

Health Ministry Announced on Friday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 84,516 With 127 More Iranians Killed by the Deadly Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Said That the Details of Vaccine imports Which FM Mohammad-Javad Zarif Has Personally Been Involved in Some Cases Will Not Be Disclosed As It Involves Evasion of Sanctions

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2 DOMESTIC

Leader Appoints Mohseni-Ejei as New Judiciary Chief

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Violators of JCPOA in No Position to Criticize

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's UN envoy lambastes the countries that gave up their pledges under the 2015 nuclear deal between the Islamic Republic and others, for their wrongfully blaming Tehran instead for its rightful remedial nuclear measures.

"Those who broke their promise are the ones who must prove their sincerity and genuine political will. They are the ones who must take hard decisions," Majid Takht Ravanchi, the country's permanent representative to the world body, told a United Nations Security Council meeting.

"Therefore, they are not in a position to criticize Iran for taking remedial measures," he added.

The meeting had been formed to study UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' biannual report on the manner of implementation of the nuclear deal that is officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The United States left the JCPOA in 2018 and returned the sanctions that the deal had lifted. It then began scaring other countries into abiding by the illegal and inhumane bans. Washington's Western allies in the deal—the UK, France, and Germany—bowed under the "maximum pressure" policy by stopping their trade with Tehran in line with the coercive economic measures.

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Tehran Restricts IAEA Access To Main Enrichment Plant



VIENNA (Dispatches)- Iran has been restricting U.N. nuclear inspectors' access to its main uranium enrichment plant at Natanz, citing security concerns after what it says was an attack on the site by Israel in April, diplomats say.

The standoff, which one official said has been going on for weeks, is in the course of being resolved, diplomats said, but it has also raised tensions with the West just as indirect talks between Iran and the United States on reviving the Iran nuclear deal have adjourned without a date set for their resumption.

It follows various moves by Iran that breach the 2015 nuclear deal or have angered Washington and its allies, ranging from enriching uranium to close to weapons-grade to failing to explain the origin of uranium particles that the U.N. nuclear watchdog found at several undeclared sites.

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4 DOMESTIC

Iran's Return to Oil Market Is the Main Task

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Parties to JCPOA Talks Need More Time Before New Meeting

PARIS (Reuters) - Some parties to the Iran nuclear talks need more time before resuming negotiations in Vienna and a new round is unlikely before next week, Russia's envoy said on Thursday.

Iran and the United States have been holding indirect talks on reviving the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and major powers that imposed restrictions on Iran's nuclear activities in exchange for lifting international sanctions.

"The #ViennaTalks on #JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) will resume as soon as all the participating states are ready for what is supposed to be the final stage of negotiations," Mikhail Ulyanov, Moscow's ambassador to the U.N. atomic watchdog, said on Twitter.

"This isn't the case in point yet. Some participants need more time. Looks like we will meet in Vienna not earlier than next week."

The Vienna talks, which began in April, are now in a pause that had been expected to last until early July. Diplomats from both sides have said major differences remain and want the other side to make greater concessions before resuming.

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Chadormalu Mining & Industrial Co. (PJS)

Growing Exploration in Mining and Industry Development



Iran's mineral resources and rich resources have a high potential for economic development. Therefore, it has provided us with the conditions to be among the industrialized countries of the world.

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Iran, Russia Discuss Cooperation in Cybersecurity

MOSCOW (IP)- Iranian Ambassador to Russia met with the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for Information Security, discussing the expansion of relations in cybersecurity.

Kazem Jalali met with Andrey Krutskikh, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for Information Security. During the meeting, bilateral cooperation in the field of cybersecurity was discussed. The two sides stressed the need to continue and expand consultations in the field of cybersecurity as well as international security.

Leader Appoints Mohseni-Ejei as New Judiciary Chief

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has appointed veteran jurist and prosecutor Gholamhossein Mohseni-Ejei as new head of Iran’s Judiciary.

According to a decree issued by the Leader on Thursday, Mohseni-Ejei will replace Seyyed Ebrahim Raeisi, who served in the position for over two years before being elected as Iran’s eighth president.

Before being named head of the Judiciary, Mohseni-Ejei was Raisi’s deputy and seen as the second-highest official in the country’s judicial system. He served as minister of intelligence from 2005 to July 2009, under ex-President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. He has also held a number of governmental posts since 1984.

Raisi is scheduled to be sworn in as president in early August after winning the June 18 presidential election by a landslide.

The president-elect had asked, in a letter on Wednesday, for the Leader’s permission to concentrate on forming his administration. He also requested Ayatollah Khamenei to take a decision in his sole discretion regarding a new Judiciary chief.

The Leader, in his decree, thanked Raisi for his “valuable services” as Judiciary chief and his “honorable record” in laying a strong foundation at the judicial branch of the Iranian government.

In the decree addressed to Mohseni-Ejei, Ayatollah Khamenei said, “I appoint you as the head of the judiciary branch, on the basis of Article 157 of the Constitution, since, besides judicial competence, you have precious experience and a deep



understanding of judicial matters.”

“I expect you to pay serious attention to the fundamental responsibilities of the Judiciary as specified in the Constitution: responsibilities such as administering justice, asserting the rights of the public, safeguarding the liberties which are legal, supervising the execution of the law, preventing crimes and combating corruption in a decisive manner,” the Leader’s website quoted the decree as saying.

It also urged Mohseni-Ejei to continue the transformational approach at the Judiciary with special care, pave the way for the usage of new technologies and guarantee people’s easy and free access to judicial services.

The Leader called on the new Judiciary chief to put efficient and virtuous personnel in charge of responsibilities at the branch under his watch and train competent managers.

The services of virtuous judges should be honored and their dignity must be preserved while offenders, who are few in number, should be dealt with decisively, Ayatollah Khamenei said, adding that being present among people has many blessings.

“I ask God Almighty for the success of your Excellency and your colleagues, and I hope that your services will please God and the people,” the Leader said.

U.S. Economic War Fails to Break Iran

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Hassan Rouhani said on Thursday that during the economic war the US wanted to break Iran through an economic blockade, but it failed to do so.

President Rouhani made the remarks at the inauguration ceremony of six national projects throughout the country via video conferencing.

Pointing to the U.S. economic war defeat against Iranians, President Rouhani said that the reason for the U.S. failure was because Iran replaced the export of other goods with oil exports.

He noted that instead of the oil they sanctioned, Iran created an alternative, saying that in the field of gas, Iran got more product and even exported.

The Iranian president went on to elaborate further to call the fact that Iran is the tenth country in the field of steel and the seventh country in the field of copper.

Six industrial and mining projects with a credit of 35,770 billion rials which create employment for 881 people were inaugurated within the framework of the 78th national plan in four provinces upon the command of President Rouhani.

The projects include the steel billet design of Pars Butyl Company and the design of Yazd jewelry ceramic tile production in Ashkezar, as well as the development plan of processed tobacco in J. T. I Pars Company in Soltanieh.

Raisi Pens Letter to Leader on Forming New Administration

TEHRAN (MNA) – President-Elect Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi has asked for Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei’s permission for concentrating on formation of a new administration.

In a letter penned to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution on Wed., Iranian President-Elect Raisi seized this opportunity to express his thanks for Leader’s trust, support, wise guidance during his tenure in the Judiciary as well as his special attention to the performance and activity of the Judiciary in the last two years in his recent

meeting with the officials of the Judiciary Branch.

In this letter, Raisi pointed to the significance of affairs of future government and the limited time left to prepare preliminary measures for formation of the next administration and asked the Leader to allow him to focus on preparing the preparations for the formation of a new government in the remaining time.

He also requested Leader of the Islamic Revolution to adopt necessary decision regarding the appointment of new Judiciary Chief at his sole discretion.

Zarif Felicitates China on 100th Anniversary of China

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif congratulated the Chinese nation and government on the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, I would like to offer my warm congratulations on the remarkable achievements that the party has achieved, Zarif wrote on his Twitter account on Thursday.

