

# **People's Democratic Republic of Algeria**

**Embassy of Algeria in the Republic of Namibia**



## **Press Review**

**4<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

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**DOMESTIC NEWS**

**President Tebboune appoints General Gouasmia as National Gendarmerie Commander**

*ALGIERS* - President of the Republic, Abdelmadjid Tebboune, Supreme Chief of the Armed Forces, Minister of National Defence, appointed on Tuesday General Nouredine Gouasmia as Commander of the National Gendarmerie in replacement of Major General Abderrahmane Arrar, who has retired, Presidency of the Republic said in a statement.

President Tebboune has also appointed General Ali Oulhadj Yahia as Chief of Staff of the National Gendarmerie to replace General Nouredine Gouasmia, the same source said.

**COVID-19 NEWS**

**Corona virus vaccine: Algeria works to be amongst first purchasing countries**

*ALGIERS* - Spokesman of the Scientific Committee in charge of evaluating the Covid-19 pandemic, Djamel Fourar, said on Monday that Algeria is working to be among the first countries to obtain the Corona virus vaccine.

a statement to the press following the presentation of the daily assessment of the evolution of the epidemic in Algeria, Fourar noted "the decision of the public authorities to be among the first countries to acquire the vaccine, once it is available at the international level," adding that "Algeria is working to position itself to be at the rendezvous."

199 laboratories throughout the world were working on the vaccine; Fourar said that 5 or 6 laboratories "have made progress" in this area, he said.

Prime Minister, Abdelaziz Djerad, said on Sunday that Algeria "will be among the first countries to acquire the Covid-19 vaccine."

This meeting is taking place on the instructions of the President of the Republic, Abdelmadjid Tebboune, in order to speed up the necessary contacts with countries that have made progress in their research for the production of the Covid-19 vaccine. Algeria, as a country and a government, will be among the first countries to obtain this vaccine," he added.

**Covid-19: Gradual reopening of places of worship, beaches and relaxing spots**

*ALGIERS* - President of the Republic, Abdelmadjid Tebboune instructed on Monday Prime Minister, Abdelaziz Djerad, to schedule the "gradual reopening" of places of worship, beaches, and relaxing spots.

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This instruction was given at a meeting of the High Security Council, chaired by the President of the Republic, Abdelmadjid Tebboune, Supreme Chief of the Armed Forces, Minister of National Defense, at the headquarters of the Presidency of the Republic, devoted to assessing the situation in the country in the light of recent developments concerning the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The President of the Republic has instructed the Prime Minister to schedule a gradual reopening of places of worship, which will be limited, in a first phase, only to large mosques of at least one thousand seats, and which are able to allow the necessary physical distance, with the imperative of wearing the mask by all," the same source said.

Also on the agenda of this meeting, the issue of reopening beaches to citizens, and places of recreation and relaxation, especially in the current summer, allowed the President of the Republic to instruct the Prime Minister to "take the necessary measures for a gradual access to such spaces that takes into account the imperative of respecting sanitary conditions."

In this connection, he has "ordered the security services to ensure, by means of a reinforced presence, that the instructions to keep a distance between summer visitors and to wear masks are observed on the ground."

The President of the Republic has instructed the Prime Minister to prepare decrees with a view to laying down practical arrangements for the flexible application of these measures, the same source assured, adding that the State will remain "vigilant as to the strict observance of these measures by citizens, which may be called into question in the event of a worsening of the health situation. The health of all is at stake."

### **Forthcoming reopening of mosques: Faithful called to respect prevention measures**

*ALGIERS* - Prime Minister Abdelaziz Djerad stressed Tuesday, in Algiers, the need for the faithful to rigorously respect the prevention measures against Covid-19 pandemic after the reopening of the mosques in the next few days.

Djerad, who officially launched with Minister of Finance Aymen Benabderrahmane services and products of the Islamic finance at the National Bank of Algeria (BNA), underlined that "the reopening of mosques doesn't mean omitting the existence of the pandemic," adding that "the mosques should be a model for respecting prevention measures, including the respect of physical distancing and the wearing of protective masks."

