suspected cases would be quarantined for a space of 14 days.

Also on Thursday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said around 20,000 testing kits, made in cooperative efforts joining the Chinese government and its Red Cross, were to be freighted to the Islamic Republic by air on Friday.

On Wednesday, President Hassan Rouhani also said coronavirus testing kits developed by Iranian experts were undergoing final tests and would enter the mass-production stage in the near future.

## Official: U.S. sanctions worse than coronavirus for Iranian people

**TEHRAN (FNA)** — The U.S. sanctions against Iran which are obstructing the import of medications are much more heinous and costly for the common people of the Islamic Republic than coronavirus epidemic, a senior Iranian official said.

Head of Presidential Office's Center for Strategic Studies Heshamoddin Ashena said on Friday that the U.S. sanctions are the same background disease that make coronavirus more lethal and sinister for Iranians.

In his twitter account, he referred to what doctors and medical experts about the existence of some background diseases in coronavirus patients which makes it deadly and said the U.S. is directly responsible for death and sufferings of Iranian victims of the coronavirus through its maximum pressure and beating drums of Iranophobia.

According to latest official records, coronavirus has so far claimed the lives of 34 Iranians. However, medical reports indicate that the number of Iranian patients who are dying because of lack of particular foreign-made medications, whose imports have been obstructed by the unilateral sanctions of the U.S., hit a higher number.

Late in December, Head of the Iranian Society of Child Blood and Cancer Hassan Abolghassemi said that the U.S. sanctions have almost made it impossible for cancer patients in Iran to access and supply their needed medicine.

"The U.S. has targeted the Iranian patients and they have planned to pressure those who are consumers of these drugs. Therefore, the vitamins and ordinary drugs are easily accessed in the market, but the U.S. is making its utmost efforts to prevent Iran from purchasing vital pharmaceutical products and those which are necessary for cancer patients," Abolghassemi told FNA.

The U.S. sanctions and restrictions on export of drugs and medical equipment to Iran have shortened the breath of patients suffering from cancer, hemophilia, epilepsy and thalassemia.

Despite the American officials' claims of not imposing sanctions on imports of drugs to Iran, it's reported that medications are hard to obtain in the country due to banking embargos that hamper money transactions which causes some Western companies to refuse to sell the necessary drugs and medical equipment to Tehran.

Head of Iran Thalassemia Association Yunes Arab



said that 90 thalassemia patients lost their life last year due to the lack of drugs and the U.S. sanctions, adding that 60 other young patients also died in the current year.

"They would have been breathing a normal life if it hadn't been for the U.S. sanctions on drugs," he told FNA.

The U.S. embargos have also left impacts on the hemophilia patients.

"Basically, what the U.S. is doing is a type of war crime; although the Americans declared that drugs and medical equipment are not sanctioned, what we witness is harsh sanctions in the field of drugs and medical equipment," former head of Iran's Hemophilia Association Ahmad Qavidel told FNA.

Also, Sara Nouri, the Managing-Director of Iran's MPS (Mucopolysaccharidosis) Patients Society, told FNA that the Association provides necessary medicine to the MPS patients but it has faced problems after the U.S. sanctions.

"The most important medicine needed for the patients is a type of enzyme and they should receive them weekly," Nouri said, adding that 300 MPS patients have been identified in Iran so far but the number is expected to increase to 1,000.

"For instance, if a patient should receive 50 drugs in a period of time, he/she receives 5 to 10 drugs now due to the problems created by sanctions, and this will inflict serious harm to the patients' health," she warned.

Meantime, Dariush Nasabi Tehrani, the head of Iran's Epilepsy Association, cautioned of the shortage

of medicine for the epileptic patients due to the U.S. sanctions.

"Production of a number of medicine has been disrupted for the sanctions and the patients are forced to use the medicine produced by other companies which are highly expensive," Nasabi Tehrani told FNA.

"The embargos make these patients anxious and concerned about shortage of their drugs while they should be assured of easy accessibility to medicine due to the sensitiveness of their disease," he added.

In a Wednesday meeting with United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, Head of the Judiciary's High Council for Human Rights Ali Baqeri Kani, rebuked the U.S. for preventing medical exports to Iran, describing Washington's anti-Tehran sanctions as barbaric and uncivilized.

Iranian nation's domestic progress has angered the Americans and that's for the same reason that the imposed barbaric sanctions on the nations, as they blocked exports of medicines to Iran, intending to deny Iran the right to live, in addition to the right to make progress, Baqeri Kani said.

He added that Islamic Republic of Iran's policies are based on upholding human rights and ensuring the Iranian nation's rights.

Lambasting European states claiming violation of human rights in Iran, he said that European government sponsoring human rights resolution against Iran in Human Rights Council is an accomplice to Saudi Arabia in killing Yemeni children on the one hand and partner to the U.S. in killing Iranian innocent children by preventing exports of medicines.

Michelle Bachelet, for her part, described anti-Iran sanctions as inhumane and unacceptable, saying that United Nations High Commission for Human Rights is the only institute that has adopted stance against sanctions.

On Monday, Baqeri Kani had denounced Washington's unilateral sanctions which are obstructing his nation's access to foreign-made medications and food, challenging Washington's membership in the UN Human Rights Council (HRC).

While addressing the 43rd session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland, Baqeri Kani described the unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States on Iran as the "most recent grave and systematic violation of human rights."

## Government spokesman to hold presser online due to coronavirus outbreak

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Government spokesperson Ali Rabiei will be holding his next presser via video conference, Mehr reported.

The press conference is scheduled to be held on Monday.

The decision was made because of the rise in the number of infected cases in Iran.

Also, Rabiei's previous press conference, which was jointly held by Deputy Health Minister Iraj Harirchi, sparked criticism after Harirchi was tested positive for coronavirus.



As of Saturday, the death toll from the coronavirus outbreak in Iran had risen to 43. Also, the Health Ministry announced that citizens diagnosed with the virus has jumped from 338 in Friday to 593 by Saturday.

The Health Ministry has previously urged people to stay at home, restrict traffic, reduce interactions, avoid unnecessary travel, cancel any nationwide gatherings, and observe individual health tips to control the virus, also known as COVID-19.

Upon the advice of the Health Ministry, the Friday prayers in Tehran and 22 other provinces were also canceled to counter the spread of coronavirus.

The Health Ministry also placed restrictions on access to the Hazrat Masumeh shrine in Qom, where the coronavirus in Iran first emerged, and the Imam Reza shrine in Mashhad.

## Tehran slams Washington's fake offer of help against coronavirus

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Tehran has denounced Washington's false expression of readiness to assist Iran in the fight against coronavirus outbreak as a "ridiculous" and "hypocritical" move and part of a political and psychological game.

In a statement on Friday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi responded to U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's claim about helping Iran in the battle with the infectious disease, which has been hugely publicized in the media and has been widely advertised before informing Iran.

Mousavi slammed Pompeo's claim as a propagandistic and hypocritical move that has been made with political objectives with the purpose of deceiving the world public opinion, the Foreign Ministry website reported.

"The claim of helping Iran in the fight against coronavirus, made by a country that has exerted massive pressures on the Iranian people with its economic terrorism and has even blocked the (Iranian) purchase of medicine and medical equipment, is a ridiculous claim and a political-psychological game," Mousavi added.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran is in close contact with many countries in order to satisfy the country's pharmaceutical and health demands and to combat the coronavirus, and so far a considerable part of the country's critical needs, including 100,000 (COVID-19) diagnostic kits, surgery masks, medical ventilators, etc. have been supplied from the friendly countries, and other consignments are also on the way which will be publicized in due time," he noted.

The fight against coronavirus, which has now become a pandemic and has engulfed many countries, requires a global resolve and widespread international cooperation, not theatrical moves that are made with political purposes and the abuse of the suffering and pains of the patients and those hurt, the spokesperson added.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury announced in a statement on Thursday that the Swiss Humanitarian Trade Arrangement (SHTA) is fully operational.

"The SHTA will further facilitate the flow of humanitarian goods to the Iranian people," the statement said.

"The SHTA is the first operational channel established under the framework announced by the U.S. Department of State and the Treasury in October 2019 to facilitate humanitarian trade with Iran. Initial transactions were successfully conducted in late January 2020 to demonstrate the viability and effectiveness of the SHTA."

According to the U.S. Treasury, while the United States maintains broad exceptions and authorizations for the conduct of humanitarian trade with Iran, the SHTA presents a voluntary option for facilitating payment for exports of agricultural commodities, food, medicine, and medical devices to Iran in a manner that ensures the upmost transparency.

"Companies within Swiss jurisdiction may reach out to Switzerland's State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) at SHTA@seco.admin.ch for further details on requirements and instructions for participating in the SHTA. This includes entities that are owned or controlled by U.S. and third-country persons and domiciled in Switzerland. Parties may continue to avail themselves of existing exceptions and authorizations to conduct humanitarian trade with Iran outside of the humanitarian channel."

Earlier this month, Deputy Health Minister Karim Hemmati said the SHTA will not remove the impact of unfair U.S. sanctions on the import of medicine by Iran, as it is not capable of carrying money in large scale.

The Ministry of Health welcomes every mechanism that eases supply of medicine and medical equipment using all the available capacities to patients, especially those with cancer and rare diseases, Hemmati said.

However, the financial mechanism launched recently by Switzerland cannot solve the problem of supplying necessary medicines and transferring money to purchase them, he lamented.

## Democratic presidential candidate Warren warns of sanctions impact on Iran's coronavirus fight

**TEHRAN (MNA)** — Democratic presidential hopeful Elizabeth Warren has raised concerns that the U.S. sanctions could hinder humanitarian transactions that would help counter and contain the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Iran.

In a letter to U.S. State Secretary Mike Pompeo and Steve Mnuchin on Friday, Warren expressed concern about the effects of the Trump administration's sanctions on Iran in its fight against the coronavirus epidemic.

Regarding the U.S. measures taken to facilitate humanitarian trade with Iran, Senator Warren wrote, "Though these steps would appear on the surface to be sufficient, I am concerned that the limited nature of the exceptions and the fact that trade in general with Iran has been circumscribed by U.S.



sanctions may make it difficult for urgently needed medical goods to get to Iran to combat the coronavirus."

The Treasury Department issued a license on Thursday to allow humanitarian aid to go to Iran through a Swiss channel.

She sought an assurance that every reasonable effort is being made by the United States to ensure the availability of medicine and other humanitarian items to the Iranian people to help prevent a further spread of the coronavirus.

The Democratic senator stressed that the U.S. should try to facilitate reception of humanitarian items, medicine, and medical equipment.

The number of cases infected by the coronavirus in Iran has risen to 593, with the death toll reaching 43.



STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	505819.0
IFX	6534.95

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	46,316 rials
GBP	53,847 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$49.67b
WTI	\$44.76/b
OPEC Basket	\$51.89/b
Gold	\$1,588.90/oz
Silver	\$16.82/oz
Platinum	\$871.20/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Domestic steel consumption surplus to reach 10m tons

**1 →** Based on the WSA data, Iran produced 2.895 million tons of crude steel, 46.7 percent more than last January's 1.971 million tons.



Iran's crude steel production increased by 30 percent in 2019 while the average global growth in this sector stood at 3.5 percent, according to the WSA's previous report.

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

Iran which stood at the 13th place in 2017 could lag behind three major steel producers in the world, namely Italy, Taiwan, and Ukraine to stand at the 10th place in 2018, despite the re-imposition

of sanctions by the U.S.

In early May 2019, Washington imposed new sanctions on Iran's metals and minerals sectors in an attempt to [as the U.S. president Trump put it] "choke off the country's largest non-petroleum related sources of export revenue".

Global stocks plummet again in worst week since 2008 financial crisis

Global stock markets plummeted for a seventh consecutive day on Friday as the coronavirus continued to spread, increasing fears that the epidemic will wipe out corporate profits and push some of the world's biggest economies into recession.

China's Shanghai Composite (SHCOMP) closed down 3.7%, bringing losses for the week to 5.6%, the index's worst performance since April 2019. Japan's Nikkei (N225) ended down 3.7% and benchmark indexes in Australia and South Korea both shed 3.3%.

European stocks matched those losses, with Germany's DAX (DAX) dropping 3.9% and London's FTSE 100 (UKX) shedding 3.4%. In Italy, where 17 people have now died as a result of the virus, the benchmark FTSE MIB index gave up 3.6%.

U.S. stocks were also sharply lower Friday. The Dow declined 950 points, or 3.7%. The S&P 500, the broadest measure of the stock market, was down 3.3%, while the Nasdaq Composite fell 2.6%.

Taken together, global stocks are on track for their worst week since the global financial crisis. The MSCI index, which tracks shares in many of the world's biggest companies, has fallen 8.9% — its worst percentage decline since October 2008.

The coronavirus cases

There have been more than 83,000 global coronavirus cases, with infections on every continent except Antarctica. The virus has killed at least 2,800 people around the world. At least 11 European countries now have confirmed infections, and health officials in South Korea confirmed 571 additional cases on Friday.

Investors have been spooked in recent days by a sharp increase in the number of warnings from companies including Ab Inbev (BUD), Disney (DIS), Apple (AAPL), Microsoft (MSFT) and Qualcomm (QCOM) who say the coronavirus is hitting their business. IAG (ICAGY), the owner of British Airways, and Chinese search giant Weibo (WB) became the latest to do so on Friday.

Major firms have seen a sharp reduction in demand for the products and services, especially in Asia. But manufacturing, tech and pharmaceutical industries have also seen their supply chains disrupted by factory closures in China that have limited production.