Stressing that these 100 years have passed with pride and prosperity, he expressed his hope that under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, this country would be empowered more and Iran-China relations would expand more vigorously.

The celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China was held this morning on Thursday, July 1 in Tiananmen Square in central Beijing, China.

Tehran, Madrid Cooperate in Boosting Cultural, Scientific Relations

MADRID (IP)- The cultural attaché of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Spain emphasized cultural and scientific cooperation with Spain.

Attending the Complutense University of Madrid, Mohammad-Mehdi Ahmadi met the Dean of the Faculty of History, Miguel Luke Taliban.

The meeting was followed by a series of meetings in which the necessary plans are to be made for the Iran-Spain Cultural Heritage Congress in December 2021.

Ahmadi stated that necessary cooperation would be established between the two delegations to hold the congress.

Welcoming the proposals of the Iranian cultural attaché in Spain, the officials of the Faculty of History of Complutense University emphasized that they would hold meetings with the vice chancellor for international affairs and the heads of other faculties, including the Faculty of Linguistics, Philosophy, and Religions to provide the ground for cooperation between the different departments of the University for holding the congress better.

General Soleimani Assassination, Barbaric, Arbitrary, Unjust, and Illegal



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The ambassador and permanent representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva described the assassination of General Ghasem Soleimani as a barbaric, arbitrary, unjust, and illegal act.

Speaking at the 47th session of the Human Rights Council on Thursday, Esmail Baghaei Hamaneh said the assassination of the late General Soleimani, a true defender of human rights and opposition to the occupation ISIL terrorism was an international crime that also threatened international peace and security.

“The negligence of the US government and the personal responsibility of this crime by those involved in this assassination, including the one who ordered this criminal operation, is quite obvious, “ Baghaei Hamaneh said.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Iranian envoy said, “The Iranian nation and all the people of the region, who owe their liberation from ISIL to the sacrifices of General Soleimani, will never give up seeking justice for that heinous crime.”

“Human rights mechanisms and institutions are expected to be aware of this heinous crime and its long-term consequences for the rule of law, human rights, and dignity, and to understand this apparent symbol of lawlessness and insult to the basic right to life,” he stated.

Gen Ghasem Soleimani, Late commander of the Quds Force of Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, former deputy commander of Iraq’s Popular Mobilization Units, and their companions were martyred outside Baghdad International Airport 3 January 2020 on the direct order of the former US President Donald Trump.

Iran, Kuwait Exchange Fugitive Citizens

TEHRAN (IP) - Iran and Kuwait have agreed upon an exchange of citizens wanted by their respective authorities, Al-Rai reported.

Al-Rai quoted Iran’s ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Irani as saying the swap took place a week ago.

According to Iran’s ambassador to Kuwait, an engineer accused of seizing \$39.8 million (12 million dinars) was returned to Kuwait. In return, Kuwait extradited an Iranian citizen wanted by Interpol in connection with a fraud case in her native country.

Irani praised the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Iran and Kuwait have been implementing an extradition agreement since 2004. This allows Iranian prisoners in Kuwait and Kuwaiti inmates in Iran to return to their respective countries and complete their prison terms in their own countries.

Iran Navy Keeps Watchful Eye on All Movements by Aliens in Persian Gulf

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The Iranian Navy commander has called for an end to the presence of extra-regional forces, especially those of the United States, in the Persian Gulf, saying they have only created instability in the region.

“While the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman are a safe and stable region, in recent years we have witnessed increased insecurity in the Gulf of Aden and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, and that’s why we do not understand the [reason for] the presence of coalition forces in the Persian Gulf. We believe that the main purpose of their presence is to undermine dialogue between the effective [regional] navies,” Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi said.

He made the remarks in a meeting with Chief of Staff of the French Navy Admiral Pierre Vandier on the sidelines of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) held in Réunion island, an overseas region of France located in the Indian Ocean.

The senior commander said that Iran is closely monitoring movements of foreign forces in the region, adding, “Today, a number of American and European vessels, as well as French ones, are present in the Persian Gulf region, but we monitor and keep a watchful eye on all their movements and vessels, even from a far distance.”

He reiterated that security of any maritime domain could only be provided by countries of that geography.

Iran protests the presence of EU vessels as well as the American ones near its shores, Khanzadi said, adding, “We believe that such uncalled-for security combinations do not enhance collective security and should be suspended.”

For his part, the French commander praised Iran’s performance during its presidency of the IONS summit and called for increased communication and interaction between the Iranian and French Navies towards reducing tensions in the region.

He said former U.S. president Donald Trump had called on Washington’s allies to send forces to the region to pile up pressure on Iran but the French government slightly backed down from the US policy.

He argued that European countries had to be present in the Persian Gulf region “to ensure the security of the region” but stressed that “we were not present in any of the US operations.”

France and Europe seek security without conflict or tension, he said, adding, “We are still in contact with American forces, and we would like to be in contact with you.”

The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) is a forum designed to increase maritime security cooperation, discuss regional maritime issues, and promote friendly relationships among the member states.

It has 24 member nations and eight states with observer status.

Iran Closes Taftaan Border With Pakistan as Covid Cases Rise

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran has closed its main border crossing point at Taftaan with Pakistan due to the rise in Covid cases in border city Zahidan, credible sources said.

Iranian authorities have informed Pakistani authorities on phone about the decision before closing the border for an indefinite time, the sources told Pakistan’s daily The Nation.

Pakistani passengers bound for Iran at Pakistani side were informed by the authorities that Iranian side had closed the border, therefore, they could no longer cross over the border.

However, the Iranian authorities and immigration staff are permitting Pakistani citizens to cross over to Pakistan from the Iran side.

The government of Pakistan last month had reviewed its border restriction with Iran and lifted it on 19th May 2021 after it remained effective for two weeks. However, Pakistan has not officially reacted to the Iranian decision of closing its border.

Happy National Day of Industry and Mining

IDRO With More Than Half a Century Of Production Support



IDRO, 2013-2021



The current report shows the most important activities of the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) during the 11th and 12th governments from Iranian calendar years of 1392 to 1400 (2013-2021). During the past 8 years, IDRO has been seriously focused on achieving the strategies of the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade to materialize the production pick-up and domestic production movement, to fulfill its industrial development mission by eliminating deprivation from less developed provinces and to invest in new technologies and advanced industries. IDRO has the capability to provide the ground for the development of the country's industry and like the first decade of its establishment, to have a significant presence in the country's industrial sector. This requires effective and constructive decisions in the field of reviewing laws and regulations to follow the flexibility and dynamism which is the nature of a developmental organization.



Achievements and Projects Put Into Operation

Due to its inherent nature, the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) has guided and commissioned various projects in various fields, the most important of them are the exploitation projects of phases 17 and 18 of South Pars by a consortium led by IDRO with a value of \$4b and \$110m, exploitation of the supplementary plan of Esfarayen Industrial Complex in North Khorasan Province with a total investment of 94 million Euros and 374 billion rials, construction of a new spinning line of Baluch Industries Development Company in Sistan and Baluchestan Province with a capacity of producing 15 tons of different types of thread per day with an investment of 5.6 million euros and 750 billion rials with creating jobs for 150 people, the operation of the first phase of the Garmsar Special Economic Zone with an area of 250 hectares with an investment of 2,860 billion rials.

Development and deepening of Domestic Manufacture

The intensification of the U.S. cruel sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran made senior officials, including officials at the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade, draw this conclusion that they must place more emphasis on domestic capabilities more than ever to meet the needs of industry, and provide to the industry the knowledge-based and technology companies. Accordingly, and in line with the domestic manufacturing movement, the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) in July 2019 held in Tehran the first domestic manufacturing exhibition with the aim of introducing and identifying the needs of the country's industries. One of the achievements of this exhibition was the exchange of 202 memoranda of understanding in 6 industrial groups. By the way, the exhibition held 4 specialized desks for 154 part-projects with a contract value of 4,460 billion Tomans, for saving forex consumption valued at 341 million euros and developing and

deepening the domestic production in the companies covered in this regard.

