

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- The U.S. Treasury Department sanctioned a Chinese company it alleged has acted as an agent for an Iranian airline.

Treasury said Shanghai Saint Logistics Limited acts as Mahan Air's agent in the Chinese city, providing administration services for the Iranian company. It's the seventh company Treasury has sanctioned as an agent of Mahan Air, the department said in a statement. Mahan Air is currently operating charter flights between Iran and Venezuela, according to Treasury.

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- In the run-up to the International Quds Day events, Iran's Foreign Ministry reminded the world community Tuesday that Palestine's fate is only to be decided by Palestinians, no matter what religion they practice. "For seven decades, the international community failed to solve the question of Palestine since the plans proposed never corresponded with its (Palestine's) historical facts and roots," the ministry wrote in a tweet. "The Islamic Republic believes that only Palestinians, whether Muslim, Christian or Jew, with a national referendum can and should decide for Palestine."

Viewpoint

Time to Kick Out CENTCOM Terrorists from the Region

Iranian Screenplays Compete in U.S.



IPL Teams Cleared to Start Training in Iran



Syria Vows Fight Against U.S., Turkish, Zionist Occupiers



‘Sultan of Cars’, Wife Sentenced to Death

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – An Iranian couple has been sentenced to death for having smuggled hard currency and laundering \$200 million of money, as well as having been found with a stash of gold at their home, the judiciary spokesman said on Tuesday.

Gholamhussein Esmaili spoke about Vahid Behzadi and his wife Najva Lasheidai, both in their early 40s but whose case had not previously been given a high profile, in a televised news conference.

Esmaili said they had been sentenced to death on charges “including disrupting the Islamic Republic’s exchange and gold market”.

“They have smuggled hard currency and laundered around \$200 million,” he said. “Also around 100 kg of gold and over 24,700 gold coins were found and seized in the couple’s home.”

He said the couple, among 34 convicts who were handed down jail sentences ranging from three to 15 years, could appeal the verdict within 20 days.

The judiciary spokesman said 11 new verdicts related to economic corruption would be announced in the upcoming days.

With the economy under the pressure of U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak, Iran’s judiciary has been waging a campaign against corruption at a state and private level.

Separately, Esmaili said two Iranian lawmakers had been sentenced to 61 months in jail each on charges of “disrupting the country’s car market”.

Lawmakers Fereydoun Ahmadi and Muhammad Azizi both were linked to a financial corruption case at one of Iran’s two major car manufacturing companies, he said.

In the past years, the judiciary has jailed several officials, including Hussein Fereydoun, for financial crimes.

In November 2018, two men sentenced to death for corrupt economic practices were hanged in Tehran.

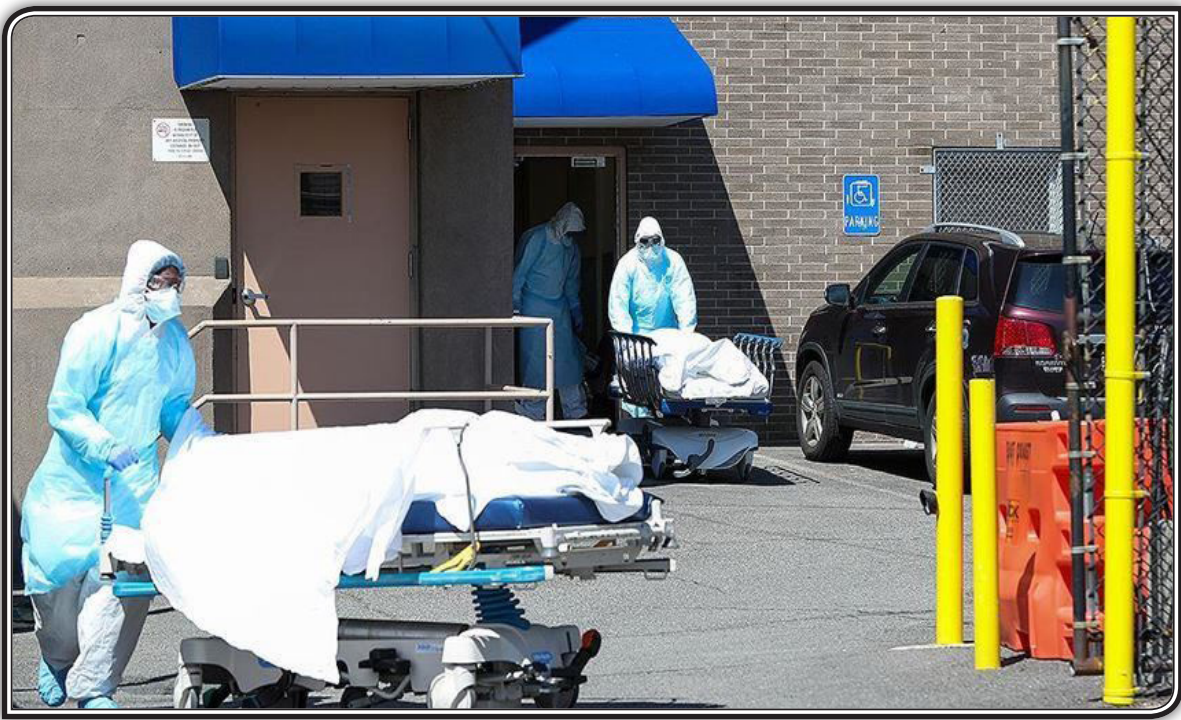
Vahid Mazlumin, known as the “sultan of coins”, and his accomplice Muhammad Ismail Qasemi, had been sentenced to death by a special court set up to confront profiteering and corruption in the wake of new U.S. sanctions on Iran.