Where the outbreak goes from here is far from clear, and that's also hammering markets and business. On Friday, IAG said that "ongoing uncertainty" over the outbreak's potential impact and duration mean it's not possible to quantify the total cost. Its shares dropped more than 8% in London.

The revenue could drop

Baidu (BIDU) said that revenue could drop as much as 13% in the first quarter compared to the same time last year. But what happens next is an open question. The "coronavirus situation in China is evolving," Baidu said in a statement. "Business visibility is very limited."

The corporate warnings paint a dire picture of the effect that the coronavirus is having on some of the world's biggest economies. Growth in China is expected to slow significantly, and other economies such as Japan and Germany could slide into recession as the outbreak compounds weakness caused by factors including the trade war between the United States and China.

If the coronavirus outbreak becomes a global pandemic, \$1 trillion could be wiped off the world economy, with recessions in the United States and the eurozone, according to economists at Oxford Economics. (Source: edition.cnn.com)

Sanctions not to impede Iranian steel sector's upward trend

By Mahnaz Abdi

Although in early May last year, the U.S. imposed new sanctions on Iran targeting the country's metals sector, the report released by World Steel Association (WSA) and also Iranian organizations indicate that not only did not the new round of sanctions hinder Iranian steel sector, this industry has preserved its growth trend as well.

A recent report released by the World Steel Association (WSA) shows that Iran's crude steel output has increased 46.7 percent in January while the global average growth rate stood at 2.1 percent.

The report indicates that Iran has produced 2.895 million tons of crude steel in January of this year, which was 46.7 percent more than 1.971 million tons of product produced in January 2019.

WSA has also announced that Iran's crude steel production climbed 30 percent in 2019 while the average global growth in this sector stood at 3.5 percent.

Based on a previous report by the global organization, Iran produced 31.9 million tons of crude steel in 2019, while the figure was 24 million tons in 2018.

The data and reports released by Iranian organizations also show that the country's



steel sector is still experiencing growth in output and export.

The latest data released by Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry indicate that crude steel output during the first ten months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2019 – January 20, 2020) has risen 2.42 percent compared to the same period of time in the previous year.

Meanwhile, the country's steel products output stood at 11.27 million tons during the ten-month period of this year, jumping 97 percent from that of the same time span in the past year.

In terms of exports, the country has exported 5.884 million tons of steel during the first ten months of the current year, rising 25 percent year on year.

The ten-month steel products export has also increased 45 percent to 4.4 million tons.

While domestic steel sector is booming despite the sanctions, Iran's annual crude steel production has been planned to rise five million tons to 30 million tons, while the export is expected to hit six million tons by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19).

To curb the effects of sanctions in the steel industry, the country resolves to benefit from domestic potential and capability.

Last month, the head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) announced that memorandums of understanding worth five trillion rials (about \$119 million) have been signed on indigenizing equipment and technology in steel industry of the country in the current Iranian calendar year.

Making the remarks in a meeting with the board members of Iranian Steel Producers Association, Khodadad Gharibpour said promotion of indigenizing is one of the major orders of the country's senior officials and in this due the steel producing companies should focus more on indigenizing and supplying their requirements through domestic production.

'Essential goods distributed abundantly for Norouz holidays'



**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran's deputy industry, mining and trade minister Reza Rahmani said on Friday that people's essential requirements are being supplied and distributed continuously in the markets for Norouz holidays, Shata reported.

Speaking in a meeting with representatives of some guilds, Rahmani said: "Ideal planning has been made for Nowruz and Ramadan and we have increased our stocks significantly compared to the last year."

There is also an increasing trend in the production of such goods, which is constantly monitored, the official said.

"In the mentioned periods, special supervision will also be conducted by the guilds and provincial agencies to prevent any possible violations and misconduct," Rahmani added.

Back in January, Rahmani said that the

government has stored enough amounts of basic goods in its storages and there are no worries over the supply of such commodities in the country, ILNA reported.

In late November 2019, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said nearly 14 million tons of basic goods were cleared through Iran's customs since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2019) up to November.

According to Mehdi Mirashrafi, nearly 20 million tons of goods have been imported into the country since the beginning of the current year, of which about 14 million tons were basic goods.

Norouz is the most important holiday in Iran, marking the official New Year of the country. It is the first day of Farvardin, the first month of the Iranian calendar year which starts on March 20.

'Shortages of raw materials for health products to be supplied through imports'



**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran's deputy industry, mining and trade minister for industry affairs said supplying raw materials to the producers of health products is currently the ministry's priority and any shortage will be compensated for through imports.

"Last week, following the health ministry, the industry ministry held a meeting with representatives of health product companies and necessary coordination with associations and organizations has been done to increase production of such products," Mehdi Sadeqi Niaraki told IRNA on Saturday.

According to the official, the recommendations and ideas presented at the meeting were provided to the Food and Drug Administration for making necessary decisions on how to supply and

distribute the necessary items. "Today [Saturday] a meeting was held to form a "Supply and Distribution" committee for health and hygiene products," Niaraki said.

Supply of raw materials to manufacturers, their general and hospital use of health products, as well as the production of masks and personal protective clothing, and monitoring production and distribution, production capacities, etc. are some of the issues which are going to be tackled by this committee, he said.

This week, the Ministry of Defense also launched production lines of disinfectants and face masks, a move to help curb the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, in the country.

The lines are projected to produce 20,000 liters of disinfectants and 20,000 face masks on a daily basis.

Iran's top automaker to unveil 9 new models within 3 years

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran's major automaker Iran Khodro Company (IKCO) is going to launch nine new vehicles within the next three years, IRNA reported on Saturday, quoting IKCO vice president for research and development.

According to Kianoush Pourmoghaj, Rana Plus, Soren Plus, Samand Optimal, Automatic Dana Plus and Peugeot Panoram are five models that will be developed in the upcoming year, while K132s, Crossover K125s and Hatchback K121s as well as a Hybrid Dena will also be launched by January 2023.

He described IKCO's development plans as measures taken for maintaining production boom and counteracting the effects of the U.S. sanctions on the country's automotive industry.

Referring to the design of a proprietary platform for IKCO vehicles, Pourmoghaj noted: "The development of this platform



will be up to date and in compliance with the highest standards and requirements of domestic laws and even export markets."

SEO changes regulations on trading codes for new shareholders

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) has set new regulations for issuance of trading codes for the new shareholders in the country's stock market, ISNA reported on Saturday.

Based on an announcement by the SEO, the new applicants can conduct trade one month after receiving their trading codes and they are required to pass an exam given by Securities and Exchange Brokers Association (SEBA) or SEO during the one-month time, while they are also committed to avoid signal selling and some other actions, and if they do so, their codes will be blocked.

As decided by SEBA, the applicants are required to take the mentioned exam in person or virtually, and it is in line with elevating the knowledge of shareholders.

Iranian stock market consists of four



major exchanges namely Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), and Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX).

The number of trading codes issued at Tehran Stock Exchange rose 128 percent in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2019) compared to its previous year, according to the TSE Head Ali Sahraei.

The official has said that some 327,000 trading codes have been issued at the TSE during the past year.

TEDPIX, IFX fall on Saturday

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), fell 18,025 points to 505,825 on Saturday, the first day of Iranian calendar week, IRNA reported.

Over 5.971 billion securities worth 45.79 trillion rials (about \$1.09 billion) were traded at TSE. The first market's index dropped 13,640 points and second market's index went down 34,247 points.

TEDPIX had risen 45,640 points, or 10 percent, to 524,394 during the past week.

The indices of Bank Mellat, Bank Tejarat, Iran Khodro Industrial Group, Saipa Group, Isfahan Oil Refinery, and National Iranian Copper Company mostly contributed to the rise of TEDPIX in the past week when the index experienced a noticeable rising trend and hit the record high of half million points.

As previously reported, TSE witnessed the highest ever weekly rise of its main index in the Iranian calendar week ended on



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

The index rose 45,638 points, or 12.9 percent, during the mentioned week to stand at 399,445 points.

During the Saturday trades in Iran's stock market, IFX, the main index of Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), also fell 209 points to 6,534.

As reported, 3,524 securities valued at 23,822 trillion rials (about \$567 million) were traded at IFB on Saturday.



# NPC producing antiseptic products to battle coronavirus

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** – Iran’s National Petrochemical Company (NPC) is producing antiseptic products following an all-out mobilization for containing the coronavirus, Shana reported on Friday, quoting an official with the company.

According to Ayoub Banavi, the mentioned products are mainly aimed to meet the needs of the industry’s workforce and employees, especially in Asalouyeh and Mahshahr regions.

The official noted that the prepared products will be gradually shipped to the mentioned regions, adding: “measures have

also been taken to also meet the requirements of the Oil Ministry headquarters.”

Government spokesman Ali Rabiei announced on Friday that Iran will face a rising number of patients diagnosed with coronavirus in the next two weeks and urged citizens to fully observe the Health Ministry advices to contain the spread of the disease.

The announcement by the government spokesman came as the National Headquarters for Campaign against Corona held a meeting on Friday in which Vice President Es’haq Jahangiri was also present.

The spokesman said decisions were taken



to limit entry into and exit from provinces in which coronavirus cases have been confirmed.

It was also decided to disinfect “special places” and provinces inflicted by coronavirus, scientifically called Covid-19.

## Asian LNG prices steady but traders wary of demand slowdown

Asian spot liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices stabilized this week though traders remained wary regarding overall demand as the spread of coronavirus threatens to dent the global economy.

The average LNG price for April delivery into northeast Asia is estimated at around \$3 per million British thermal units (mmBtu), steady from the previous week, but still near record low prices, several traders said.

“We were worried about China initially but now with the virus spreading, I don’t think spot prices will be recovering any time soon,” a Singapore-based trader said.

Global share prices are on track for their biggest weekly fall since the global financial crisis in 2008 as virus-related disruptions to travel and supply chains fuel fears of recession in the United States and the euro zone.

For LNG, some bargain hunters appeared in the market either seeking or buying cargoes for April while availability for March cargoes are limited, a second Singapore-based trader said.

South Korea’s GS Energy, Posco and Prism Energy International entered the spot market seeking cargoes, while India’s Gujarat State Petroleum Corp (GSPC) and Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) sought cargoes for March and April, traders said.

China’s appetite for LNG also appeared to be slowly resuming with shipments to the world’s second largest importer of the super-chilled fuel rising last week for the first time in five.

This week, LNG imports into China are expected to rise further by 11% from last week, Refinitiv Eikon data shows.



PetroChina on Wednesday bought a cargo for delivery in April from commodity trader Vitol through the S&P Global Platts’ pricing process also known as market-on-close (MOC).

This follows two cargoes the firm bought in the spot market, traders said, though this could not be immediately confirmed. It was also not clear if the cargoes are for delivery into China.

Still, supply was more than ample with several cargoes being offered in the market, traders said.

Oman LNG, Russia’s Sakhalin 2 plant, Angola LNG and Malaysia’s Petronas were all offering cargoes.

Osaka Gas, is also discussing a swap deal offering a cargo for loading from the United States and buying one for delivery into Japan, sources said.

Shipments of three LNG cargoes from Indonesia’s Tangguh LNG Plant to Fujian Province in China have been delayed because of the coronavirus outbreak, Indonesia’s upstream oil and gas regulator SKK Migas said on Thursday.

(Source: [auto.economictimes.india-times.com](http://auto.economictimes.india-times.com))

## Energy storage set to charge into central role in global markets: new research

Energy storage is set to take an increasingly central role in the global economy, growing almost tenfold over the next decade and a half, new research suggests.

The total energy storage market is expected to grow to \$546 billion in annual revenue by 2035, up from just \$59 billion in 2019, according to a report released by Lux Research.

Electric vehicles will be the main long-term driver of annual revenue and demand in the sector, with a 2035 total market share of 74% by annual revenue and 91% by demand as regulations on petrol and diesel vehicles tighten and auto makers start to ramp up demand in response.

Meanwhile, the stationary storage market will surpass the electronic devices market as early as 2023, when it is projected to become a \$30 billion industry of 52 GWh in installations.

The sector is driven by the need to support the rapidly growing amounts of renewable energy being deployed around the world, to meet grid storage mandates and it is also tapping into new revenue streams through application stacking. However, Lux warns, it can still be challenging to make money in this market due to uncertainties in regulation and regional differences.

### Market for electronic devices

The report, “Global Energy Storage Market 2019,” says that the three main drivers of energy storage – mobility applications, electronic devices, and stationary storage – will reach an annual combined deployment level of 3,046 GWh over the next 15 years, up from the current 164 GWh, with mobility applications making

up the lion’s share of the growth and stationary storage growing rapidly, while the market for electronic devices sees little growth.

The “energy storage industry is poised for a massive increase in annual revenue and deployment capacity as key innovative technologies, such as solid-state batteries and flow batteries, reach commercialization,” said analyst Chloe Holzinger, one of the report’s lead authors.

“We continue to expect electric mobility applications, primarily light-duty passenger vehicles, to be the principal long-term driver of energy storage annual revenue and demand, with a total market share of 74% by annual revenue and 91% by annual deployed GWh by the year 2035.”

In the near term, electric cars will dominate the market, with the market set to grow by \$24 billion by the end of 2022, a 49% increase.

### A combined annual growth

Starting from a lower base, medium and heavy duty vehicles will grow much faster, increasing from \$600 million in 2019 to \$3.6 billion in 2022, a combined annual growth rate of 80%, while the \$8 billion growth in the residential storage market comes at a CAGR of 76%.