Oil, Gas and Energy Industries

In this field, IDRO is the leader of a consortium consisting of eight companies in the South Pars Phase 14 development project and it has on its record the materialization of 90% progress in the South Pars Phase 14 development project by the end of 1399 (last Iranian calendar year ended on March 20), as well as the installation of 4 platforms of South Pars 14 and production of 2 billion Cubic feet per day of sour gas and transfer of production to the Phase 12.

Transportation Industries

Marine Industries

Development of a strategic document for the marine industries, construction of medium and small size metal vessels, repair of various vessels especially the wide-body ships, and implementing the macro developmental projects in Iran Shipbuilding and (ISOICO), such as construction of dry basins, construction and repair of oil tankers up to 300,000 ton-capacity with a credit of \$88m is one of the IDRO's actions in this area.

Automotive industry

The Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran, as one of the shareholders of the country's automotive industry, has always played an important role in policy-making and leadership of this industry and has taken significant measures to develop and promote the automotive industry. Among the measures being raised in this field is holding 4 specialized desks for 154 part-projects with a contract worth of 4,460 billion tomans and saving forex consumption worth of 341 million euros. Advancing the renovation plan of the country's worn-out commercial transport fleet is another action of IDRO in this field. By the end of 1399 (last Iranian calendar year ended on March 21), some 33,244 orders for commercial vehicles were registered, and for 11,346 vehicles worth \$518 million, the blocked forex has been received by the National Development Fund and therefore, 657 vehicles were delivered to the applicants.

New Industries

During the past 8 years, important measures have been taken in this field that led to the cooperation of 154 coupled knowledge-based companies and industrial companies requesting technology with a contract worth of more than 27.800 billion rials, advancing the production of water filters (membranes) in Ilam city, with a total investment of 9.03 million

dollars and 1.748 billion rials, employment of 75 people, construction of the first phase of allograft bio-implant production center in Tehran and Kermanshah provinces with investment of 850 billion rials, and employment of 40 specialized manpower and commissioning Completion, and development of e-government systems of centers and organizations under the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade.

Development of Deprived and Less Privileged Areas

Paying attention to less privileged areas is one of IDRO's focal activities. During this period, the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran has on its record defining and implementation of 24 investment projects (ongoing) with an investment of 364.166 billion rials and employment of 10,904 people in 16 mainly deprived and less privileged provinces, conducting studies, identifying 39 investment projects with investment worth of 193,000 billion rials and employment of



about 5,000 people in 12 provinces, issuing a call to attract private sector participation to implement and continue the implementation of the plan to create and develop export-oriented production complexes on the shores of Jask to Gwadar.

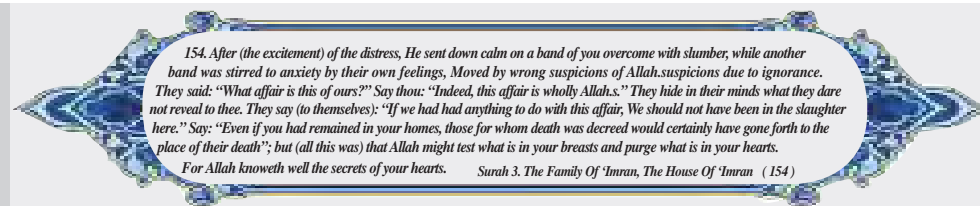
Renovation of Selected Industries

The Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran has completed several modernization projects of some companies in the past eight years. Renovation of spinning line of Baluch Industries Development Company with Z.



PRAYER TIME

| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| ■ Noon (Zohr) | 13:08 |
| ■ Evening (Maghreb) | 20:45 |
| ■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr) | 04:08 |
| ■ Tomorrow's Sunrise | 05:53 |



Iran's Return to Oil Market Is the Main Task

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Oil Minister Bijan Zangeneh said after the 181st Meeting of the OPEC Conference that the main responsibility of the next petroleum minister is to help Iran return to the oil market and get our lost market share back which was caused by the sanctions.

I am happy that I have carried this huge burden of responsibility on my shoulder for years and I hope to put it down safely, properly and honestly. I asked all OPEC members to support next petroleum minister, he said.

About OPEC meeting, Zangeneh said it was an ordinary meeting of OPEC not an extraordinary one and we mostly focused on some paperwork such as approving financial reports and selecting the auditor. And, most technical reports are due to be presented in OPEC Plus meeting.

The decision on easing oil output cuts or increasing production is to be made in OPEC Plus meeting which will be held in hours, he added.

The OPEC's decisions are mainly based on reaching consensus, he said, adding oil market condition has not created any differences.

Earlier Zangeneh spoke at the 181st Ordinary Meeting of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' Conference after he received OPEC's remarks honoring him for his contributions to the organization. In his remarks, he said, "I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our distinguished Secretary-General, HE. Mohammad Barkindo and his able staff for this tasteful and humbling video documentary presentation. I thank you for all the kind words addressed to me."

He continued, "Allow me to share with you, very briefly, my insight about the underlying reason for the success and durability of our Organization. In my view, OPEC is the only economic organization of the developing countries that directly and significantly impacts and shapes the world economy. OPEC was founded on the pillar of a golden principle. This golden principle was the key for OPEC to achieve unparalleled success in the last 60(sixty) years. Comprehension and acceptance of the need for cooperation within OPEC along with intra economic competition and even political conflict among OPEC member countries constitute that key golden principle."

He added, "Agreeing to cooperate with one another within OPEC to secure national interests with overarching rule of wisdom in relations among OPEC members, despite tremendous ups and downs and major tensions and discords



among member countries is the secret key to durability and success of our Organization in the last 60(sixty) years. In the meantime, we have all scored and benefited from being an OPEC member in the interest of our national development and our own peoples."

He noted, "At the verge of being 70(seventy) years old, when the new government of President-elect His Excellency, Mr. Raisi, is about to be formed, I have decided to step aside from official public service and go to retirement. I ask all friends here and am confident that the same courtesies and cooperation that was accorded me during these long years will be accorded to my successor who will take office in less than two months from today."

Meanwhile in a video message, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) praised Iran's oil minister for his long presence in Iran's Ministry of Oil at the 181st Ordinary Meeting of the OPEC Conference on Thursday.

The video message was recorded and played to honor Zangeneh's final attendance at the OPEC ministerial meetings during the 181st Ordinary Meeting of the OPEC Conference held via videoconferencing on Thursday.

OPEC Secretary-General, Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo, said: "At this historic moment, I would like to take a few minutes of your time to reflect with deep appreciation and a touch of nostalgia on the historical contributions of his Excellency, Bijan Zangeneh of the Islamic Republic of Iran to OPEC during his long and illustrious career."

"Indeed, we have a debt of gratitude to pay for his many years of dedicated service of excellence to this organization as head of the Islamic Republic of Iran's delegation to OPEC," the message reads.

First Container Shipment From Finland Arrives in Iran

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The first container shipment from Finland crossed three rail borders into Iran's Astara border on Wednesday to reach India by crossing the North-South Corridor.

The project to transport 32 containers of paper cargo from Helsinki in Finland to the Indian port of Nhava Sheva has been operational in collaboration with several logistics companies from Russia, Azerbaijan, India, and Iran.

Iran is trying to remove barriers to the entire transport operation from Finland's Helsinki to India's Nhava Sheva port within 22 days through the North-South Corridor.

The increase of economic exchanges and the trade boom are among the benefits of establishing the North-South Corridor. The countries participating in the project can minimize political and economic risks, which are natural in international exchanges.

The strategic, geo-politic, and geo-economic situation of Iran has been in the spotlight of powerful countries. Its railways and roads and access to long shores along the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman, the Gulf of Makran, and the Caspian Sea are among the country's privileges for big economic producers around the world.

A one-week blockage of the Suez Canal by a giant 250,000-ton container ship showed the world that the global trade needs to find alternative routes such as the North-South Corridor via Iran.