A month later, Iran hanged a corrupt businessman for appropriating more than 10 trillion rials (\$100 million) mainly by defrauding banks and a major oil refining firm.

The special courts were set up on the request of the Judiciary chief from Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei who has called for “swift and just” legal action to confront an “economic war” by foreign enemies.

COVID-19 Death Toll Nears 43,000

New Data Paints a Grim Picture in UK



Tuesday’s numbers from the Office for National Statistics painted a grim picture in care homes.

LONDON (Reuters/AP) -- The United Kingdom’s COVID-19 death toll has reached nearly 43,000, underlining the country’s status as the worst-hit in Europe and raising more questions about Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s handling of the crisis.

New figures for England and Wales brought the death toll to at least 42,990, a Reuters tally showed, including earlier data from Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well recent hospital deaths in England.

Tuesday’s numbers from the Office for National Statistics painted a grim picture in care homes,

more than a third of which have been stricken by the novel coronavirus.

Deaths in care homes across the United Kingdom topped 10,000 as of May 8, although the increase has slowed over the last couple of weeks.

Comparisons with other countries are tricky, but the data confirmed Britain was among those hit worst by the pandemic, which has killed more than 317,000 worldwide.

Such a high UK death toll increases the pressure on Johnson, who says the government is following scientific advice. Opposition parties say he was slow to

introduce testing and provide protective equipment to health workers, and that his policy left care homes exposed.

In March, Britain’s chief scientific adviser said keeping deaths below 20,000 would be a “good outcome”. In April, Reuters reported the government’s worst-case scenario was 50,000 deaths.

Unlike the daily death toll announced by the government, Tuesday’s ONS figures include suspected deaths from COVID-19.

Excess deaths across the UK are now close to 55,000, ONS statistician Nick Stripe told the BBC.

An influential group of British lawmakers on Tuesday accused Johnson’s government of failing to conduct enough tests for the new coronavirus, saying the lapse helped COVID-19 cut a deadly swath through UK nursing homes.

As official statistics revealed more than 11,000 coronavirus deaths in British nursing homes, the House of Commons’ Science and Technology Committee said “testing capacity has been inadequate for most of the pandemic so far.”

In a letter to the prime minister, committee chairman Greg Clark said Britain’s limited testing capacity “drove strategy, rather than strategy driving capacity.”

UK authorities initially sought to trace and test everyone who had been in contact with people infected with the coronavirus. But they abandoned that strategy in mid-March as the number of infections overwhelmed the country’s testing resources.

Johnson’s Conservative government has faced growing criticism as Britain suffers one of the world’s worst coronavirus death tolls. The government’s official tally of deaths among people who tested positive for the virus stands at 34,796, second only to the U.S. When suspected as well as confirmed cases are added, the toll is well over 40,000.

Clark, a lawmaker from the governing Conservative Party, said the “pivotal” decision in March to stop

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Officials Say No Disruption at Shahid Rajaei Port Cyber Terrorist Attack by Zionist Regime Foiled

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – An Iranian official said Tuesday a recent cyberattack by the occupying regime of Israel on a port in southern Iran failed to disrupt operations at the facility, Tasnim news agency reported.