Personal mobility devices such as electric bikes and scooters are set to from a \$2 billion market to \$43.7 billion, while Lux predicts that the stationary storage market will grow more than tenfold, from \$9.1 billion in 2019 to \$111.8 billion, driven by the commercialization of several key innovative technologies, including solid-state batteries and flow batteries.

(Source: [forbes.com](http://forbes.com))

## Renewable energy could power the world by 2050, experts say

What would a more sustainable world powered by renewable energy look like? We have a better sense, thanks to a special collection of research from experts from around the globe.

Collated by Stanford University, a collection of 47 peer-reviewed research papers by 91 authors analyzed different scenarios to examine whether individual countries or entire regions could get by solely relying on renewables.

The papers look at a range of different situations and geographies, including small island states, major powers and countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

In each case, they found energy for electricity, transport, building heating or cooling, and industry can be supplied reliably with 100% – or near-100% – renewable energy, at different locations around the world.

One study in the collection looked at global warming, air pollution and energy insecurity, creating Green New Deal roadmaps for 143 countries to overcome these problems.

The roadmaps call for these countries, which are collectively responsible for 99.7% of global CO2 emissions, to switch to 100% clean, renewable wind, water and solar power no later than 2050, with at least 80% renewables by 2030.

The study divides all the planet’s countries into 24 regions which can work together on grid stability and energy storage solutions, so energy demand matches supply between 2050 to 2052. After that, it’s possible to power the planet entirely by sustainable energy.

### Stabilizing global energy sector

Switching to wind, water and solar worldwide could eliminate 4 to 7 million deaths from air pollution annually, while first slowing and then reversing the effects of global warming and, in doing so, stabilizing the global energy sector.

What’s the World Economic Forum doing about the transition to clean energy?



A study by researchers in Finland looked at the feasibility of building a renewables super grid connecting the regions of North America, including the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

Dividing the regions into 20 interconnected sub-regions, based on population, energy demand, area and electricity grid structure, could significantly reduce storage requirements and overall cost of the energy system, they found.

While replacing fossil fuels with mainly wind and solar power is entirely possible by 2030, such a dramatic transformation couldn’t be achieved in the short-term without the full support of policymakers, investors and many other relevant organizations.

Saudi Arabia can transition to a 100% renewable energy system by 2040, according to another Finnish study. While the country is known for its oil deposits, it is also rich in another energy source: sunshine to power solar energy.

By 2050, solar power could account for 79% of the country’s energy demand, supported by enhanced battery and water storage solutions to lower energy system costs.

### The solar and wind sources

This study emphasizes the central role that energy

storage will play in the transition to a sustainable energy landscape, to overcome the intermittent nature of solar and wind resources and provide power when there is no wind or sunshine.

To be sure, challenges exist and the targets are ambitious. Still, the reports all conclude that the technology exists for the world to transition to a fully sustainable energy system by 2050, which should keep the planet below the 1.5° Paris global warming target.

Mitigating the impact of climate change means fewer floods, storms, droughts and other extremes caused by warming temperatures.

It could also mean less pollution. Nine out of every 10 people on the planet breathe polluted air, according to the World Health Organization, which can lead to respiratory diseases, heart conditions, strokes and other life-threatening diseases.

Pollution, largely from burning fossil fuels, kills up to seven million people annually, with low and middle-income countries carrying the highest burden. This includes exposure to toxic fumes from using wood, coal or dung as the primary cooking fuel.

A future powered by wind, solar and other sustainable energy sources, could also reduce energy bills. The costs of producing wind and solar have plummeted in recent years and renewables remain on course to outpace fossil fuels in future.

This future could be attainable, the researchers stress, provide urgent action is taken by a range of stakeholders, including policymakers, business leaders and other stakeholders. Through collaboration, the world can speed its transition to sustainable energy and a sustainable future.

(Source: [weforum.org](http://weforum.org))

## OPEC had better get used to \$50-or-lower oil

By Barani Krishnan

With Russia finally ending its cat-and-mouse game with OPEC, the world alliance of oil producers hopes to shock the market into a rebound next week by announcing a cut of more than one million barrels per day in output.

No matter what the cut ordained by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the cartel may have to live in an extended period of oil at \$50 per barrel or lower as the disruptive forces of the coronavirus continue tearing through the global economy.

As benchmark Brent and U.S. crude futures headed for their worst week since 2016, amid year-to-date losses of about 25% each, Russia emerged from the shadows to say that it wanted to continue cooperating with OPEC on production cuts.

OPEC Secretary-General Mohammed Barkindo also said there was “renewed commitment” in the OPEC+ alliance to “build the consensus for joint action ... in mitigating the current hyper volatility in the market.”

The Financial Times followed this up by saying the Saudis were trying to commit those in OPEC+ — mainly, Russia, of course — to a collective production cut of an additional million barrels per day.

While the details will likely be known only at the group’s March 6 meeting in Vienna, the takeaway was a cut “significantly higher” than the 600,000 bpd initially proposed.

The bottom line is OPEC is treating this like any other oversupply crisis in oil and trying to cut its way out of it. It’s a standard defense mechanism for the cartel — in fact, the only one it knows, the only one it can logically use and the only one that’s worked since its founding 60 years ago.

### The strategy of output rationing

Output rationing is probably a strategy that will work again for OPEC in bringing the market back up to some respectable level. But it probably won’t happen as quickly as OPEC desires.

In fact, OPEC might have to live with a frustratingly long range-bound period of \$40-\$50 oil. That’s because this is a demand crisis — unlike the typical oversupply situation the market has often found itself in the past six years, thanks to the U.S. fracking boom and cheap shale oil.



Compounding the problem for oil now is a tottering U.S. stock market that could turn into a bear market in a matter of days or weeks. The correlation between oil and equities cannot be disputed. Wall Street’s continued crash poses a terrifying specter for those long crude, not to mention those who had bet on continued record highs in stocks till U.S. elections in November, when President Donald Trump will be seeking a second term.

To better understand the current situation in oil — and determine how realistic a chance the market has for recovery — a journey back into December 2018 will help. Trapped in another supply glut then forced by Trump’s unexpected sanction waivers on Tehran — which the flooded the market with Iranian oil — OPEC+ announced a 1.2 million bpd cut on Dec. 7 that year.

But it wasn’t until after Christmas 2018 — nearly three weeks later — that the rebound came. WTI still ended December 2018 down almost 11% — not too far from the 9% decline for the S&P 500 that month. From there, in almost mirror-like fashion, U.S. crude and Wall Street’s top stocks gauge moved in unison through 2019.

If the harmony that existed between oil and equities then was valid, the collapse in both now shouldn’t surprise. As OANDA’s analyst Jeffrey Halley noted in his Friday commentary, the market carnage brought by the virus has now hit everything from stocks to bond yields and even the dollar. It simply meant that nothing was sacred and, if anything, things would get worse before they got better.

The December 2018 model of the oil-stocks relationship also gives an insight into the quagmire that possibly awaits crude prices this time.

Then companies like tech giant Apple (NASDAQ:AAPL), beer and spirits maker Constellation Brands (NYSE:STZ) and homebuilder Lennar (NYSE:LEN) were all issuing profit warnings, saying they’d miss quarterly earnings forecasts due to economic uncertainties.

Fast forward to February 2020 and we have Apple’s guidance that it doesn’t expect to meet second-quarter forecasts; Microsoft’s (NASDAQ:MSFT) caution that it will likely miss fiscal third quarter expectations; and Nike Inc. (NYSE:NKE) saying it has closed about half its stores in China while experiencing lower-than-expected retail traffic at the rest.

### The stock market and oil

Can the stock market and oil both be helped by economic stimulus, specifically a rate cut?

Maybe and maybe not, Moody’s Analytics said in a note on Thursday. The ratings agency said the Federal Reserve may have to restart an easing cycle it ended in December if there were signs that the U.S. economy, which was into a record 11th year of growth, was under serious threat from the coronavirus. Speculation has mounted this week the central bank may announce a half point cut in rates at its upcoming policy meeting in March.

Yet, given the uncertainty spawned by the virus, “Fed rate cuts may fall short of stabilizing markets,” Moody’s Analytics added.

The ratings agency said it expected the U.S. economy to grow by an annualized rate of 1.3% in the first quarter, down by 0.6% point because of the virus. Growth for all of 2020 was seen at 1.7%, down 0.2% point.

### Breaking down the forecast, it said:

“Our previous assumption that the virus will be contained to China proved optimistic, and the odds of a pandemic are rising. We previously put the odds of a pandemic at 20%, but we now put them at 40%.

A pandemic will result in global and U.S. recessions during the first half of this year. The economy was already fragile before the outbreak and vulnerable to anything that did not stick to script. COVID-19 is way off script.”

The implications for oil will be worse if U.S. consumer sentiment — which is responsible for 70% of the country’s growth — tanks. Forget the slowdown in retail or shopping. Simple behavioral changes like not going out to the movies, dinners or canceling travel plans because of pandemic concerns can have a huge impact on the economy — not something OPEC supply cuts can easily solve for oil.

“This is a global crisis that we still haven’t come to see the full magnitude of it. And it could be unlike any crisis really in our lifetime outside of a world war, in that the entire world gets seized up because of the spread of this virus,” New York Times op-ed columnist Tom Friedman said.

(Source: [investing.com](http://investing.com))

## Spanish oil group Repsol becomes major wind power developer

Repsol has added an 860MW wind complex in northern Spain to its development portfolio, in effect turning the Spanish oil & gas company into a major wind developer.

The so-called Delta 2 project will consist of 26 wind farms in the provinces of Huesca, Zaragoza, and Teruel, and will be built over the next three years and operated by the group’s Repsol Electricidad y Gas unit.

Once online, the wind complex together with the already under construction 355MW Delta complex in the regions of Zaragoza and Teruel, and the 255MW PI wind farm between Palencia and Valladolid, will push

Repsol’s wind power fleet in Spain to 1.45GW.

The oil firm also has a participation in the 25MW Atlantic WindFloat floating wind array off Portugal.

The wind power push comes as part of a strategy to reach net zero CO2 emissions by 2050. In interim steps, Repsol wants to reduce its so-called “carbon intensity indicator” by 10% by 2025, 20% by 2030, and 40% by 2040.

The somewhat complicated indicator measures emissions from its own exploration and production - plus emissions from the burning of oil and gas products

by its clients - in relation to the energy from its production of oil and gas, and electricity, combined.

“Delta 2 will contribute to reaching the target that Repsol has set to reach net zero emissions by 2050, being the first company in its sector to set this ambitious goal,” the company said in a statement.

Repsol last week said it plans to develop up to 500MW in new renewables project per year, lowered the long-term value of its oil and gas projects and booked a nearly €4.85b (\$5.33b) impairment on production assets.

Repsol already has 697MW in operating hydro capacity in Spain, and is also developing 595MW in solar projects in southern parts of the country, bringing its total renewables development pipeline to 2.05GW.

The company also operates 2.25GW in combined-cycle gas-fired plants for industrial use or electricity production.

Repsol’s emission reduction goals will serve as the basis for its 2021-2025 Strategic Plan that will be presented to the market and to investors on May 5, 2020.

(Source: [rechqargenews.com](http://rechqargenews.com))



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**Oil min. holds phone talk with Russia's energy min. on reducing oil output**

TEHRAN, Feb. 20 (MNA) -- Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh held a phone conversation with the Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak on Thu. with regards to the cooperation of the two countries within the framework of OPEC Plus.

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Oil min. holds phone talk with Russia's energy min. on reducing oil output

TEHRAN, Feb. 20 (MNA) -- Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh held a phone

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- Senior Iranian officials cast vote in ballot box
- All countries except 3 terrorist regimes in favor of...
- Islamic Revolution Leader casts his vote in ballot...
- Polls open across Iran
- CAO rejects rumors on continuation of Iran-China flights
- Hatami hails Iran aviation efforts to neutralize sanctions
- Iran's envoy, OPEC secretary-general discuss oil market
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# World changed after martyrdom of Lt. General Soleimani: Colombian analyst

**1 →** Mr. Maria pointed to the surprisingly positive impact of the Islamic Revolution and maintained, "Cuba and in general Latin America are well aware that Iran is a model. Yemenis share the same view. We observe how they have resisted against Saudi Arabia which holds huge technological and military power. After the martyrdom of Lt. General Soleimani and his comrade Mahdi al-Mohandes, we noticed how Iranians showed Awareness and awakening. They sent a message to the US saying, "We just gave you a slap, wait for the next consequences of your action! You will never be able to commit such crimes again!" these words can only be uttered by people who have a clever understanding of the world."

"I want to put emphasis on a theory. That is, not only Iran but also the world has undergone a transformation after the martyrdom of Lt. General Soleimani. In fact, American terrorism actually failed in this case. The world has changed since that day, and the US realized that the only formula that could destroy a nation was weapons, as other factors



have failed to achieve US goals. There are other countries such as North Korea that say, "If the US shows the slightest kind

of aggression, we will respond harshly". The world has changed today, and anyone who has the power to respond can stand

up to US imperialism and defend himself freely. The US is drowning more and more every day, as the Resistance Front is well aware of what is happening in the present world", he noted

Regarding the prospect of the second stage of the Islamic Revolution, the analysts said, "Given the geographical power, there are two very important issues to consider in the current situation. First, in the humanitarian field, Iran managed to establish good and effective relations with many countries around the world. This has given Iran a unique force. Second, the country has made numerous advances in various fields, which enhanced its confidence in the International arena. Iran and other free and independent countries that have been wounded by the United States, such as Russia, Venezuela, China, etc. must defend themselves. Now it's time to attack. They must put pressure on the US through media and International relations. It is currently a new era. Resistance is not enough anymore, we have to move forward. This is an active resistance."