"The mosques shouldn't cause the spread of the pandemic. On the contrary, they must contribute to ending it through the respect of the prevention measures," he said.

Prime minister called on citizens and the faithful to protect these sacred places and ensure their cleanliness.

### **ECONOMIC NEWS**

#### **SAFAV Mercedes Benz in Tiaret: Over 1000 vehicles delivered**

*TIARET* - A total of 1,048 multipurpose Mercedes-Benz vehicles were delivered Tuesday to public and private bodies by the Algerian Company for Mercedes-Benz Vehicle Manufacturing (SAFAV-MB) of Tiaret, coming under the Ministry of National Defense.

Interim director general of SAFAV-MB Karim Kharoubi said, in the delivery ceremony, chaired by Chairman of the Board of Directors of the company Smail Krikou that this quota comprises 566 vehicles for the Ministry of National Defense represented by the central equipment directorate, including 443 all-terrain vehicles and 123 others of Sprinter class.

The General Directorate of the National Police (DGSN) received 171 vehicles of the aforementioned types, including ambulances and transport vehicles.

A total of 104 vehicles were delivered to the General Directorate of the Civil Protection, including 34 all-terrain vehicles for extinguishing fires and 68 transport buses while the General Directorate of Forests benefitted from 80 fire trucks.

A total of 69 vehicles were delivered to private operators, said the source.

SAFAV-MB of Ain Bouchekif continued normally its activities and production during the exceptional health crisis marked by the coronavirus pandemic.

Since its creation in 2014, this company has produced more than 21,000 vehicles of different types and classes.

#### **BNA: Official launch of marketing of Islamic finance products**

*ALGIERS* - The National Bank of Algeria (BNA) has officially launched Tuesday its Islamic finance activity through the marketing of products in compliance with Shariah, under the supervision of Prime Minister Abdelaziz Djerad and Minister of Finance Aymen Benabderrahmane.

Speaking on this occasion, Djerad said that the Islamic finance activity will be generalized throughout the national territory so that all provinces can benefit from this type of banking products, adding that Algeria is lagging behind in this field.

The implementation of the Islamic finance is part of the Government's guidelines aimed at developing the financial system and diversifying its products and services, he pointed out, emphasizing that this new system will be, henceforth, gradually applied and generalized, by adopting scientific and accurate methods within the scope of Shariah principles in order to win the citizens' trust.

"We can take advantage of the experience of Muslim countries which are pioneers in this field," said Prime minister.

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In this respect, he recommends the training of executives in the rules and techniques of Islamic finance, encouraging the banks to open up to clients and supply them with the necessary information and explanations on the activity of the Islamic finance and procedures for accessing their products.

He stressed the importance of modernizing and digitizing the banking system to address the problem of cash flows and win the citizens' trust so that to encourage them to use bank cards when making withdrawals.

After giving exhaustive information on the Islamic finance activity to the Prime minister, BNA's CEO Miloud Ferhati announced the launch, scheduled for late September 2020, of the activity of Islamic finance through 32 agencies of BNA in the country.

### Gas markets: Sonatrach deals with situation

*ALGIERS* - The national hydrocarbon company Sonatrach deals with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the international gas market by relying on the flexibilities provided for in its gas contracts and the use of other solutions, said Minister of Energy Abdelmadjid Attar.

"Gas prices have plummeted to historically low levels and current market dynamics failed to stabilize the market. Sonatrach has managed and continues to manage this exceptional situation with its customers through flexibilities already provided in its gas contracts but also through solutions that adapt to market conditions," said Attar in an interview with S&P Global Platts.

"[Gas] markets were already suffering from oversupply since early 2019 and COVID-19 and the resulting demand drop have exacerbated this situation," he said.

"Sonatrach is in continuous discussions with its customers to find consensual solutions, particularly in terms of operational flexibility in order to cope with this exceptional situation," he said.