Iran, Armenia Economic Officials Meet to Discuss Trade Ties

TEHRAN (MNA) – Head of Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) Hamid Zadboom has held a meeting in Tehran with Armenian Deputy Economy Minister Varos Simonyan.

In the meeting, Hamid Zadboom said Iran's TPOI is ready to hold a meeting of the Joint Industrial, Mining and Commercial Working Group in order to accurately identify the obstacles and problems facing bilateral trade and to take appropriate and effective decisions to tackle them.

The TPOI chairman appreciated the cooperation of the Armenian side for hosting an Iranian exhibition in Armenia in June this year and described as necessary the continuation of trade events in both countries and the sending and receiving of trade delegations to better introduce export capabilities and exchange information on the needs of the markets on both sides.

Zadboom, who is also Iran deputy industry minister considered the removal of non-tariff barriers and



reducing logistics and transportation costs along with the expansion of the scope of the preferential trade agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union as an important factor in increasing the level of trade relations between the two countries and called for discussing those issues within the framework of the joint working group.

Armenian Deputy Economy Minister Varos Simonyan, for his part, welcomed the holding of a joint Industry, Mining and Trade Working Group at the earliest and announced his readiness to hold expert talks during the meetings of the joint working group between the two countries.

Simonyan also said that given Armenia's shared borders with Iran and its membership in the Eurasian Economic Union it is considered as a bridge for Iranian traders with the Eurasian Union.

He also stressed Armenia's support for a free trade agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Union.

Syria Calls for Joint Aviation Cooperation With Iran

TEHRAN (MNA) – In a meeting with the Head of Civil Aviation Organization of Iran, Syrian officials called for joint aviation cooperation with Iran.

Officials of the Syrian National Aviation Organization met and held talks with Touraj Dehqani Zangeneh on wed. In this meeting, they called for joint technical and educational cooperation in the aviation industry with Iran.

The Civil Aviation Organization of Iran, for its part, announced its readiness for technical and educational cooperation in the field of training of controllers, technical and operational personnel, as well as technical tests of Syrian aircraft and transfer of experience in establishing monitoring structures between the two countries.

Tehran-Beijing Trade Volume Urged To Be Doubled



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Deputy Chairman of the Iranian parliament's economic commission said the volume of exchanges between Iran and China should be doubled.

In a meeting with the Chinese ambassador to Tehran Chang Hua, Ehsan Khandouzi stated that the practical response of Iran and China to neutralizing the U.S. maximum pressure is to double the volume of trade between the two countries in the upcoming years.

He noted that the friendly and stable relations between Iran and China are strong support for enhancing mutual relations in the political, economic, and cultural fields, especially the parliamentary ones.

He also stressed the need for greater contribution in implementing the Iran-China Comprehensive Strategic Plan and the need to strengthen parliamentary cooperation to facilitate the process of implementation of the 25-year agreement between the two countries.

The Chinese ambassador to Tehran also stated that the Chinese government welcomes and supports developing and strengthening friendly relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Referring to the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive of Plan of Action) and the ongoing negotiations in Vienna, Chang Hua said: "The White House uses political and economic tools to interfere in the internal affairs of countries and imposes sanctions on them, and China strongly opposes this kind of behavior and considers the United States to be the main cause of the current situation."

President Inaugurates Several National Projects

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Hassan Rouhani on Thursday inaugurated six national projects throughout the country via video conferencing.

Six industrial and mining projects with a credit of 35,770 billion rials which create employment for 881 people were inaugurated within the framework of the 78th national plan in four provinces upon the command of President Rouhani.

The projects include the steel billet design of Pars Butyl Company and the design of Yazd jewelry ceramic tile production in Ashkezar as well as the development plan of processed tobacco in J. T. I Pars Company in Soltanieh.

Also, the plan for transferring, storing, and exporting sulfuric acid in Kerman and Bandar Abbas, the design of cooked and hydrated lime in Ahar, and the pelletizing plan of Ardakan Sponge Iron Company are other projects that started operation on Thursday.

Tehran, Belgrade to Develop Cooperation in Agriculture, Mining

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK



TEHRAN - Holding a bilateral webinar, Iran and Serbia reviewed developing bilateral cooperation in agriculture and mining sectors.

The Head of the Iranian Geological Survey and Mineral Exploration, Alireza Shahidi, said in a joint webinar with Serbian officials: "With scientific cooperation, especially between two countries' geological organizations, the agricultural and water sectors' problems can be overcome."

Iran's Ambassador to Belgrade, Rashid Hassanpour Baei, also stated that the Iranian Embassy would not spare any effort to support and strengthen communication and continue their cooperation. He noted that Iran has good potential in mining and energy, adding that the relationship between Iran and Serbia will create leading opportunities to build positive cooperation in the future.

Serbian Ambassador to Tehran, Dragan Todorovic, also thanked for holding the webinar and said: "The Serbian Embassy in Tehran will cooperate to strengthen relations, and we hope that the two sides' intentions in mining and energy will lead to fruitful cooperation in the near future."

Iran, Safest Air Transport Route in Region

TEHRAN (IP) - The First Deputy Head of the National Security and Foreign Policy Commission of Iran's Parliament says the Army air defense force has created the safest airspace for the country and region.

Ebrahim Azizi pointed out that in the past years, the skies of many countries in the region and the world were insecure, and many countries used the skies of Iran for air transport as the safest route in the region. Azizi noted that the domestically made equipment, along with the ability to protect the country's airspace and the accurate monitoring of the skies, indicated the significant progress of Iran.

Training experienced and ready forces to defend Iran's establishment and the production of equipment and modernization of radar stations in different parts of the country were indicative of the development of air defense of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the MP reiterated. The 'Sustainable Security 1400' marine drill started on Wednesday while various surface and aviation units of the navy, including missile launcher destroyers, aircraft, helicopters, marine-based UAVs, corvettes, planes, naval drones, electronic warfare systems, as well as Marines and commandos took part in the wargame.

Tabriz-Yerevan Direct Flight Launched

TABRIZ (IRNA) - The first Tabriz-Yerevan flight with a capacity of 110 passengers landed at Tabriz International Airport on Thursday and returned to Yerevan an hour later with the full passenger capacity.

On the sidelines of the opening ceremony of the Tabriz-Yerevan flight, the head of East Azarbaijan airports Ramin Azari said that this is the third foreign flight line of Tabriz international airport, which opened today with the transfer of 46 passengers from Yerevan to Tabriz.

He stated that Armenia Airways flight also transferred 97 passengers from Tabriz to Yerevan, adding that the flights between two cities of Iran and Armenia with the capacity of 110 passengers and two weekly flights on Mondays and Thursdays were established with these Tabriz-Yerevan and vice versa flights.

Tabriz International Airport is the main air terminal in the northwest of the country, which flies to 11 domestic cities and three foreign cities, including Istanbul, Izmir, and Yerevan.

Azari met and held talks with the CEO of Armenian Airlines Arlen Davudyan on the sidelines of the opening ceremony of the Tabriz-Yerevan flight.



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J, balcony
marble fl
Fully Furn

Shanon (adviser)

Darrous Villa (\$5000)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
S, J, balcony
yard, & pkg
Fully Furn

Parsian

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Jordan (\$1700) 170sq.m
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Farmanieh (\$2500) 260sq.m
All with S/p, balcony, F.F

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Ethiopia Urges Tigray Rebels to Join Ceasefire

ADDIS ABABA (Reuters) - Ethiopia's government urged Tigrayan rebels to join a unilateral ceasefire in their conflict on Thursday as aid agencies struggled to reach hundreds of thousands of people facing famine.

The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the former rulers of Ethiopia's Tigray region, said on Monday it was back in control of the regional capital Mekelle after nearly eight months of fighting.

The government declared a unilateral ceasefire but the TPLF dismissed it as a joke. Hostilities persisted on Thursday and pressure built internationally for all sides to pull back. "Operations are under way ... and the number of prisoners of war is increasing by the minute," TPLF spokesman Getachew Reda told Reuters by satellite phone, with light artillery fire crackling in the background.