## Coronavirus pandemic show just another business scam in world wide

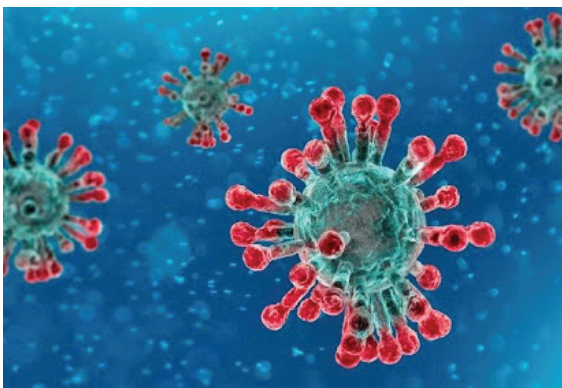
**1 →** In fact all the healthy people anyone they should periodically take some days making the Aerosol treatment because this therapy help to free the lungs from the bad air making them run much more better than before.

The Aerosol device it is composed by a mask, cable, filter and the electric engine, it takes 15 minutes of treatment 2/3 times a day for 1 week usually administering some cortisone medicines and with the antibiotic for patients affected by the breathing disease. The cortisone medicines like spray, injections, drops, powder, capsule and so on are the right way to help the lungs to breath well.

The level of oxygen present in the human body must be 95% - 99% of saturation values, under 95% it's an alarm of the breathing disease, to calculate these values there is a little device called Oxymeter to measuring the oxygen saturation to check the pulmonary lung functions or how well the lungs are working. The spirometry is a simple breathing test to check eventually an obstruction occurred, and the patient use this device managed by the doctor Pneumologist in order to puff inside a cable to get the values of the lung power.

Another exam test but much more invasive is the arterial hemogasanalysis sample, abit painful but necessary to get the real oxygen values of the human body. Till this moment the right doctor in charge to cure this breathing disease is always the Pneumologist that strangely wasn't involved in the Covid virus neithe interviewed on TV, so we should ask why?

Basically the world is own by the Anglo Zionists these lords of wars rule the countries with their imperial terrorism against the entire human civilization. Cause the China is getting powerful being the one country without any economy crisis and extending their business around the world scaring the Anglo American countries to lose their geopolitical influence, now all the corrupted media are



scaring the people with this fantastic story of a pandemic disease like Coronavirus while in real it's a simple breathing illness eventually degenerate in Pneumonia anyone possible to cure and no need surely of any vaccination, because it is already exist named Pneumococcal vaccination, so all the governments are lying.

In Italy this show is going ahead isolating some cities in north by using the army and closing the public facilities and privates imposing the citizens to do not go to work and staying at home wearing masks and we should ask why? the media are saying to avoid to go at hospital if there is a Covid risk, so we should ask how each citizen would recognize the Coronavirus not going at hospital? also in every hospital there is a section specialized in infectious diseases usually full of patient ills of Pneumonia, but suddenly is not possible get access to this department anymore, then we should ask why? in the same hospital doctors, paramedics, nurses, cleaners never use mask protections putting in a danger the

patients and themselves, the governance don't impose to them to use any protection, so we should ask why? every year it come the period of the flu while people contaminate each other in the public places no one use the mask and of course the government never impose to use it, and never isolate the cities with the army, so we should ask why? right now the African illegal immigrants keep coming in Italy how come if there is a red alert of Coronavirus these fake refugees arrive in our coast, we should ask why? anyway the Anglo American pharmaceutical companies sell billions of medicines in both cases, so they are interested in spread any virus out of nothing. All the business incomes gold, oil, food, water, weapons, medicines are increasing for these criminal leaders but not for the citizens, we should ask why? by the way at moment all the important media most of them own by jewish families in Italy are blaming Iran to be the second country for Coronavirus death but strangely they are not talking about mr Giovanni Ripamonti an Italian professional ski champion - coach died yesterday in Iran in the Shemshak mounts cause an avalanche though the Iranian rescue team immediately intervened saving the son of this Italian pro skier unfortunately for him the impact was truly strong, so I feel disgusted about some Italian and European media not mentioning this man member of the important Italian ski federation all in all cause the Coronavirus scam is much more important for their business rather a countryman death, so may god bless Giovanni finding the peace he deserve.

Hoping in a Coronavirus outbreak scam to be a short period of madness to cease really soon without becoming the excuse to begin the world war 3, I tell to the all people to don't believe in such terror story because there is no any risk actually, just like in a common flu it need to observe the things listed above to prevent any sort of degeneration.

## Dubowitz represents cabal of Neoconservative Zionists: U.S. author

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** – An American political analyst and author deplored recent remarks by Mark Dubowitz about the spread of coronavirus in Iran, saying that Dubowitz "represents the cabal of neoconservative Zionists who are almost entirely responsible for creating and spreading terrorism in the region".

"Dubowitz represents the cabal of neoconservative Zionists who are almost entirely responsible for creating and spreading terrorism in the region," Kevin Barrett told Tasnim in an interview, adding, "The truth is that Tehran has been the strongest anti-terrorist force in the region. Iran and its allies are the prime force opposing both the Wahhabi-inspired terrorism of Daesh and the Zionist terrorism targeting the Palestinian and Lebanese people".

Dr. Kevin Barrett, a Ph.D. Arabist-Islamologist, is one of America's best-known critics of the War on Terror. Dr. Barrett has appeared many times on Fox, CNN, PBS and other broadcast outlets, and has inspired feature stories and op-eds in the New York Times, the Christian Science Monitor, the Chicago Tribune, and other leading publications. Dr. Barrett has taught at colleges and universities in San Francisco, Paris, and Wisconsin, where he ran for Congress in 2008. He is the co-founder of the Muslim-Christian-Jewish Alliance, and author of the books Truth Jihad: My Epic Struggle Against the 9/11 Big Lie (2007) and Questioning the War on Terror: A Primer for Obama Voters (2009). His website is [www.truthjihad.com](http://www.truthjihad.com).



Following is the full text of the interview:

■ Mark Dubowitz, Chief Executive of Washington-based Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD), said on Twitter Tuesday that the coronavirus has halted Iran's non-oil exports, achieving "what American economic sanctions could not." Why do you think some US officials are cheering for this deadly Virus to spread - and enjoy seeing Iranian people suffer?


A: Dubowitz and his friends are not nice people. Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) is essentially the same organization as the notorious Project for the New American Century (PNAC), which was forced to shut down and emerge under a new name after David Ray Griffin's The New Pearl Harbor revealed that it had been the intellectual author of the 9/11 false flag operation. In September 2000 PNAC published "Rebuilding America's Defenses," which called for staging a "New Pearl Harbor" to trigger a US invasion of the Middle East. The same document looked forward to ethnic-specific biological weapons becoming a "politically useful tool."

So the short answer is that neoconservative extremists have always hoped to weaponize epidemics for use against their perceived enemies. They hate Iran because they are fanatical supporters of the Zionist genocide of Palestine, and they view Iran as a roadblock to Zionist aspirations for total domination of the region.

■ In another outrageous and unfounded claim, Dubowitz said that Tehran has "spread terrorism" in the Middle East and "now it's spreading the coronavirus." Do you believe this is Tehran that is spreading terrorism in the region?

A: Dubowitz represents the cabal of neoconservative Zionists who are almost entirely responsible for creating and spreading terrorism in the region. Thomas Suaraz's State of Terror: How Terrorism Created Modern Israel offers fully-documented proof. The Zionist public relations strategy largely consists of charging their opponents with doing exactly what the Zionist themselves are doing.

The truth is that Tehran has been the strongest anti-terrorist force in the region. Iran and its allies are the prime force opposing both the Wahhabi-inspired terrorism of Daesh and the Zionist terrorism targeting the Palestinian and Lebanese people.



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National Iranian Drilling Company	3,230,281	Tender No.: FP/11-98/201 Indent No.: 01-22-9846012	5,814,000,000

**Qualitative evaluation of tenderers**

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**Purchasing & Submitting**

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<b>Distribution Place</b>	Hall No. 113, 1 <sup>st</sup> floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN 061-34148601 Room No. 431, 4 <sup>th</sup> floor, Oil central building No.8, Yaghma alley, Jomhori Islami st., Tehran - Iran	
<b>Submitting Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 190,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491 (Shaba No. IR 520100004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank.</li> <li>Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents.</li> </ul>	
<b>Documents Receiving Method</b>	<b>Closing date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35 Days after the last time of Purchasing</li> </ul>
	<b>Address</b>	Hall No. 107, 1 <sup>st</sup> floor, Tender Committee, Operation building, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Tel: +98-61-34148580 +98-61-34148569

**Tender Guarantee**

Value of guarantee	291,000,000 Rial / 2,146 Euro
<b>Type of guarantee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtain activity license from the central bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran.</li> <li>Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 4001114006376636 ( Shaba No. IR 350100004001114006376636) in name of "NIDC saving account" by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran.</li> </ul>
<b>Duration of credit &amp; quotation</b>	Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.

(Name of department)

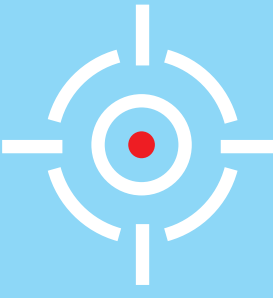
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**1398.7494**

Tender descriptions:			
The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. /Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial)
National Iranian Drilling Company	3 /230 / 215	Tender No.: FP/04-98/ 195 Indent No.: 08-22-9845125	4,206,000,000

**Qualitative evaluation of tenderers**

Method	Qualification process will be done in plain mode in offers opening session according to presentation of valid practice certificate / legal documents (certificate of corporation/ supply announcement up to latest changes) which should be related to tender subject.

**Purchasing & Submitting**

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<b>Submitting Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 190,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491 (Shaba No. IR 520100004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank.</li> <li>Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents.</li> </ul>	
<b>Documents Receiving Method</b>	<b>Closing date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35 Days after the last time of Purchasing ( closing date <b>April 13 / 2020</b> )</li> <li>The envelopes will be opened At <b>10:45 a.m On April 14 / 2020</b> )</li> </ul>
	<b>Address</b>	Hall No. 107, 1 <sup>st</sup> floor, Tender Committee, Operation building, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Tel: +98-61-34148580 +98-61-34148569

**Tender Guarantee**

Value of guarantee	21,000,000 Rial / 1,536 Euro
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<b>Duration of credit &amp; quotation</b>	Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.

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## United Airlines suspends some Asia flights due to coronavirus

United Airlines announced Friday it will reduce service throughout Asia due to the rising number of coronavirus cases in the region, amid declining traveler demand.

Travel to China has fallen by 75 percent in the last several weeks following the start of the COVID-19 crisis, which originated in Wuhan. United said it's also cutting its trips to Japan.

"We are reducing capacity to Tokyo-Narita, Osaka, Singapore and Seoul," United said in a statement. "Additionally, we are extending the suspension of flights between our U.S. hubs and Beijing, Chengdu, Shanghai and Hong Kong through April 30.



"We will stay in close contact with the CDC and other health organizations as we continue to evaluate our schedule."

United flights from Los Angeles and Houston to Tokyo's Narita International Airport will be affected from March 8 to April 24, as well as service from Chicago until at least March 27. It's also cutting flights from Newark, N.J., to five a week in April and will fly smaller planes for its San Francisco to Taipei route in March and April.

"Asia continues to be an important region for us, and we thank you for your patience and professionalism as we respond to the challenging situation in front of us," United said in a memo to employees Friday. "We'll continue to monitor the situation and provide you with the most recent information we have to keep you updated."

United's decision to reduce flights in Asia follows a similar change this week by competitor Delta, which cut weekly flights to Seoul nearly in half.

(Source: UPI)

## Russia asks citizens to avoid foreign travel over virus fears

**MOSCOW (Reuters)** — A senior Russian official on Saturday called on citizens of the country to refrain from non-essential travel abroad over fears about the growing number of coronavirus cases internationally.

Anna Popova, the head of Russia's consumer health watchdog, told local news agencies that Russians should stay put to avoid contracting the virus.

"In order to consider yourself protected today, first of all possible future trips outside the native country need to be reduced as much as possible," Popova said.

"Now is a time when it is not worth leaving Russia." Despite sharing one of the world's longest borders with China, where the first coronavirus cases were recorded last year, Russia has relatively few confirmed cases of the illness on its territory.

Three Russian nationals are receiving treatment in Russia after they contracted the virus on a cruise ship in Japan, the authorities have said. Two Chinese nationals were earlier taken to hospital in Russia with the virus but have since recovered.



## ROUND THE GLOBE

### Jongmyo Shrine

Jongmyo is a shrine housing the spirit tablets of the former kings and queens of the Joseon Dynasty.

Located in South Korea, the shrine is a symbolic structure that conveys the legitimacy of the royal family, where the king visited regularly to participate in the ancestral rites to wish for the safety and security of the people and state.



Jongmyo is the oldest and most authentic of the Confucian royal ancestral shrines, with a unique spatial layout that has been preserved in its entirety. It was originally built in the late 14th century, but was destroyed during the Japanese invasion during the 16th century, and was rebuilt in the early 17th century with a few expansions made to the buildings thereafter.

Jongmyo and its grounds occupy a 19.4 ha oval site. The buildings are set in valleys and surrounded by low hills, with artificial additions built to reinforce the site's balance of natural elements, in accordance with traditional pungsu principles.