The Washington Post had reported that Israel carried out a cyber terrorist attack that caused disruption at Shahid Rajaei port terminal offline on May 9.

According to the newspaper, U.S. and foreign government officials believe the attack appears to have originated from the occupying regime of Israel which has a history of terrorist attacks on Iran’s nuclear energy program.

Shipping traffic at Shahid Rajaei port terminal, the paper said, came to an abrupt halt after computers that regulate the flow of vessels, trucks and goods all crashed at once. The attack created brief backups on waterways and roads leading to the facility, it added.

The attack came after the occupying regime said it had been the target of an attempt to penetrate the computers that operate water distribution systems in Israel.

The sprawling Shahid Rajaei port facility is the newest of two major shipping terminals in the Iranian coastal city of Bandar Abbas, on the Strait of Hormuz.

The Post quoted an Israeli regime official as boasting that the attack had caused “total disarray” to shipping traffic in the port.

However, Muhammad Rastad, managing director of the Ports and Maritime Organization of Iran, said the terrorist attack “failed to penetrate the PMO’s systems and was only able to infiltrate and damage a number of private operating systems at the ports”.

An unnamed Iranian official, speaking to Tasnim news agency

cy Tuesday, confirmed that no disruptions occurred because civil defense units at the facility which are always on high alert responded “timely and effectively to the infiltration attempt.

Iran has been the target of U.S. and Israeli cyber terrorism for a decade, including attempts to remotely sabotage the Islamic Republic’s nuclear program.

In 2010, U.S. and Zionist intelligence agencies unleashed a computer worm called Stuxnet on Iranian uranium-enrichment plants in an attempt to disrupt Iran’s nuclear program. The Washington Post reported two years later that the US National Security Agency (NSA), its spy service CIA, and Israel’s military had worked together to launch Stuxnet against Iran’s nuclear facilities.

The attack was followed by Mossad’s assassination of several Iranian nuclear scientists.

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U.S. Sends Coronavirus-Hit Carrier Back to Sea

WASHINGTON (AP) — The USS Theodore Roosevelt will return to sea later this week, nearly two months after the ship was sidelined in Guam with a rapidly growing coronavirus outbreak, U.S. officials said as the crew finished final preparations to depart.

In an interview from the aircraft carrier, Navy Capt. Carlos Sardiello said Monday the ship will sail with a scaled-back crew of about 3,000, leaving about 1,800 sailors on shore who are still in quarantine. Those include up to 14 sailors who recently tested positive again, just days after getting cleared to return to the carrier. The puzzling COVID-19 reappearance in the sailors adds to the difficulty in getting the ship’s crew healthy again, and fuels questions about the quality of the testing and just how long sailors may remain infected or contagious.

Sardiello would not discuss timelines or planned operations. But other U.S. officials said the ship is

expected to leave in the next few days, and if all goes well it will conduct naval operations in the Pacific region for some period of time before heading home to San Diego. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss military operations.

Asked about the possibility the ship will be able to conduct missions after its two-month layoff in Guam, Sardiello expressed confidence. “Do I have a crystal ball? I do not. But I think we have set the conditions for a high probability of success, and we’re going to go to sea and do our mission,” he said.

The Roosevelt has been at the center of a widening controversy that led to the firing of the ship’s previous captain, the resignation of the Navy secretary and an expanded investigation into what triggered the outbreak and how well top naval commanders handled it. More than 1,000 sailors on the ship have tested positive over the past two months, and the entire crew

has had to cycle through quarantine on shore before being allowed to reboard.

Preparing to go back to sea has been an intense process, requiring sailors to go through mandated preparations and training to ensure all the systems are working and that troops are ready despite the added requirements of masks, constant cleaning, social distancing and other virus-related restrictions.

Sardiello said they were able to get special black neck gaiters for the flight deck crew, because wearing regular masks wouldn’t be safe. And they’ve set up one-way corridors, spaced out berthing for the crew members, and are keeping mess halls open longer so fewer sailors are there at any one time.

Once at sea, the crew will conduct carrier qualifications for the flight-deck crew, including fighter jet take-offs and landings. After about two weeks, the carrier plans to return to Guam to pick up

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