Portugal Imposes Night-Time Curfew to Curb COVID-19 Spike

LISBON (Reuters) - A night-time curfew will be imposed in several Portuguese municipalities, including the capital Lisbon and the city of Porto, as authorities scramble to bring under control a surge in COVID-19 infections, the government said on Thursday.

The 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew, which starts on Friday, will be in place in 45 high-risk municipalities, including tourist magnet Albufeira in the sunny southern Algarve region.

Cases in Portugal, which faced its toughest battle against the coronavirus in January, jumped by 2,449 on Thursday, the biggest increase since mid-February. Daily coronavirus deaths, in single digits, remain well below February levels, however.



Xi Warns Against Foreign Bullying As China Marks Party Centenary



BEIJING (Reuters) - China's President Xi Jinping on Thursday warned that foreign forces attempting to bully the nation will "get their heads bashed", and hailed a "new world" created by its people as the ruling Communist Party marked the centenary of its founding.

In an hour-long address from Tiananmen Square, Xi pledged to build up China's military, committed to the "reunification" of Taiwan and said social stability would be ensured in Hong Kong while protecting China's security and sovereignty.

"The people of China are not only good at destroying the old world, they have also created a new world," said Xi, China's most powerful leader since Mao Zedong, the founder of the People's Republic. "Only socialism can save China." Xi and the party are riding high as China recovers briskly from the COVID-19 outbreak and takes a more assertive stance on the global stage. But Beijing faces external criticism over its clampdown in Hong Kong and treatment of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, and is dealing with a worsening demographic outlook that imperils long-term economic growth.

A survey of 17 advanced economies released on Wednesday by the U.S.-based Pew Research Center showed that views about China have remained broadly negative and confidence in Xi near historic lows.

On Thursday, Xi said that the people of China would never allow any foreign force to bully, oppress, or subjugate them.

"Anyone who dares try to do that will have their heads bashed bloody against the Great Wall of steel forged by over 1.4 billion Chinese people," he said, sparking applause from an invited audience of 70,000 gathered in the massive square in central Beijing. The phrase became the top trending topic on China's Twitter-like Weibo on Thursday morning.

Tang Renwu, a professor of public management at Beijing Normal University, said the tough talk was in response to U.S. and western efforts to "contain" and "suppress" China. "Xi's stronger-than-usual response would have the effect of invoking even more patriotic and nationalistic sentiment among the Chinese people," Tang said.

China, whose rapid military modernisation has fuelled growing worry among its neighbours and in the West, will build up its armed forces to safeguard its sovereignty, security and development, elevating them to world-class standards, Xi said.

Resolving the Taiwan question and realising China's complete "reunification" is an "unswerving historical task" of the party, Xi said.

"All sons and daughters of China, including compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, must work together and move forward in solidarity, resolutely smashing any 'Taiwan independence' plots," he said.

China, which considers democratically-ruled Taiwan its own, has stepped up efforts to assert its sovereignty claims, including sending fighter jets and bombers close to the island.

Turkey Exits Treaty Combatting Violence Against Women

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey on Thursday formally exited a treaty combatting femicide and domestic abuse, in a controversial move defended by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan but condemned by the West and rights groups.

Erdogan sparked outrage in March by pulling out of the world's first binding treaty to prevent and combat violence against women, known as the Istanbul Convention.

There were protests on Thursday evening across Turkey including the capital Ankara and Istanbul as people rallied in support of the convention. The 2011 pact, signed by 45 countries and the European Union, requires governments to adopt legislation linked to the prosecution of crimes including marital rape and female genital mutilation.

Erdogan's move came as he clings on to support from conservative and nationalist groups to maintain his 18-year rule. Rights organizations say Erdogan's decision will put women at greater risk of violence when femicide is already prevalent in Turkey.

"We're very frustrated. Every day a woman who we know or don't know is murdered. There's no guarantee that we will not be subject to the same treatment tomorrow," Nevin Tatar, 35, said during the demonstration in Istanbul.

Several hundred people attended the protest, some with rainbow flags, chanting: "We're not going to be silent, we're not scared, we won't obey!" The president on Thursday insisted Turkey's commitment to end violence against women would not suffer because of his decision.

Sudan Protesters Call for Gov't to Resign Over Harsh Economic Reforms

KHARTOUM (Dispatches) - Hundreds of Sudanese protesters took to the streets of major cities on Wednesday to demand the government's resignation over IMF-backed economic reforms seen as too harsh, AFP correspondents said.

"We want the fall of the regime" and "No to (IMF) policies", shouted demonstrators who massed outside the presidential palace in Khartoum.

The protests erupted a day after the International Monetary Fund approved a \$2.5 billion loan and debt relief deal that will see Sudan's external debt reduced by some \$50 billion.

Public discontent has mounted over the reforms that slashed subsidies on petrol and diesel, more than doubling their price.

The dozens who had gathered in Khartoum burned tyres and brandished banners that read "Bread for the poor", before they were dispersed by police who fired tear gas, an AFP correspondent reported.

In a statement later Wednesday, Sudan's interior ministry said 52 police officers were wounded in clashes with protesters in several parts of Khartoum. Security forces also used tear gas against demonstrators who attempted to join the protests from Omdurman, the capital's twin city across the Nile.

In Kassala, in Sudan's east, dozens of protesters demanded justice for people killed in demonstrations that toppled autocratic president Omar al-Bashir in April 2019.

"Blood for blood, we will not accept compensation," some of them chanted. Sudan has been led by a transitional civilian-military administration since August 2019.

The government has vowed to fix the country's economy, battered by decades of mismanagement, internal conflict and international sanctions under Bashir.

Myanmar Protesters Burn Army Uniform Five Months After Coup

YANGON (Dispatches) - Hundreds of protesters took to the streets of Myanmar's biggest city Yangon on Thursday, setting fire to an army uniform and chanting calls for democracy five months after a military coup ousted elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

The protest was one of the biggest in Yangon in recent weeks, although demonstrations against the army take place daily in many parts of the Southeast Asian country.

"What do we want? Democracy! Democracy!" protesters chanted as they ran through the streets with colorful smoke flares.

"For the people! For the people," they shouted, according to video published by Reuters.

They set an army uniform ablaze before dispersing.

Demonstrators burn a flag and a uniform during a protest in Yangon, Myanmar July 1, 2021, in this screen grab taken from a video obtained by Reuters.

Demonstrators march on a street during a protest in Yangon,

Myanmar July 1, 2021, in this screen grab taken from a video obtained by Reuters. Reuters was not immediately able to reach a military spokesman for comment.

Myanmar's army has struggled to impose its authority since taking power on Feb. 1. It has faced protests, strikes that have paralyzed public and private sectors and a resurgence of conflicts in the borderlands.

The military authorities have branded their opponents terrorists. On Wednesday it freed more than 2,000 prisoners, most of them detained since the coup.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners activist group says more than 6,400 people have been arrested since the coup. It puts the death toll at more than 880, a number the military says is exaggerated.

The army says its takeover was in line with the constitution. It took power alleging fraud in a November election swept by Suu Kyi's party. The former electoral commission had dismissed its accusations.



Progressive South Korean Governor Vows to Tackle Inequality in Presidential Bid

SEOUL (UPI) -- A left-wing South Korean politician launched his presidential bid Thursday, vowing to "quash the powerful and help the vulnerable."

Gyeonggi Province Gov. Lee Jae-myung, 56, said in a prerecorded, 14-minute video statement that socioeconomic disparities in South Korea must be addressed so that "everyone prospers together," local network YTN reported.

"Society has a future only when people or regions don't get to suffer a loss for abiding by the rules, the opportunities are fair, and a reasonable reward is given as the result of fair competition," Lee said, according to Yonhap.

The South Korean politician also said he would implement forceful economic policies to stimulate new growth.