Jongmyo was built faithfully abiding by the Confucian ideology of ancestral worship and its ritual formalities under strict royal supervision, and still maintains its original form dating from the Joseon Dynasty.

Traditions of ancestral worship rites — Jongmyo Jerye, are still carried out, together with the accompanying ritual music and dance performance. Construction and management of Jongmyo, and the operations of Jongmyo Jerye rituals, are all meticulously recorded in the royal protocols of the Joseon Dynasty.

(Source: UNESCO)

# Northwest Iran: A verdant realm of ancient churches & monasteries

By Afshin Majlesi

**TEHRAN** — To the untrained eye, Iran's earliest churches may seem modest structures to some but they bear testimony to a vast panorama of architectural and decorative scenes associated with Armenian culture blended with other regional cultures: Byzantine, Orthodox, Assyrian, Persian and Muslim.

St. Thaddeus, St. Stepanos and the Chapel of Dzordzor are three photogenic ancient churches that constitute the Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran, which were collectively inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage in 2008. They are dotted in fresh and green lands of northwest Iran and are important pilgrimage sites for Armenian-Iranians and others from across the globe.

Also known as the Qareh Klise ("the Black Church"), St. Thaddeus, as one of the oldest surviving Christian monuments in the country, is situated in Chaldoran county some 20 kilometers from Maku, adjacent to the borders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkey.

The ancient Church shows off elaborate bas-reliefs of flowers, animals and human figures on its façade and exterior walls. It bears verses of Old and New Testament in Armenian calligraphy as well.

The Chapel of Dzordzor stands tall on the outskirts of Maku. The name narratively originates from a famous painter Hovans Yerz, known as Dzordzortzi, who supervised the chapel's restoration for a while.

What is present now is a remnant of the large monastery that once existed there, as the entire chapel has been shifted



Saint Thaddeus



Saint Stepanos

to a new location 600 meters away due to submergence resulting from a dam that was built on the river. Before the building was dismantled, detailed plans were made and the dismantled elements numbered so that they could be reassembled to the same design at the new site. The reconstruction was carried out in the late 1980s.

St. Thaddeus Monastery plays host an annual religious ritual every summer. Last July, it hosted to over 3,000 Christian worshippers coming together from Iran, Armenia, Syria, Lebanon, the Netherlands, France, Austria, Germany, Canada and some other countries.

Baptism of children and youngsters along with performances of traditional songs and dances are amongst highlights of the pilgrimage.

The festivity is of high importance for Iranian-Armenians who mostly come from the cities of Tabriz, Urmia, Tehran, Isfahan and Qazvin, to stage the reunion in groups and families. It also provides them an opportunity to go on holiday and visit distant relatives.

Attendees commemorate the martyrdom of St. Thaddeus, one of the twelve disciples killed while he was preaching the Gospel. The legend says, a church dedicated to him was first built in 68 CE where Qareh Klise is standing.

Thaddeus was an apostle of Christ and the ceremony is rooted in the last supper with Jesus Christ on the night of his arrest and execution by the Roman soldiers.

Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians are the most significant religious minorities in Iran with Christians constituting the bulk.



The Chapel of Dzordzor

## Iranian, German archaeologists, experts start project in Kerman

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** — German Archaeologists and experts along with Iranian fellows have commenced a joint survey in Kerman province, southeastern Iran.

Senior Iranian archaeologist Nader Alidad-Soleymani and German Professor Peter Pfalzner co-led the survey, which is aimed to record evidence about previously excavated sites in the counties of Jiroft, Kahnouj, Anbarabad, Faryab, Rudbar, Qalehganj and Manujan, ISNA reported on Saturday.

"A delegation of Iranian and German archaeological experts has arrived in Kerman to start the sixth season of a research in southern parts of Kerman province in order to document the hills and sites, which had been identified during the past five seasons," Alidad-Soleymani said.

"Over the past five seasons of archeological research, much of these areas have been studied by Iranian and German archaeologists, shedding light on [archaeological] hills, landscapes,



Jiroft vase, 2800-2300 BC

structures and human settlements, which date from the Neolithic era [also known

as the "New Stone Age"] up to various Islamic periods."

Supervised by Iran's Cultural Heritage and Tourism Research Center, the previous surveys adopted a methodology that involved field sampling methods, pottery documentation, setting up a database system and carbon dating.

Back in 2008, Piotr Steinkeller, professor of Assyriology in Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations of Harvard University, announced that Jiroft is the lost ancient city of Marhashi.

Steinkeller presented his theory during the first round of an international conference on Jiroft civilization, held in Tehran on May 5 and 6, 2008. Marhashi, (known in earlier sources as Warahshe) was a 3rd millennium BC polity, which was formed east of Elam on the Iranian plateau.

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

## COVID-19 cancels ITB Berlin 2020

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** — International Tourism Fair (ITB) Berlin has been canceled due to the spread of the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, organizers said on Friday.

The fair was due to take place from March 4 to 8, with around 10,000 planned exhibitors, including Iranian travel marketers, tour operators, airlines, hoteliers and craftspeople.

The massive fair was called off following advice from Berlin's health and economics ministries, and after its health authority asked organizers to impose stricter controls on potential visitors, Messe Berlin announced.

"Due to the rapid spread of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) the Federal Ministry of Health and the Federal Ministry of Economics have stated their opinion that ITB Berlin be cancelled."

Dr. Christian Goke, CEO of Messe Berlin GmbH, said: "With more than 10,000 exhibitors from over 180 countries ITB Berlin is extremely important for the world's tourism



industry. We take our responsibility for the health and safety of our visitors, exhibitors and employees very seriously. It

## California reports 2nd case of community-spread COVID-19

Health officials in Santa Clara County, Calif., announced Friday that a second person has tested positive for COVID-19 without having prior travel or contact with someone who has the disease.

The case, which involves an adult woman, is the third case of COVID-19 in the county.

Dr. Sara Cody, director of Santa Clara Public Health Department, said the woman had no contact with someone known to have the disease.

"We've been working to identify the woman's contacts and to understand who she might've exposed to the virus," she said

at a news conference.

Cody said the county has received assistance from the California Department of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

She said the woman isn't linked to either of the other two cases of COVID-19 in Santa Clara County, nor had she traveled to Solano County, where the other case of community-spread coronavirus was reported. About 40 miles separate the two counties.

It is the 16th confirmed case of COVID-19 in the United States, not including evacuees from Wuhan and the Diamond Princess

cruise ship.

Meanwhile, CDC officials said all state and local public health laboratories across the country will have the capability to test for the virus by the end of next week.

The announcement comes as officials face criticism over shortages of working test kits in several states with hundreds of suspected cases of the virus, most notably California. UPI reported Thursday that California currently has 8,400 state residents under self-quarantine but only 200 kits available to test for the virus.

According to Nancy Messonnier, director of the agency's National Center for Immu-

nization and Respiratory Diseases, states that received kits as part of the initial batch distributed two weeks ago will be able to use them under a modified testing protocol. Those kits yielded inconclusive results during quality assurance checks for one of their three testing components, while the other two were deemed effective.

However, the CDC now believes that the tests can accurately test for COVID-19 using just the two functioning components, Messonnier said. Still, the agency plans to send out revised test kits in the coming days.

(Source: UPI)



# Iran pioneer in cancer innovation, research among Islamic countries

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Iran has the most research and innovation in the field of cancer both in the region and among Islamic countries, deputy health minister Reza Malekzadeh has stated.

Referring to the great progress in cancer research, he said that “We have been able to play a role in this area globally.”

He added that one of the hopes for early detection of cancer is the use of urine and blood tests for people who are susceptible to cancer.

“We have conducted researches in the field of blood and urine biomarkers, which will help control cancers in the country,” he said.

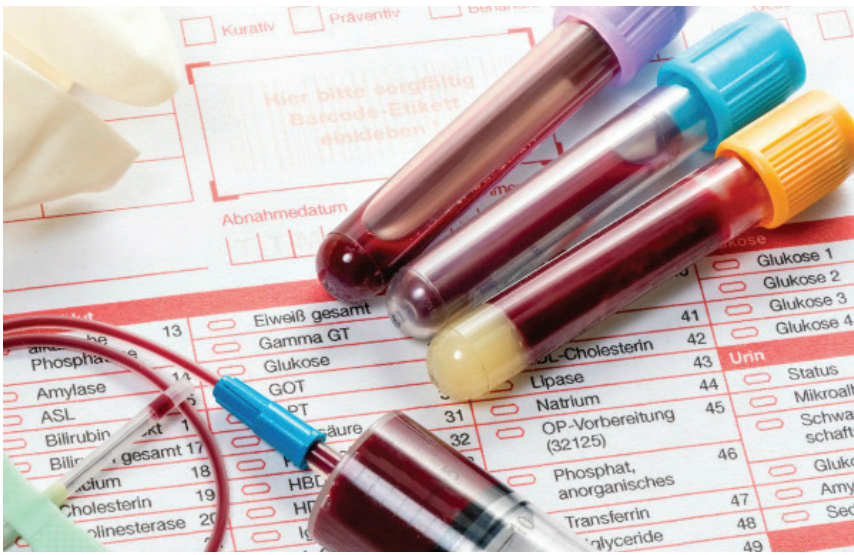
A team of researchers at Iran University of Medical Sciences for the first time in the world has managed to detect bladder cancer up to 10 years before clinical diagnosis and early tumor formation in asymptomatic healthy individuals.

Led by Malekzadeh, the team has been able to detect the disease early in urine samples by examining a somatic genetic mutation.

According to WHO, to assess the test’s ability to detect the mutations in urine samples before any clinical symptoms of bladder cancer occur, World Health Organization, International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) researchers collaborated with the Tehran University of Medical Sciences in Iran and the United States National Cancer Institute to design a unique pilot study within the Golestan Cohort Study.

**Cancer patients increasing annually**

Pointing out that there are about 250,000 cancer patients in the country, Malekzadeh noted that 50,000 people die each year from the disease and 125,000 new patients develop



**According to WHO, to assess the test’s ability to detect the mutations in urine samples before any clinical symptoms of bladder cancer occur, World Health Organization, International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) researchers collaborated with the Tehran University of Medical Sciences in Iran and the United States National Cancer Institute to design a unique pilot study within the Golestan Cohort Study.**

cancer, so that the number of people with the disease increases each year.

In 2014, some 125,000 Iranian have been diagnosed with cancer, of which about 52

percent were male and the rest were female, and we anticipate that the number of cases will reach 150,000 by 2025, and during this period, there will be more than 5,000 cases annually, he explained.

He went on to say that 380,000 deaths occur every year in the country, of which about 122,000 are premature deaths, or nearly 40 percent of deaths happen to people aging 70 or less.

Among the premature deaths, 34,000 are related to cancer, he lamented, adding, 11,000 people aging less than 50 years lost their lives due to cancer.

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’s cancer registry system the most accurate**

The cancer registry system is one of the most accurate one in the world, and we are the most advanced in the field of cancer in the region, Malekzadeh highlighted.

There has not been a precise cancer registration system in the country since four years ago, which is the most important infrastructure for cancer control to know which cancers are most common in the country and how to prevent and treat them, he concluded.

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.

## WHO sends fifth batch of COVID-19 diagnostic kits to Iran

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — The World Health Organization (WHO) sent the fifth consignment of COVID-19 diagnostic kits to Iran, IRNA news agency reported.

The fifth consignment of COVID-19 diagnostic kits arrived in Tehran, WHO representative to Iran Christoph Hamelmann wrote on his Twitter account on Friday.



“We are on our way back from the airport with emergency personnel and health workers, and I appreciate their efforts battling novel coronavirus,” he tweeted.

The number of coronavirus cases in the country has risen to 593, with 43 deaths so far.

## Chinese medical team in Tehran to help fight coronavirus

**1 →** “Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said that the first Chinese shipments has arrived in Iran and more aid would be sent. Be strong Iran,” the envoy tweeted on Friday.

Some 5,000 coronavirus test kits, and 250,000 face masks have also been sent last week.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke to his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif by telephone Friday afternoon. The Chinese minister expressed his sympathy toward Iran as the first country who expressed sympathy with the Chinese government and nation after the outbreak of COVID-19, and expressed his condolences to the Iranian government and nation.

He also announced China’s readiness to send more specialized assistance, as well as to provide all the findings and methods of combating COVID-19 and conduct scientific cooperation with Iran.

Zarif expressed his appreciation for China’s medical supplies and technical support, he called the corona epidemic a global issue, emphasizing that cooperation of all countries is the solution without politicizing it, and welcomed the collaboration of researchers for joint scientific research to eradicate the disease.

Iran has so far sent three million face masks to China and has expressed readiness for providing more medical aid to China.

## WORDS IN THE NEWS

### EU’s first military mission to Macedonia

(March 31, 2003)

The European Union is launching its first military mission. It is taking over from NATO to run a peace-keeping operation in Macedonia with a force of three hundred soldiers. The mission has been called “Operation Concordia” but it is starting at a time when the EU is still suffering from damaging disputes about Iraq. This report from Chris Morris.

It may be scarcely noticed amidst the **flurry** of war in Iraq, but this is something of a **turning point** for European defense. For the first time, the EU, that most political of organizations, will run a military mission. It’s **putting flesh on the bones** of its ambitions to create a **viable** European defense identity. It’s neither the biggest, nor the most ambitious of missions – just three hundred troops in Macedonia to begin with, for **just six months** – but it is a start and it has great **symbolic importance**. If all goes well, and as the EU is taking over from a successful NATO mission there’s no reason why it shouldn’t, then there will be more to come. The EU already **has its eye on** the much larger peace-keeping operation in Bosnia, where twelve thousand troops are currently under NATO command.