"Gas markets have evolved: more actors, LNG trade linking regional markets, more diversity of contracts and pricing mechanisms, and more competition with other fuels, notably in the power sector," Attar said.

"Sonatrach is an important player in the gas market and has developed a reputation of a reliable supplier. Its cooperative strategy is based on a 'win-win' spirit, especially with its European partners," stated the minister of Energy.

Attar said the country's export capacity means Sonatrach can satisfy its contractual commitments "and have the flexibility to place additional quantities on the spot market."

He added that a project underway at the port of Skikda will allow for Very Large Gas Carriers to load cargoes, expanding the range of its LNG supply options.

"Sonatrach's marketing strategy is also focused on diversifying and expanding its client portfolio," Attar said.

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Despite the current low prices and challenging market environment, Attar said gas would remain a key fuel in the future.

"I believe that this situation will progressively improve. Gas is a fuel of choice and its share in the global energy mix will increase," he said.

### Corona virus crisis “opportunity” to strengthen GECF-

The economic crisis triggered by the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent fall in gas prices represent an opportunity to strengthen the role of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF).

"I believe this crisis is an opportunity to innovate and explore ways and means to further strengthen the GECF," he said.

However, GECF Secretary General Yury Sentyurin said in June that he considered OPEC a "model" for the gas exporter group's activities, saying it was "high time" it implemented the knowledge and solutions of the oil industry.

The GECF -whose members include gas heavyweights Russia, Qatar and Iran- came into being in 2001 and holds around 70% of the world's proven gas reserves.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### 3.5- magnitude earth tremor hits Oran

*ALGIERS* - A 3.5- magnitude earth tremor on the Richter scale was recorded Monday at 11.16 p.m. (local time) in the province of Oran, announced the Research Centre in Astronomy, Astrophysics and Geophysics (CRAAG).

The epicenter of the tremor was located 6 km north of Ain Kerma in the same province, according to the same source.

### Setif: Two employees die, one injured in partial collapse of mining tunnel in Chaaba El Hamra

*SETIF* - Two employees died and a third was injured in the partial collapse following an explosion of a prospecting tunnel of the National Company of Non-ferrous Mining Products and Useful Materials in Chaaba El Hamra, in the region of Kharza Youcef, in the east of Ain Azal (50km south of Setif), said Tuesday the Civil Protection.

Communication manager of this body Captain Ahmed Lamamra affirmed that the teams of the Civil Protection of the commune of Ain Azal intervened this morning at 8.30 a.m. to extract the bodies of the two victims from under the rubble and rescued a third employee who was suffering from serious respiratory difficulties because of the inhaled dust.

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According to captain Lamamra, researches are currently underway in the rubble under the supervision of local director of the Civil Protection to make sure that there are no other workers buried inside this mining tunnel.

The bodies of the two victims were transferred to the morgue of the hospital Youcef Laalaoui of Ain Azal, while the injured worker was transferred to the medical emergencies of the same hospital, said the source.

### **Collapse of mining tunnel at Ain Azal: Arkab tasked with going to scene**

*ALGIERS* - President of the Republic Abdelmadjid Tebboune has tasked Minister of Mines Mohamed Arkab with going to Ain Azal (province of Setif) to follow closely the evolution of the situation after the collapse of a tunnel of prospection of non-ferrous mining products and useful substances, and to offer his condolences to the families of the victims of this tragic accident, said the Presidency of the Republic.

An explosion preceded the partial collapse of a prospection tunnel, built by the National Company for the Exploitation of Non-Ferrous Mining Products and Useful Substances at Chaaba El Hamra, in the province of Kharza Youcef, located east of Ain Azal (50 km south of Setif). Two people were killed and some employees were injured, said the Civil Protection.

Research is currently continuing in the rubble under the supervision of the local Civil Protection official, in the presence of the Governor of Setif, to ensure that no other workers are buried inside this mining tunnel, said the source.