"I will immediately launch a powerful economic revival plan that will turn a crisis of paradigm shift into a chance for another leap forward," Lee said. "Moving into innovative future-oriented economic industries ... will increase the creation of quality jobs and replenish state finances to lay the ground for a country with universal welfare."

"I have only made promises I intend to keep, and I have kept promises I have made." Lee said he advocates universal basic income and building a "society where anyone can enjoy minimum economic prosperity and pursue jobs they want."

Segye Ilbo reported Thursday that Lee's approach to the South Korean economy draws its inspiration from U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, citing sources from Lee's campaign. Roosevelt's New Deal provided relief for the unemployed and launched reforms including universal retirement pensions.

"It is because of inequity and inequality that we suffer from low growth despite having more capital, better technology, a better workforce and stronger infrastructure than ever before," Lee said, referring to problems dogging South Korea's economy.

Lee is expected to continue a policy of engagement with North Korea, the report also said.

Local pollster Realmeter showed support for Lee at 22.8% last week, trailing behind former prosecutor Yoon Seok-youl at 32.3%.



Capital is at Heart of American Human Rights

MASHHAD (IP) - The Secretary-General of the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought says the axis of American human rights is neither God nor man, but capital.

Speaking at a conference entitled 'Critique of US Human Rights' in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province (northeastern Iran) on Thursday night, Hamid Shahriari added: U.S. human rights methods and tools

are coercion that uses either military power or economic sanctions.

The Secretary-General of the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought called the warmongering in the Islamic world, assassination, the use of uninformed groups to excommunicate other groups, and conflict in the form of soft war as American methods and said: "We must try not to fall into the trap of American human rights."



WHO Sounds Alarm on Euro 2020 as Covid Cases Soar

COPENHAGEN (AFP) - The World Health Organization (WHO) called Thursday for better monitoring of Euro 2020 football matches as Covid cases rise again in Europe, fuelled by the deadly Delta variant that is racing around the globe.

Hundreds of cases have been detected among spectators attending Euro matches taking place across Europe, with carriers of the Delta strain detected in Copenhagen, and infected Scots and Finns returning from London and Saint Petersburg respectively.

Russia posted record virus deaths for the third day running on Thursday, while in Britain -- where the Euro semi-final and final take place next week -- infections are soaring despite a strong vaccination drive.

"There will be a new wave in the WHO European region unless we remain disciplined," the UN agency's Europe director Hans Kluge told a press conference.

He warned that the region had seen a 10 percent rise in cases over the past week, "driven by increased mixing, travel, gatherings and easing of social restrictions".

Asked about whether the Euro championship was potentially acting as a "super-spreader" event, Kluge replied: "I hope not... but this can't be excluded."

The coronavirus has killed more than 3.9 million people worldwide, according to an AFP tally.

On Thursday, the European Medicines Agency said two doses of the vaccine appeared to provide protection against the Delta variant, based on real world evidence.

But while some three billion jabs have been administered worldwide, the global vaccine drive has highlighted stark inequalities between countries, with low-income nations having only given an average of one shot per 100 people.

Vaccine skepticism has also been an issue for many countries including Russia, prompting President Vladimir Putin to urge people on national television to get the jab.

On Thursday, Russia reported 672 deaths over the past 24 hours, setting yet another pandemic high.

Saint Petersburg, which is due to host the Spain vs. Switzerland Euro 2020 quarter-final on Friday in front of thousands of spectators, saw the most deaths with 115.

Authorities have introduced minimal restrictions beyond banning food sales at fan zones.

"What we need to look at is around the stadia. How are people getting there? Are they travelling in large crowded convoys of buses? Are they taking individual measures when they are doing that?" Catherine Smallwood, Senior Emergency Officer at WHO Europe, told reporters.

She added that it was also important to look at what was happening after the games, for instance if fans gathered in crowded bars.

"Should this mixing happen, there will be cases."

The concerning situation in Europe coincides with the launch of an EU-wide Covid certificate meant to ease travel for those living in the 27 member states.



The document -- essentially a QR code available on smartphones or on paper -- shows whether the bearer is vaccinated with one of the EU's approved jabs, whether they have recovered from an infection or recently tested negative.

But the surge in the Delta variant could put an abrupt end to this, triggering an "emergency brake" provision suspending the certificate's acceptance.

Cases are rising fast in many Asian countries too.

Bangladesh locked down completely on Thursday, the army and police patrolling the streets as 168 million people were confined to their homes except for emergencies and to buy essentials. Many hospitals are struggling, particularly in areas bordering India where the Delta strain was first detected.

Some rural towns have recorded infection rates of 70 percent.

The healthcare system in Indonesia is also overwhelmed by a huge coronavirus wave, which has forced the government to impose emergency restrictions from Saturday.

The curbs, lasting more than two weeks, cover the capital Jakarta, hard-hit Java and the holiday island Bali.

Malaysia too has announced tighter curbs in some parts of Kuala Lumpur and the neighbouring state of Selangor.

Despite the resurgence of the virus and warnings to go slow, many nations are pressing ahead with plans to open up their economies and revive sectors badly hit by the pandemic, especially travel and tourism.

Thailand kicked off its "Phuket sandbox" project on Thursday, under which vaccinated international travelers can visit the holiday hotspot without needing to quarantine.

OPEC+ Could Add 2m bpd of Oil to Market by December



LONDON (Reuters) - OPEC+ is moving towards gradually adding about 2 million barrels per day (bpd) to the oil market from August to December, an OPEC+ source told Reuters as the group eases back on output curbs amid a recovering global economy and an oil price rally.

The source said monthly increases would amount to less than 0.5 million bpd. Another OPEC+ source said top OPEC producer Saudi Arabia and top non-OPEC producer Russia had a preliminary agreement for a deal on easing output curbs from August.

Responding to oil demand destruction caused by the COVID-19 crisis, OPEC+ last year agreed to cut output by almost 10 million bpd from May 2020, with plans to phase out the curbs by the end of April 2022. Cuts now stand at about 5.8 million bpd.

Oil prices extended gains on news of the latest increase plans because some traders had expected a bigger output rise in August. Brent crude was trading at \$76.40 a barrel by 1315 GMT, up more than 2% and close to 2-1/2 year highs.

The outlined increase "would keep the market tight this summer, with still rising demand over the coming weeks", UBS analyst Giovanni Staunovo said, adding that consensus had been for an addition of 0.5 million bpd a month or slightly more.

Ministers from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Russia and their allies, a group known as OPEC+, began online meetings on Thursday. Sources said they would decide policy from August and could also consider extending their overall pact on supply restraint beyond April 2022.

One source said active supply management could be extended until the end of 2022. OPEC finished its meeting just before 1300 GMT with the wider OPEC+ meeting.

An OPEC+ panel on Tuesday said it expected oil demand to grow by 6 million bpd in 2021 but flagged risks of a glut in 2022, saying there were "significant uncertainties" including an uneven global recovery and rising cases of the Delta variant of the coronavirus.

Saudi Arabia, Russia and other OPEC+ members have been cooperating closely since their big falling out in March 2020 just before the pandemic sent oil prices diving. The price crash drove them back together to forge their supply pact.

Yet the group still faces a challenge over how quickly to unwind the cuts.

Euro Zone Factory Growth, Input Costs Rose at Record Pace in June

LONDON (Reuters) - Euro zone manufacturing activity expanded at its fastest pace on record in June, according to a survey on Thursday which also showed factories faced the steepest rise in raw materials costs in well over two decades.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced governments to shutter much of the 19-country bloc's dominant services industry, ravaging the economy, but factories have largely remained open and the lifting of some restrictions has boosted demand.

IHS Markit's final manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose to 63.4 in June from May's 63.1, above an initial 63.1 "flash" estimate and the highest reading since the survey began in June 1997.

An index measuring output, which feeds into a composite PMI due on Monday and seen as a good guide to economic health, rose from May's 62.2 to 62.6. Anything above 50 indicates growth.