Officials say future missions could take them to Africa or the Caucasus, once the EU’s new rapid reaction force is up and running. Europe has been **split asunder** by bitter disagreements about Iraq, exposing the **fatal weakness** of plans to create a **common** foreign policy. But the Balkans is one place where the EU is making progress.

**Words**

**flurry:** sudden activity

**a turning point:** a time at which a very important event or change occurs

**putting flesh on the bones:** in this context – putting its ideas into practice by forming a small army

**viable:** capable of doing what it is intended to do

**just six months:** only six months

**symbolic importance:** important because of what it represents

**has its eye on:** to watch carefully to see how the situation develops

**split asunder:** broken into pieces

**fatal weakness:** a lack of strength which results in failure

**common:** able to be accepted and used by everyone

(Source: BBC)



Every action has a reaction. We have one planet; one .chance

## New cars producing more carbon dioxide than older models

New cars sold in the UK produce more carbon dioxide than older models, according to new research that suggests the industry is going backwards in tackling the climate crisis.

Cars that reach the latest standards of emissions use cleaner internal combustion engine technology to combat air pollution, but the relentless rise in demand for bigger, heavier models meant that average emissions of the greenhouse gas rose, according to the consumer group Which?

The latest generation of cars produced 7% more emissions than those manufactured to earlier standards, testing of 292 models released in the UK since 2017 found. Cars account for just over 18% of UK emissions, according to government figures, and reining back pollution from the sector is seen as crucial to efforts to cut the country’s carbon emissions to net zero by 2050.

Lisa Barber, editor of Which? magazine, said: “It is shocking to see our tests uncover increasing levels of carbon dioxide emissions for the latest cars that are being built and sold to UK consumers.

“Manufacturers must ensure that they are doing everything in their power to create cleaner vehicles that are fitter for our planet and its future.”

Overall, cars that met the latest emissions regulations (standards known as Euro 6d and Euro 6d-temp) produced 162.1g of CO2 per kilometre, 10.5g more than those in the previous generation (Euro 6b and Euro 6c).

That was far above the 95g target carmakers must meet across all EU sales in order to avoid steep fines. Manufacturers across Europe are racing to make and sell



new electric models in order to meet the rules, although many are relying on hybrid models that combine internal combustion with battery power.

Mike Hawes, chief executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), the industry lobby group, said: “We can’t comment on the results of non-official tests by commercial organisations where the methodology is unclear.

“Only the official, Europe-wide WLTP [Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure] test – the toughest and most comprehensive in the world – can be relied upon by consumers to accurately compare vehicles on a like-for-like and repeatable basis. This shows that new cars emit, on average, some 29.3% less CO2 than models produced in 2000, the effect of which

drivers can see at the pump.”

However, the new findings tally with SMMT data which found that the average CO2 output of cars sold in the UK has risen for the past three years. Cars sold in the UK in 2019 produced average emissions of 127.9g of CO2 per kilometre.

The Which? analysis found that carbon emissions were rising across every segment of the car market, from smaller city cars through to SUVs, as manufacturers packed more technology into their cars. Emissions rose fastest in the hybrid segment, up by 31% between generations, in part because of the weight of two different power sources.

Newer cars performed significantly better on air quality issues, with the latest models slashing emissions of carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides, both of which directly harm human health.

The tests also found that carbon emissions were higher than official readings carried out by EU regulators, which do not measure extended use at motorway speeds or take into account a car full of people using the air conditioning and the radio.

Doug Parr, chief scientist at Greenpeace, said the figures showed that the government should ban the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030, earlier than current plans to ban internal combustion engines from 2035.

“It’s clear that we can’t simply rely on the car industry’s good will to make progress,” he said. “We need decisive intervention from government, starting with enforcing existing rules on car emissions and bringing in a firm ban on sales of new diesel and petrol vehicles by 2030.”

(Source: The Guardian)

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

### Shiraz University, Chinese Academy of Sciences sign MOU

Shiraz University and Chinese Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences (RCEES) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to expand cooperation in scientific and research projects, IRNA news agency reported on Tuesday. Joint research activities through the Silk Road Research Program, joint publication of articles and books, study opportunities for faculty and doctoral students, use of laboratory facilities, experience exchange workshops especially in the field of natural disasters, droughts, floods, medicinal plants, biodiversity, land degradation and international joint research projects were among the mutually agreed programs. The MOU provides the opportunity of extensive scientific and research cooperation in a wide range of areas of interest to both natural and agricultural resources.

### دانشگاه شیراز و موسسه تحقیقات منابع طبیعی چین تفاهم‌نامه امضا کردند

دانشکده کشاورزی به نمایندگی از دانشگاه شیراز با موسسه تحقیقات منابع طبیعی آکادمی علوم چین سند تفاهم نامه همکاری‌های علمی-پژوهشی مشترک امضا کرد.

به گزارش ایرنا، زمینه بهره برداری عملیاتی از ظرفیت های تفاهم نامه حاضر به ویژه در زمینه فعالیت های پژوهشی مشترک از طریق برنامه پژوهشی راه ابریشم، نشر مشترک مقالات و کتب، فرصت‌های مطالعاتی اعضای هیات علمی و دانشجویان دکتری، استفاده از امکانات آزمایشگاهی، برگزاری کارگاه‌های تبادل تجربه به ویژه در حوزه حوادث غیرمترقبه طبیعی، خشکسالی، سیل، گیاهان دارویی، تنوع زیستی، تخریب سرزمین و طرح‌های پژوهشی مشترک بین‌المللی در قالب برنامه‌های مشترک مورد توافق طرفین مورد بحث و بررسی قرار گرفت.

این تفاهم‌نامه مقدمه همکاری‌های گسترده علمی و پژوهشی را در دامنه وسیعی از حوزه‌های مورد علاقه طرفین در زمینه منابع طبیعی و کشاورزی فراهم می‌کند.

## PREFIX/SUFFIX

### “dic-”

**Meaning:** speak, say

**For example:** I have four letters to **dictate**.

## PHRASAL VERB

### Put something out

**Meaning:** to produce something for sale

**For example:** A great many people are involved in putting out a newspaper.

## IDIOM

### Done and dusted

**Explanation:** When a project, task or activity is done and dusted, it is completely finished or ready

**For example:** I’ve nearly finished preparing the presentation. When it’s all done and dusted I’ll be able to relax.



## The Idlib battle shows Turkey's real face

→ 1 Moscow is clever enough to recognize the ripe time to be hard against Erdogan and the due time to be flexible towards him.

Also, the United States will not interfere directly in the Idlib conflict. The U.S. policy is currently based on black-mailing the international sides and providing supports for the Takfiri terrorists. Washington is utilizing the policy as the best tool to materialize its own objectives on the ground.

Undoubtedly, the Zionist regime of Israel has been considered as one of the main partners of Turkey in the Idlib battle. Observers are now witnessing a series of Israeli forces' operations against the Syrian military sites in Damascus. These moves by Turkey and Israel clearly show coordination between Tel Aviv and Ankara in their common approach towards the Syrian issue.

It should be mentioned that Tel Aviv army will avoid any direct ground presence in Syria; instead, Israel has resorted to providing military backup for Turkey via targeting the Syrian Army positions to weaken Damascus and give more chances to Turkish forces to continue their pro-militant operations in Idlib with the lowest level of threat.

Israel's raids on the Syrian targets sends this message to the Turkish officials and the Takfiri terrorists in Idlib that Tel Aviv is in the same boat with Ankara and the terrorists in the battle against Syria and the larger resistance front.

## Russia cites Syria agreement but Erdogan sounds belligerent

### Erdogan asks Russia's Putin to step aside in Syria

→ 1 "I asked Mr Putin: 'what's your business there? If you establish a base, do so but get out of our way and leave us face to face with the regime,'" Erdogan said, recalling his Friday's telephone conversation with the Russian president.

He further complained that Turkey can no longer handle new waves of refugees and would let them travel on to Europe.

"What did we do yesterday (Friday)? We opened the doors," he said. "We will not close those doors... Why? Because the European Union should keep its promises."

Erdogan also estimated that 18,000 migrants have amassed on the Turkish borders with Europe since Friday, warning that the number could reach as many as 30,000 on Saturday.

Tensions surged in Idlib on Thursday after dozens of Turkish soldiers were killed in an airstrike by Syrian forces.

The Russian Defense Ministry said that the targeted Turkish troops "were in the battle formations of terrorist groups."

On Friday, Turkey which backs anti-Damascus militants claimed that it hit 200 Syrian government targets, "neutralizing" 309 soldiers.

Defense Minister Hulusi Akar claimed that the Turkish military had also destroyed five Syrian government helicopters, 23 tanks, 10 armored vehicles, 23 howitzers, five ammunition trucks, two air defense systems and three ammunition depots.

Drone footage released by the Turkish military showed blistering attacks on tanks, howitzers and soldiers.

However, a senior Turkish official, who was speaking on condition of anonymity, claimed on Saturday that Turkey had destroyed "a chemical warfare facility, located some 13 kilometers south of Aleppo," along with a large number of other Syrian government targets.

The so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights challenged the claim, saying Turkey had struck a military airport in eastern Aleppo, where there are no chemical weapons.

(Source: agencies)

## French terrorists fighting against Syrian govt. forces in Idlib

Dozens of French militants are reportedly fighting within the ranks of Takfiri terrorists in Syria's Idlib Province amid a major army operation to liberate the last terrorist-held bastion.

FRANCE 24 reported on Friday that those Idlib-based terrorists are following orders from French militant recruiter Omar Omsen, head of an al-Qaeda-linked terror outfit, called Firqat al-Ghuraba.

«There are a few dozen people who have been in the area since 2013 and who have set up a camp on the Syrian-Turkish border,» said FRANCE 24's Wassim Nasr, who spoke with Omsen via Skype.

The French terrorists pledged allegiance to the al-Qaeda militant group upon arrival in Syria, but «reclaimed their independence in 2018,» according to Omsen.

### Idlib conflict

Over the past few weeks, tensions have escalated between Ankara and Damascus in Idlib, the only large territory in the hands of terrorists after the Syrian military managed to undo militant gains across the Arab country and bring back almost all of Syrian soil under government control.

Syria launched the counter-terrorism offensive in Idlib and neighboring areas last December after its troops and those of Russia came under increasing militant attacks.

The Syrian army gains, however, coincided with a massive deployment of troops and military equipment by Turkey, which is evidently upset by changing conditions on the ground.

Under a deal reached with Russia in the Black Sea resort of Sochi in September 2018, Turkish troops were deployed in Idlib and set up military outposts there.

The agreement required Turkey to oust Takfiri terrorists from the northwestern Syrian province. But, more than a year into the Sochi deal, foreign-backed terrorist rule supreme in Idlib in quite close proximity to the Turkish troops.

On Thursday, Turkey said at least 33 of its soldiers were killed in an aerial attack by Russian-backed Syrian forces in Idlib.

The Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement that the targeted Turkish troops were among terrorists.

"Turkish soldiers who were in the battle formations of terrorist groups (on Thursday) came under the fire of Syrian troops," the statement read.

Turkish forces had not communicated their presence in the area, "where they should not have been," it added. "The Russian air force is not used in this zone."

Following the incident, Turkey requested a NATO emergency meeting, citing security threats.

(Source: Press TV)

# Afghanistan's Taliban, U.S. sign peace deal

→ 1 "With this deal comes the end of war in Afghanistan," he told Al Jazeera.

In a statement, the Taliban said it had reached an agreement "about the termination of occupation of Afghanistan".

"The accord about the complete withdrawal of all foreign forces from Afghanistan and never intervening in its affairs in the future is undoubtedly a great achievement," it added.

For his part, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called on the Taliban Saturday to honor its commitments.

"I know there will be a temptation to declare victory, but victory for Afghans will only be achieved when they can live in peace and prosper," he said at the Doha ceremony.

### Troop withdrawal

Minutes before the deal was signed, a joint statement released by the U.S. and the Afghan government said the U.S. and NATO troops would withdraw from Afghanistan within 14 months.

About 14,000 U.S. troops and approximately 17,000 troops from 39 NATO allies and partner countries are stationed in Afghanistan in a non-combatant role.

"The United States will reduce the number of U.S. military forces in Afghanistan to 8,600 and implement other commitments in the U.S.-Taliban agreement within 135 days of the announcement of this joint declaration



and the U.S.-Taliban agreement," the joint statement said.

It added that the Afghan government will engage with the United Nations Security Council "to remove Taliban members from sanctions list by May 29".

"No agreement is perfect, and the U.S.-Taliban deal is no exception," said Robert Malley, president and CEO of the International Crisis Group, said.

"But it represents the most hopeful step to end a war that has lasted two decades

and taken countless American and especially Afghan lives. It ought to be celebrated, bolstered and built upon to reach a genuine intra-Afghan peace."

The talks were launched in 2018 as part of a push by U.S. President Donald Trump's administration to strike a deal with the Taliban, which has been fighting the U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan since it was toppled from power in 2001.

The peace deal also proposes an intra-Afghan dialogue with the government in Kabul

and the release of 5,000 Taliban members from prison.

The Taliban has so far refused to speak to the Western-backed Afghan government, saying it is a "puppet regime".

The intra-Afghan talks are to begin on March 10 but no specific details have been given.

A weeklong "reduction in violence" between the Taliban, the U.S. and Afghan security forces saw a sudden drop in violence and casualties across the country after taking effect on February 22.

The Taliban now controls or holds influence over more Afghan territory than at any point since 2001 and has carried out near-daily attacks against military outposts throughout the country.

The two sides were on the verge of signing a peace agreement in September when Trump abruptly cancelled the talks after a Taliban attack killed an American soldier.

Trump has long expressed eagerness to bring U.S. soldiers home and to end the country's longest war as he seeks re-election in 2020.

More than 100,000 Afghans have been killed or wounded since 2009 when the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan began documenting casualties.

(Source: al Jazeera)

## Biden seeks decisive South Carolina win to breathe life into presidential bid

Former Vice President Joe Biden seeks a decisive victory in South Carolina's Democratic primary to resuscitate his presidential hopes, while Bernie Sanders aims to cement his status as the leading candidate for the party's nomination.

The contest in South Carolina, the fourth state to vote on which Democrat will challenge Republican President Donald Trump in November, takes place just three days before Super Tuesday races in 14 states, which will award one-third of the available national delegates in a single day.

South Carolina, where African Americans account for 60% of the Democratic electorate, is seen as a final stand for Biden, the one-time front-runner who faltered in national polls after poor showings in Iowa and New Hampshire.

His second-place finish in Nevada's caucuses a week

ago - while still far behind Sanders, a senator from Vermont - provided his campaign fresh momentum, and polls show he is well positioned to win the Palmetto State.

For months, Biden's campaign has argued South Carolina would serve as a "firewall" given his strength among African-American voters, and Biden himself has suggested anything less than a victory would imperil his campaign.

But with Super Tuesday looming so close, even a comfortable victory in South Carolina might not be enough for Biden to blunt the momentum of Sanders, a self-identified "democratic socialist" whom Democratic Party leaders worry might be too liberal to beat Trump.

After South Carolina, Biden will also face competition from billionaire former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who has blanketed the country with half a billion dollars in

advertising. Bloomberg skipped the first four states and will be on the ballot for the first time on Tuesday.

Sanders, with his unabashed populist message of social and economic justice, has grown stronger with each contest, finishing in a virtual tie for first in Iowa with former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, before notching a narrow win over Buttigieg in New Hampshire and a decisive victory in Nevada.

Sanders said on Friday he was in "striking distance" in South Carolina.

"We've come a long way," he said at a church hall in Saint George, South Carolina. "When we started this campaign here in South Carolina, I think we were 25 or 30 points behind. We've made up a lot of ground."

(Source: Reuters)

## Malaysia's king appoints Muhyiddin Yassin as prime minister



Malaysia's king has appointed seasoned politician Muhyiddin Yassin as the new prime minister, the latest twist to a week-long political crisis.

In a statement issued by the palace on Saturday, Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah said Muhyiddin, a former interior minister and president of the Bersatu party, will be sworn in on Sunday as he likely commands the most support of any candidate.

The appointment came after this week's shock resignation of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, a move that plunged the country into crisis following a weekend of political wrangling and the collapse of the ruling alliance.

"The process to appoint the prime minister cannot be delayed because the

country needs a government for the well-being of the people and the nation," the palace statement said. The king appoints the country's prime minister.

The king decreed that "it was the best decision for all".

The announcement came hours after Mahathir struck a new deal to work with his former ruling alliance led by rival Anwar Ibrahim and threw his name into the fray again.

But the palace announced that King Abdullah believed that Muhyiddin has the support of a majority of legislators.

"I only ask for all Malaysians to accept the decision announced by the national palace today," Muhyiddin told reporters at his home.

(Source: al Jazeera)

## Kim warns of 'serious consequences' if virus spreads to N. Korea



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has called for stronger efforts to guard against coronavirus, saying there will be "serious consequences" if the outbreak spreads to the country.

North Korea has not reported a single case of COVID-19, which has killed more than 2,800 people and infected over 84,000 people in dozens of countries since it emerged in neighboring China.

During a meeting of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea, Kim called for the country's anti-epidemic headquarters to strengthen screening and to seal off all "channels and space through which the infectious disease may find its way," the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported on Saturday.

"In case the infectious disease spreading

beyond control finds its way into our country, it will entail serious consequences," KCNA quoted Kim as saying.

Pyongyang has been pushing a tough anti-virus campaign it has described as a matter of "national existence".

The country has shut down nearly all cross-border traffic, banned tourists, intensified screening at entry points and mobilized tens of thousands of health workers to monitor residents and isolate those with symptoms. It has also placed hundreds of foreigners in quarantine to prevent an outbreak.

Experts say an epidemic in North Korea could be dire because of the country's chronic lack of medical supplies and poor healthcare infrastructure.

(Source: RT)

## Greek police fire teargas on migrants at border with Turkey



An estimated 3,000 people had gathered on the Turkish side of the border at Kastanies, according to a Greek government official. Kastanies lies just over 900 km north-east of Athens.

Greece, which was a primary gateway for hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers in 2015 and 2016, has said it will keep the migrants out.

However, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Saturday that some 18,000 migrants had crossed borders from Turkey into Europe. Speaking in Istanbul,

he did not immediately provide evidence for the number, but said it would rise.

Greek police were keeping media about a kilometre away from the Kastanies border crossing, but the broader area, where the two countries are divided by a river, was more permeable.

A group of Afghans with young children waded across fast-moving waters of the Evros river and took refuge in a small chapel. They crossed into Greece on Friday morning.

"Today is good" said Shir Agha, 30 in broken English. "Before, Erdogan people, police problem," he said. Their shoes were caked in mud. It had rained heavily the night before, and by early morning, temperatures were close to freezing.

Greece had already said on Thursday it would tighten border controls to prevent coronavirus reaching its Aegean islands, where thousands of migrants are living in poor conditions.

Nearly a million refugees and migrants crossed from Turkey to Greece's islands in 2015, setting off a crisis over immigration in Europe, but that route all but closed after the European Union and Ankara agreed to stop the flow in March 2016.

(Source: Daily Star)



# FFIRI provides feedback on FIFA letter

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN**—The Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) has sent a letter to FIFA responding to FIFA orders which have been stated in a previous letter.

FIFA ordered the revision process of the FFIRI Statutes which in earlier correspondence.

Based on the letter sent by FIFA to FFIRI on Feb. 24, 2020, FIFA and the AFC stated that their position is that the FFIRI elective General Assembly, scheduled for March 15, 2020 in Tehran, should be postponed until after the draft IRIFF statutes and electoral code are finalized and adopted by the FFIRI general assembly.

However, the Iranian Football Federation has appealed to FIFA in its reply letter so that the FFIRI elective General Assembly to be held on the scheduled date.

FFIRI has mentioned in the letter that the current statutes had been used for the FFIRI general assemblies and also elections in the last nine years.

Concerning the Ministry of Sport's involvement in the Football Federation elections, the federation has confirmed that the Ministry of Youth and Sports has a crucial role in advancing the goals of the Federation and the development of football throughout the country.

Besides, following the FIFA recommendations that FIFA Member Associations must implement an electoral committee and an electoral appeal committee to be elected or ratified by its general assembly, the FFIRI has responded that the above-mentioned points had already been considered in the statutes.

Consequently, the Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran has asked FIFA and the AFC to support the football federation like all the past years so that elections can be held as scheduled due to the upcoming events such as 2020 World Cup qualifiers.



## Sepahan GM Masoud Tabesh resigns

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Sepahan general manager Masoud Tabesh resigned from his role on Saturday. Manouchehr Nikfar has been appointed as club's acting president.

Tabesh was appointed as Sepahan GM last year but was forced to step down after 10 months in charge following poor performance.

Last week, Sepahan didn't play Persepolis in Iran Professional League (IPL), saying that the fans didn't let them to leave the hotel.

Four days later, Iran football federation awarded Persepolis a 3-0 win and punished Sepahan 10,000 USD.



## Iranian sports journalist Abbasi passes away

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iranian sports journalist Pooya Abbasi has passed away at the age of 43 on Saturday. Abbasi died following weight loss surgery in Rasht, Gilan Province.

He had worked in Iranian news agencies and several newspapers.

Pooya Abbasi is survived by his wife, as well as a son and a daughter.

Tehran Times offers its heartfelt condolence to his bereaved family.



## Hong Kong's World Cup qualifier against Iran 'extremely unlikely to happen' says HKFA chief

Soccer chief Pui Kwan-kay said it was "highly unlikely" that Hong Kong's World Cup Asian zone qualifier against Iran next month will go ahead because of the coronavirus outbreak, but hoped to clear the air with governing bodies as to whether the clash can go ahead.

Hong Kong are expected to visit Tehran's 78,000-seat Azadi Stadium for the away World Cup match on March 26 before returning for their home tie against Iraq in the group C qualifiers five days later.

Hong Kong Football Association chairman Pui is deeply concerned with the city's strict quarantine measures that have been put in place to prevent the spread of the virus after a surge of positive Covid-19 cases were recorded in the Middle East nation in recent weeks. In addition, Hong Kong has issued a "red" outbound travel alert for the country, further complicating matters and making the March clash less likely to happen.

From midnight on Sunday, all travelers arriving in the city, including Hong Kong residents, will be required to spend two weeks in quarantine if they have visited Iran during the past 14 days, according to a government statement released on Friday.

"I doubt very much if we will still send a team to Iran after these new precautionary measures [were put in place]," said Pui. "If our players are required to be placed in quarantine centers after returning from Tehran, I don't think clubs would be willing to release their players for the qualifying match."



Most of all, how can we play the home match against Iraq just five days later if all the players are still in quarantine?

"We would seek advice from Fifa and the Asian Football Confederation as soon as possible because the two World Cup matches are fast approaching and the situation is quite urgent."

Iraq are current leaders of the group on 11 points, followed by Bahrain (9), Iran (6) and Hong Kong (5) with Cambodia bottom on one point.

Iran and Italy are the latest two countries that have been ravaged by the coronavirus which first originated in Wuhan in China. Japan and South have also been hard hit with Hong Kong also recording 94 cases.

It is understood the AFC will hold emergency meetings with representatives of its member associations and its Leagues from both the East and West regions starting on Monday as they try to deal with the coronavirus outbreak. The meeting will be held in Kuala Lumpur on Monday.

The regional body also announced the two-legged Women's Olympic qualifying final round play-off between South Korea and China, originally expected to take place on March 6 and 11, has been postponed. The first leg will now be rescheduled for April 9 with the return leg on April 14. The winners after two legs will qualify for the Tokyo Olympics this summer, along with the play-off winner between Australia and Vietnam.

However, it is not known if the first leg will still be played in South Korea, which has seen coronavirus cases surge in recent weeks, becoming the hardest hit country after the mainland with more than 3,000 positive cases.

The Chinese side want to move the match to a neutral ground but it is believed the Koreans want to play at home and it's for this reason the AFC has decided to postpone both legs.

The Chinese women's team have already used Sydney as their training base since the previous round of competition began in February. Their home match against South Korea is also scheduled in Australia because of the epidemic outbreak back home.

(Source: scmp.com)

## World Series opener in Abu Dhabi postponed due to coronavirus



The opening round of the 2020 World Triathlon Series scheduled to be held in Abu Dhabi has been postponed as a precautionary measure to reduce the spread of the coronavirus, the International Triathlon Union (ITU) said on Saturday.

The event was due to take place on Yas Island from March 5-7, but organizers confirmed they will look to find a new date later in March or April.

The rapid spread of the coronavirus has seen eight countries reporting their first cases and the World Health Organization (WHO) has raised its global spread and impact risk alert to "very high".

(Source: Reuters)

## Bayern Munich ban players from selfies amid coronavirus fears



Bayern Munich have advised their players to not make themselves available for autographs or selfies as German football braces for the coronavirus.

Five fixtures have been called off in Italy including the top of the table clash between Juventus and Inter Milan due to fears over the virus.

But in Germany, all Bundesliga fixtures will go ahead despite the first confirmed cases of coronavirus in the country.

However, Bundesliga clubs are bracing for the epidemic virus and Bayern have announced they imposed a ban on autographs and selfies.

"Based on the recommendations of the

[state-run] Robert Koch Institute and their extended implementation," a statement on the club website said.

"Prof. Dr. Roland Schmidt, the internal head of FC Bayern's medical department, has advised that FC Bayern players refrain from signing autographs for the time being and also from being available for photos or selfies with fans."

Earlier, the German Football League made a general statement on the subject of coronavirus for the clubs of the two top German tiers.

They said they are closely monitoring the situation.

(Source: ESPN)

## Iran on brink of appointing Hashemian as Team Melli assistant

**PLDC** — Vahid Hashemian is on the verge of returning to Iran national football team as assistant coach.

He parted company with Team Melli after Marc Wilmots stepped down from his role but local media reports suggest that he is on the verge of returning to the team.

He will assist Dragan Skocic in Iran national football team in the 2022 World Cup qualification.

Iran, who are going to continue their quest for a sixth World Cup appearance, sit five points behind leaders Iraq in Group C but having played one game fewer.

Ebrahim Shakouri, acting secretary general of Iran football federation has said Hashemian has a big chance of naming Team Melli assistant.

## Askari advances to Karate 1-Premier League Salzburg final

**TASNIM** — Bahman Askari from Iran qualified for the final match of the Karate 1-Premier League Salzburg on Friday.

Askari defeated his rivals from Australia, Finland, England and Turkey.

He will meet Stanislav Horuna from Ukraine in the Male Kumite -75kg final match on Sunday.

Over 600 competitors from 88 countries compete at the 2020 Karate 1-Premier League Salzburg. This tally represents a considerable increase with the previous event since 513 competitors from 79 countries took part in the Karate 1-Premier League Dubai.