"Euro zone manufacturing continued to grow at a rate unbeaten in almost 24 years of survey history in June



as demand surged with the further relaxation of COVID-19 containment measures," said Chris Williamson, chief business economist at IHS Markit.

"However, the sheer speed of the recent upsurge in demand has led to a sellers' market as capacity and transportation constraints limit the availability of inputs to factories, which have in turn driven industrial prices

higher at a rate not previously witnessed by the survey."

Due to a shortage of shipping containers and supply chains hugely affected by the global pandemic, the input prices index soared to 88.5 from 87.1 -- by far the highest in the survey's history. Inflation dipped to 1.9% last month, official flash data showed on Wednesday.

After a slow start, vaccine programs are accelerating in the bloc so optimism improved and to meet strong demand, factories increased headcount at the fastest rate since the survey began.

The euro zone economy was expected to grow 4.2% this year as life starts to return to some form of normal, a June Reuters poll found.

Parties to JCPOA Talks...

FROM PAGE 1

Former U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the agreement in 2018, to which Tehran responded by starting to violate some of the nuclear limits in 2019 while sticking to its position that it had no nuclear weapons ambitions.

"As the U.S. exited the deal, we need to make sure it won't happen again. This is one of Iran's red lines. We never left the deal, therefore, it is Washington that should give us assurances that it will not happen again when the administration changes," a senior Iranian official said.

"We are not in a rush," the official said, adding that a resumption of talks next week depended on Washington making a "tough political decision."

A Western diplomat said it was still possible that the talks would resume next week.

A second source familiar with the matter echoed this, saying nothing was set and attributed the uncertainty to internal Iranian discussions after last month's Iranian presidential election won by Ebrahim Raisi.

"We could resume next week but ... they (the Iranians) are having their post-election consultations and they need to run their course," said this source. "It is ... a function of their internal deliberations and of the transition that is under way."

France's ambassador to the United Nations Nicolas de Riviere, a former negotiator in the talks, on Wednesday threw the ball back in Iran's court.

"After six negotiation sessions, the parameters of this return to an agreement are clearly identified and the most difficult questions remain to be resolved," he told the U.N. Security Council. "It is now crucial that the courageous trade-offs that are required are taken to conclude the negotiations and allow the swift return of all parties to the agreement."

Tehran Restricts IAEA...

FROM PAGE 1

"They are provoking us," said one Western diplomat who follows the International Atomic Energy Agency closely, adding that inspectors should be able to have full access next week.

Iranian officials were not immediately available for comment. The IAEA declined to comment, citing its general policy of not commenting on inspection matters.

Any reasons for Iran's move beyond the official security and safety concerns it cited as explanations are unclear, but it has quarreled with the IAEA over access before. Iran in 2020 denied the IAEA access to two locations for snap inspections. In 2019, Iran held an IAEA inspector and seized her travel documents.

The IAEA has so far stopped short of reporting the issue to its member states and calling an emergency meeting of its 35-nation Board of Governors as it did in November 2019 when Iran briefly held the IAEA inspector who diplomats say had sought access to Natanz.

An explosion and power cut in April at Natanz, the heart of Iran's uranium-enrichment program, appears to have damaged centrifuges at the underground, commercial-scale Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP) there. The last quarterly IAEA report on Iran in May showed its enrichment output had slowed.

"Because of the accident/sabotage in April, certain accesses have been limited for safety and security reasons," a Vienna-based diplomat said, adding that the move "had very little impact on the agency's ability to carry out verification".

The IAEA and Iran have discussed the issue "in order to avoid that these limitations become permanent and therefore start eroding the verification capability", he added.

Violators of JCPOA...

FROM PAGE 1

In his report, Guterres urged the U.S. to lift the sanctions. The Wednesday meeting backed underway talks in Vienna that are aimed at potential restoration of the deal after the US sabotage. A few parties, however, focused on the remedial steps that Iran has been taking in the face of the Western allies' non-commitment.

"Today, the Council's message is loud and clear: the JCPOA must be implemented and there is no better alternative," Takht Ravanchi said.

He decried the few "discouraging statements" for "pointing their fingers at the victim instead of demanding the culprit to act responsibly."

He reminded that Iran started the remedial steps once its policy of "maximum restraint" failed to dissuade the U.S. from its continued pursuance of the pressure policy.

As part of the countermeasures, the Islamic Republic has so far taken its level of uranium enrichment up to 60 percent and stopped exporting its excessive heavy water.

The envoy reminded that Iran's measures were, as their name indicated, "remedial" in nature and in line with the JCPOA's paragraph 26 and 36. Those sections provide the country with "the right to cease performing" its commitments "in whole or in part" in case of "a re-introduction or re-imposition of the sanctions."

Iran's measures were, meanwhile, neither "inconsistent with our obligations under the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) and our safeguards agreement," he said.

The official also underscored that all the measures were reversible once those of the JCPOA's members, which were in default of their obligations, resumed their commitment to the deal.

He also warned that the country would not "overlook" the contrarily "irreversible" suffering and losses of life that it incurred as a result of the sanctions.

Takht Ravanchi separately blasted efforts at trying to erroneously link the JCPOA to Iran's ballistic missile and space programs.

Firstly, Iran's ballistic missiles are not designed to carry non-conventional warheads, he said, adding, "Iran will not compromise on its security and its conventional defensive capability as no other country does." Secondly, the JCPOA features no reference to any space launch vehicles that some countries have been trying to turn into the subject of their criticism of the Islamic Republic space activities, the envoy said.

In conclusion, Takht Ravanchi said, "Given years of serious violations of the JCPOA by other sides, it is essential to secure enough assurances that all sanctions are removed verifiably." The US also had to be rendered incapable of fresh withdrawal from the deal or abuse of its mechanism to create another implementation crisis, he noted.

He also said a guarantee by the United States that it will never unilaterally withdraw from the 2015 nuclear deal again is crucial to a successful conclusion of the ongoing talks in Vienna aimed at reviving the agreement.

Son Left out of S. Korea Olympic Football Squad

LONDON (Dispatches) - Tottenham Hotspur striker Son Heung-min was not included in South Korea's 18-man Olympic football squad named on Wednesday, avoiding a potential club-versus-country dilemma.

Son's new English Premier League campaign with Tottenham is due to begin on Sunday August 15 against champions Manchester City, just a week after the Olympic final in Tokyo.

LICENCE HOLDER: SOKHAN GOSTAR INSTITUTE

Switchboard:

(+98) (21) 44253448

Public Relations Tel:

(+98)(21) 44253450

Editorial Board: 44253449

Public Relations Fax:

(+98)(21) 44253395

Advertising Department:

Tel/Fax:(+98) (21) 44253335-9/44253234

Website:

http://www.irannewsdaily.com

E-Mail Address:

info@irannewsdaily.com

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Leicester Sign Salzburg Striker Daka

LONDON (Dispatches) - FA Cup holders Leicester City have signed Patson Daka from Austrian side RB Salzburg, the Premier League club announced Wednesday.

The 22-year-old Zambia striker will join the Foxes on a five-year deal, subject to Premier League and international clearance.

"I'm so, so excited to join this great, historic club," said Daka in a Leicester statement. "It has been my dream and I'm so happy and looking forward to what's coming next."

Federer Cruises Past Gasquet

Roger Federer cruised past Richard Gasquet in straight sets to set up a third-round clash with Britain's Cameron Norrie at Wimbledon.

The 20-time Grand Slam singles champion may not be one of the favourites for the title at SW19 this year in what is his latest comeback from an injury layoff, but he looked typically comfortable on Centre Court as he won through, 7-6, 6-1, 6-4. The Swiss superstar found life very tricky in the opening set as Gasquet, who has never won a set against him, battled ferociously from the back of the court. But once in the tie-break, Federer accelerated away with consummate ease to take it 7-1.