The tournament started on Friday and the finals are slated for Sunday, March 1.

## 11-year-old Syrian qualifies for Tokyo 2020 table tennis tournament

Eleven-year-old Syrian Henda Zaza has qualified for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games after winning the West Asia Olympic Table Tennis Qualification Tournament in Amman.

The youngster defeated Lebanon's Mariana Sahakian in the women's final at Prince Hamzah Hall in the Jordanian capital.

She is set to be one of the youngest athletes competing at Tokyo 2020 after her 4-3 success.

Sahakian is 42-years-old, meaning there was a 31-year age gap between the two players.

In the men's event, Saudi Arabia's Ali Al-Khadrawi de-



feated Lebanon's Daoud Shihab 4-1 in the final to book his Olympic place.

Only the winners of the two tournaments earned a Tokyo 2020 spot.

There was disappointment in the semi-finals for Jordanian siblings Zaid and Sewar Abo Yaman, who both exited in the final four on home soil.

Both lost to the eventual winners.

The competition in Jordan was contested by 11 countries.

Qualification for the Tokyo 2020 singles tournaments will continue tomorrow, with the start of the African event in Tunis.

(Source: Insidethegames)

## Coronavirus tests clear 167 of possible UAE Tour exposure

Tests on 167 people have proved negative for coronavirus after they were feared to have been exposed to two infected Italian participants of the UAE Tour, Abu Dhabi's health department (DoH-AD) has said.

The rapid spread of coronavirus has raised fears of a pandemic, with eight countries reporting their first cases and the World Health Organization raising its global spread and impact risk alert to "very high".

The final two stages of the UAE Tour, which featured some of the world's leading riders, was canceled because two Italian participants testing positive for coronavirus, the Abu Dhabi Sports Council said on Thursday.

"Two cases of coronavirus were suspected among two staff members of one of the participating teams," cycling's governing body, UCI, said on Friday.

The official race hotel in Abu Dhabi was sealed off late on Thursday and health authorities ordered precautionary quarantine and preventive measures for all participants of the UAE Tour.

"The health authorities are still monitoring the health condition of the contacts to ensure safety of the community," the DoH-AD said in a statement late on Friday.

The results of the remaining test findings will be available soon, it added.

The UAE Tour was just one of many international sports events hit by the coronavirus, with some postponed and others canceled outright.

(Source: Reuters)



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Trusting others before testing them is weakness and abasement.

Imam Ali (AS)

## “White Winged Horse” honored at Berlin festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Mahyar Mandegar’s “White Winged Horse” won a special mention in the Generation 14plus Section of the 70th Berlin International Film Festival, the organizers announced on Saturday.



A scene from “White Winged Horse” by Mahyar Mandegar from Iran.

The movie is about a man who returns to his Iranian hometown, which was destroyed in the war 20 years ago. He is searching for his childhood sweetheart who had promised him eternal love.

“This film uses the audience’s imagination to build an exceptional world, following an unlikely protagonist who nonetheless inspires strong emotion,” the jury wrote in a statement.

“When fantasy eventually re-connects with reality, we can feel as if we are flying away with the white winged horse,” the jury added.

Iranian filmmaker Abbas Amini along with South African writer and director Jenna Bass and Indian filmmaker Rima Das were juries for the Generation section of the festival.

“My Name Is Baghdad” by Caru Alves de Souza from Brazil received the Grand Prix of the Generation 14plus.

The Special Prize of the Generation 14plus for the best short film went to “Mutts”, a co-production between Canada and Morocco by Halima Ouardiri.

## Publisher Amut organizing “Reading in Quarantine” contest

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — The Iranian publisher Amut in Tehran is organizing a reading contest named “Reading in Quarantine” amid growing concerns over the new coronavirus outbreak in the country.



Books published by Amut.

In a statement published on Saturday, Amut has asked people to send the publisher photos and notes from books in their personal libraries after reading them until Friday.

The top ten notes will be awarded by the publishing company. “These days we are dealing with a big challenge and that is the coronavirus concern, which has kept us in quarantine at home,” the publisher wrote in the statement.

“But before the virus spread, we were imprisoned by a bigger challenge, and that was the books we had in our libraries but have not read. And this pain was ruining us little by little by preventing us from going to our favorite bookstores. Now that we are forced to stay at home, it is the best time to open our home libraries and say hello to our unread books,” it added.

## Iran’s “Tangle” named best at Russian film festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — “Tangle” by Iranian director Maliheh Gholamzadeh was crowned best animation at the 15th Vstrecha (Meeting) International Orthodox Film Festival in Obninsk, Russia.

The short animated film is about the people who lose their homes in wars and are forced to leave all their memories and loved ones behind. “Escape from Moskvabad” by Darya Poltoratskaya from Russia was named best film, while “Don’t Get Out of Here” co-directed by Vladimir Samorodov and Marina Trush, also from Russia, received the best documentary award.

The festival was held from February 21 to 26.

# Dartmouth College displays works by Iranian artists

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — A collection of artworks by Iranian artists are on display in an exhibit underway at the Campus Gallery of Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, United States.

Entitled “Contemporary Iranian Art and the Historical Imagination”, the exhibit is organized in conjunction with Pamela Karimi, an associate professor of history of art and architecture at Dartmouth College.

The exhibition sheds light on how contemporary Iranian artists engage with Iran’s ancient heritage, history and politics, the college wrote in its statement for the exhibit.

Despite having a tradition deeply rooted in complex historical narratives and aesthetic sensibilities, all the participating artists reveal their own unique interpretations.

Displayed in conjunction with historic manuscripts and images on loan from the private collection of Elmar Seibel and Ars Libri Ltd. in Boston, the exhibition invites the visitors to appreciate the extent to which contemporary Iranian artists build on their heritage to craft a unique artistic idiom.

Through this exhibition, participating students have had the opportunity to hone their skills in all aspects of curation and exhibition design, from handling precious artworks to installing vinyl lettering and from label writing to selecting color themes for the gallery walls.

Additionally, they are required to deliver short presentations on the thematic sections of the exhibition, including Persian poet



A photo from Gohar Dashti’s series “Land/s”.

Ferdowsi’s epic masterpiece Shahnameh, the medieval manuscripts, Qajar dynasty, the 1953 Coup and the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Artemis Akchoti, Samira Alikhanzadeh,

Amir-Hossein Bayani, Gohar Dashti, Rauf Dashti, Shadi Ghadirian, Amir-Ali Qasemi, Ghazaleh Hedayat, Rana Javadi, Pantea Karimi, Mehran Mohajer, Hamed Nuri,

Siavash Naqshbandi and Mojtaba Tabatabai are among the artists whose works are on view. The exhibit which opened on February 20 will be running until April 1.

## Kish Gallery makes its debut by displaying designs by Otto Wagner

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Kish Gallery on the Persian Gulf island Kish opened last week with showcasing a collection designs by the Austrian architect and urban planner Otto Wagner.

“Organizing the exhibition of Wagner’s designs is an auspicious beginning to better and more cultural collaborations with Iranian artists and foreign countries,” Kish Free Zone Organization managing director Gholamhossein Mozaffari said during the opening ceremony of the gallery.

“Kish, as the crossroads to various cultures, needs such cultural places to interact with other great countries, which have played a key role in the growth of culture and civilization,” he added.

The Austrian Ambassador to Iran, Stefan Schulz, also attended the inauguration ceremony of the exhibition.

He called Kish a safe and beautiful island with great tourist attractions, and said, “It is a great honor to showcase

designs by one of the distinguished Austrian architects on this island.”

Born in 1841, Wagner was a founder and leader of the modern movement in European architecture. His early work was in the already-established Neo-Renaissance style.

As a teacher, Wagner soon broke with tradition by insisting on function, material and structure as the bases of architectural design.

Among his notable works in the Art Nouveau style are a number of stations for the elevated and underground City Railway of Vienna and the Postal Savings Bank. The latter, which had little decoration, is recognized as a milestone in the history of modern architecture, particularly for the curving glass roof of its central hall.

His lectures were published in 1895 as “Moderne Architektur”. An English translation appeared in “The Brickbuilder” in 1901. He passed away in 1918.



A view of the Postal Savings Bank in Vienna designed by Otto Wagner.

## Animac picks “The Cycling Wind”, “Eaten”



A scene from “The Cycling Wind” by Nazanin Sobhan Sarbandi.

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — The Iranian short animations “The Cycling Wind” and “Eaten” are competing in the 24th edition of the Animac, an international animation festival in Lleida, Spain.

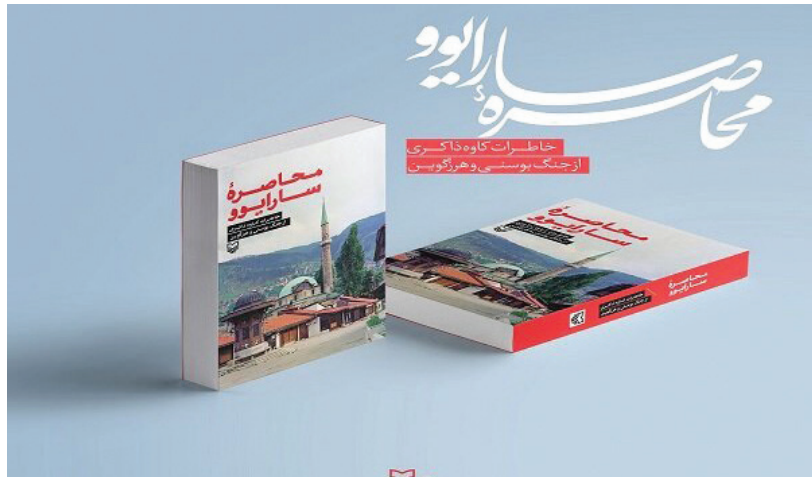
Produced by the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCY), Nazanin Sobhan Sarbandi is the director of “The Cycling Wind”.

The film tells the story of a young wind that comes into possession of a bike, which helps the wind to blow even faster without spending much energy, and to truly enjoy its time.

“Eaten” by Mohsen Rezapur is about a rabbit-like creature on a mysterious and unknown planet, which is eaten, but that’s not the end of the story.

The Animac will come to an end tonight.

## Iranian military advisor Kaveh Zakeri’s memories of Bosnian War published



A poster for “The Siege of Sarajevo” by Kaveh Zakeri.

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — Iranian military advisor Kaveh Zakeri’s memories of the Bosnian War have been published under the title of “The Siege of Sarajevo”.

Published by Sureh-Mehr in Tehran, the book carries original materials about the siege of the city, which was the longest siege of a capital city in the history of modern warfare.

Sarajevo was besieged by the Bosnian Serb Army from 1992 to 1996 during the Bosnian War.

The siege led to the Dayton Agreement, which put an end to the war.

Zakeri, who was a combat engineer, trained the Bosnian soldiers and volunteer forces ways to defuse mines and explosive traps.

He also helped provide some relief to people in the war-torn regions.

## Polanski wins best director at Cesars, prompting walkout protest

**PARIS (Reuters)** — Roman Polanski cast a shadow over France’s Cesar Awards on Friday even as he won best directing for his film “An Officer and a Spy,” with several women in the audience walking out in protest at honoring a man facing rape accusations.

The French-Polish director’s dozen nominations had divided opinion in France, a country where the #MeToo movement that inspired women globally to out powerful men for sexual misconduct has struggled to gain traction. Polanski, 86, whose film also picked up awards for best adaptation and best costume designer, stayed away from the event, saying he feared he would be lynched.

Controversy had swirled around the inclusion in the awards program of Polanski, who fled the United States for France in the late 1970s after admitting raping a 13-year-old girl, and faces more recent allegations of sexual assault. Polanski denies the latest accusations against him.

During the ceremony, the biggest night on the French cinema calendar, Polanski served as both lightning rod and punch line.

“It is the last (event) of one era and the first of another,” actress Sandrine Kiberlain said.

Among those who left the venue early was leading actress Adele Haenel, who last year revealed she had been sexually abused as a child by another director.

Haenel told the New York Times before the ceremony that France had “missed the boat” on #MeToo and criticized the Cesar Awards for recognizing Polanski.

“Distinguishing Polanski is spitting in the face of all victims. It means raping women isn’t that bad,” she said.

Protesters outside clashed with police shortly before the biggest names in French film arrived at the Pleyel concert hall, but none made it onto the red carpet. Nearby, other protesters peacefully waved placards reading “Shame on an industry that protects rapists.”

“An Officer and a Spy” chronicles the persecution of French Jewish army officer Alfred Dreyfus in the 1890s. It lost out on best film to “Les Misérables”.

Polanski himself survived the Holocaust, while his mother died in a Nazi concentration camp. He shot to fame in the

United States with his 1968 Hollywood film “Rosemary’s Baby.”

Polanski’s cast and production team boycotted the Cesars on Friday after Culture Minister Franck Riester said the success of a director accused of sexual violence would send the wrong signal in the #MeToo era.

French photographer Valentine Monnier last year accused Polanski of raping her in 1975 when she was an 18-year-old model and actress. Polanski has denied the charge.

It is the second time in five months that recognition of Polanski, who was expelled last year from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences - which bestows the Oscars - has prompted disquiet.

Organizers of the Venice Film Festival drew criticism for including Polanski’s work in the program. It went on to take the festival’s Silver Lion Grand Jury in September.

The French awards come in the same week that Harvey Weinstein, once one of Hollywood’s most influential producers, was convicted of sexual assault and rape by a New York court.