With the first set by his name on the board, the 39-year-old almost bagelled the Frenchman in the second with Gasquet just about able to muster a solitary game in the nick of time. The third set was, perhaps, the middle ground as Federer secured the crucial break of serve and held on to his advantage comfortably. The sixth seed will next take on British number two Norrie in the third round after the 25-year-old sealed a 6-3, 6-1, 6-2 win over Australia's Alex Bolt earlier in the day.

"I hope the crowd gets into it," Federer said in his on-court interview.

When asked about the prospect of facing Federer prior to the legend's match, Norrie joked: "Come on Gasquet!" If there was a time to play Roger now is probably the time I guess. He's still a decent player though, he still can play!

With world number one Novak Djokovic the overwhelming favorite to triumph at Wimbledon this year and retain the trophy he won two years ago against Federer, the Swiss has a lot on the line. Particularly given Djokovic will be aiming to equal his tally of 20 Grand Slam singles titles this fortnight.

Meanwhile world number one Ash Barty moved into the third round at Wimbledon but not without a battle as she overcame spirited Russian Anna Blinkova and her own inconsistency in a 6-4 6-3 win.

The top seed never looked in danger



against the 89th-ranked Blinkova, but it was still not plain sailing for the Australian scrapper.

Her serve, so often a dependable weapon, was at times wayward, as she hit nine double faults and was broken three times, while her 33 unforced errors suggest she has some way to go to get fully sharp on the grass.

Barty, whose sole Grand Slam title came at the 2019 French Open, has never gone beyond the last 16 at Wimbledon.

She ultimately had too much firepower for Blinkova, however, and wrapped up victory after an hour and 30 minutes when her opponent swiped a forehand long.

"A few things didn't feel quite right today. That's half the battle in sport, being able to find a way when it's not feeling all that great," Barty told reporters.

"I felt like when my back was against the wall today I was able to bring the good stuff. It just wasn't quite there all the time."

Next up for Barty will be an encounter with 64th-ranked Czech Katerina Siniakova, who booked her spot in the third round with a 4-6 6-2 6-2 win over CoCo Vandeweghe.

Yet there are certainly some creases to iron out in the Australian's game before then.

After taking 49 weeks out of the sport as tennis closed down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Barty returned to the tour exhibiting the sort of consistency that has seen her finish the campaign at the top of the rankings for the last two years.

This season she has won more titles, reached more finals and beaten more top-10 opponents than anyone else on tour, but against Blinkova there was room for improvement.

Iran, South Korea Grouped in the World Cup Qualifiers

KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Iran and South Korea have been grouped together in the final round of Asian qualifying for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

South Korea, seeking a 10th consecutive World Cup appearance, is the only team from the eastern zone in Group A, which also includes Iran, United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon.

Iran and South Korea are also in the same group for the fourth straight World Cup qualifying tournament.

The teams drew 1-1 in both games ahead of the 2010 World Cup, Iran had 1-0 wins at home and away in the 2014 qualifiers, and a 1-0 and a draw in qualifying for 2018.

South Korea coach Paulo Bento said the group was difficult but balanced.

"The last two qualifiers, 2014 and 2018, the (South Korean) team had a lot of difficulties to qualify," Bento said. "That is a good experience for us. We learned from what happened in the past."

Meanwhile Japan and Australia have been grouped together along with Saudi Arabia, China, Oman and Vietnam in Group B in the final round of Asian qualifying for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

The 12 teams for the final round were seeded in pairs before being divided into two groups of six during the official draw conducted at the Asian Football Confederation headquarters in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday.

The final round of qualifying is set to kick off Sept. 2 and culminate on March 29, 2022, with each team playing five home and five away matches.

The winner and runner-up in each group will advance automatically to the World Cup and the third place teams will meet to determine who proceeds to an intercontinental playoff for one of the last places at Qatar.

Japan and Australia were the only teams to go through the disrupted second round with a perfect record of eight wins, although the Australians had to play all but one of their games away because of restrictions in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

New

Messi Deal Delayed by La Liga Financial Controls



a new deal had to fit with the league's requirements.

"It's going well, he wants to stay and we're making all the efforts to ensure he does. But we have to balance it with financial fair play," Laporta told Spanish radio station Onda Cero on Thursday.

BARCELONA (Reuters) - Barcelona's attempts to offer Lionel Messi a new contract are being held up because of La Liga's financial control measures, the club's president, Joan Laporta, said on Thursday after the Argentine became a free agent.

Messi, who joined Barca aged 13 in September 2000, has no current contractual link with the Catalans after his deal expired on June 30 and while Laporta said the club's all-time top scorer wishes to stay, he added their attempts to tie him to

"There are many options and we're contemplating which is the best for both parties. But we want him to stay and so does he, we want to give him the most competitive team possible."

La Liga introduced financial control measures in 2013 establishing a maximum amount of money each club can spend on its playing squad and coaching staff each season, conditioned by their income.

Barca have the highest revenues in world soccer according to this year's Deloitte Money League, although income dropped by 125 million euros last year due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the start of the 2019-20 season Barca were allocated a maximum budget of 1.47 billion euros by La Liga which shrank to 733 million for the last campaign and is expected to fall even further after a whole season without ticket sales and a depressed transfer market.

Messi had the most lucrative contract in world sport, according to a January report in El Mundo, and if Barca are to get a new deal for him over the line they will have to further reduce their wage bill, which Laporta said last month contained many players on salaries "out of sync with the current market".

Djokovic, Federer Named In Olympic Tournament

LONDON (Reuters) - World number one Novak Djokovic and 20-time Grand Slam champion Roger Federer were both named on the list of players for the Tokyo Olympics on Thursday -- a boost for a tournament hit by high-profile withdrawals.

Women's world number one Ash Barty and Japan's Naomi Osaka head the field in the women's singles.

A first-time gold-medal winner is assured in the women's singles with Puerto Rico's defending champion Monica Puig unable to compete because of injury.

Two-time champion Andy Murray, whose ranking has slipped to 118 as he battles to come back from hip surgery, will be aiming to win gold for the third Olympics in succession.

Djokovic, who is bidding at Wimbledon to match Federer and Rafa Nadal's record Grand Slam haul, won a singles bronze medal at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing when Federer won doubles gold.

An Olympic singles gold is the one major prize that still eludes the two players who are vying, along with Nadal, to be considered the greatest of all time.

A total of 46 nations will be represented at the Olympic tennis event which will be held at the Ariake Tennis Park from July 24 until Aug 1.

Several big names will not be travelling to Tokyo including former singles and doubles gold-medallist Rafa Nadal, four-time gold-medallist Serena Williams, U.S. Open champion Dominic Thiem and Romanian two-time Grand Slam winner Simona Halep.



Loew Seeks to Clear Air With Ozil

BERLIN (Dispatches) - Outgoing Germany coach Joachim Loew wants clear-the-air talks with Mesut Ozil in a fresh attempt to bury the hatchet with the midfielder, who quit international football in 2018 amid accusations of racism.

Following Germany's 2-0 defeat to England at Wembley in the last 16 of Euro 2020 on Tuesday, Loew is stepping down after 15 years in charge of the national side.

However, Ozil's shock decision to quit the German team in the wake of their humiliating group-stage exit at the 2018 World Cup remains a "huge personal disappointment" for Loew. "The time will come when we will talk or meet again, to talk things over and put everything aside," Loew said Wednesday at Germany's Euro 2020 base in Bavaria.

Ozil, a German of Turkish decent, complained of being subjected to "racism" and quit the national team in anger following Germany's miserable display in Russia. His place in the team was the subject of fierce debate during the tournament, after which he penned an explosive resignation letter accusing the German Football Association of structural racism.

He said fans regarded him as "German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose." Loew's previous attempt to speak with Ozil in September 2018, when the midfielder was still at Arsenal, was reportedly blocked by the Premier League club.

When he signed for Turkish side Fenerbahce in January, the 32-year-old Ozil flatly ruled out ever adding to his 92 appearances for Germany.

He was part of the German side which won the 2014 World Cup in Brazil and Loew regards him as "an incredibly important and great player".

