

Health Ministry Announced on Tuesday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 85,261 With 166 More Iranians Killed by the Deadly Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Offered His Condolences to the Russian Government and People On the Crash of a Russian Airliner In Which 28 Passengers and Crew Were Feared Dead

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DOMESTIC

Theater, Magnitude of Any Battle to Be Determined by Iran



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DOMESTIC

Iran Exports to Iraq Doubled Last Month

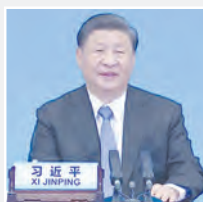


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Italy Beat Spain on Penalties to Reach Euro 2020 Final



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Problems Remain as Long As FATF Is Not Approved

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – President Hassan Rouhani believes that as long as Iran does not approve the FATF, problems with world banks and utilizing their capitals will remain, and this process will create problems in projects that require investment.

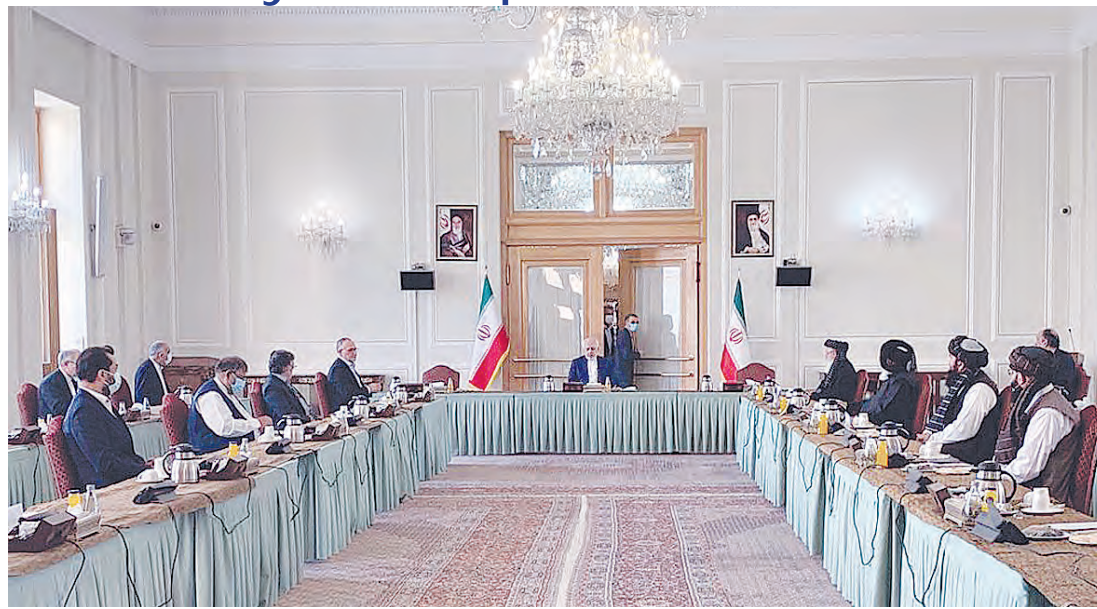
Speaking in the cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Rouhani said: “The government decided to approve the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and its bill, but in the end, this did not happen. We will have problems with the world’s banks in terms of relations unless the FATF-related issues are solved.”

The president said that in more than 190 countries, banks operate within the framework of the FATF, all of which are members except Iran and North Korea. If we are not a member of the FATF, the risk of investing in the country will increase.

Rouhani further referred to the achievements gained due to the 2015 Iran Nuclear Deal, a.k.a. the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), adding: “Dozens of projects that we inaugurated in 2020 are all because of the nuclear agreement.”

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Tehran Hosting Intra-Afghan Talks, Ready to Help Restore Peace



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - As Tehran hosts a round of intra-Afghan talks, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif tells the representatives of the Kabul government and the Taliban group that the Islamic Republic stands ready to help the neighboring country resolve its conflicts and achieve lasting peace.

In a tweet on Wednesday morning, Seyed Rasoul Mousavi, the head of the South Asia Department at Iran’s Foreign Ministry, announced that Tehran is hosting four delegations, including representatives of the Afghan government and parliament, the Taliban group and prominent figures supporting the Republic system in the war-torn country.

Taliban’s spokesman Mohammed Naem Wardak also said via Twitter that the militant group’s trip to Tehran comes at the official invitation of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He said Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai, the head of Taliban’s political office in Qatar’s Doha, leads the delegation to Tehran.

Meanwhile, the government’s delegation is headed by former Vice President of Afghanistan Yunus Qanuni.

During his address at the beginning of the talks, Zarif pointed to the United States’ defeat in establishing peace in Afghanistan, saying the US military’s more than two decades of presence on Afghan soil has led to widespread destruction in the country. “The United States has failed in Afghanistan...and its presence in the country for more than two decades has caused major damage in Afghanistan,” said Zarif. “Today, the people and political leaders of Afghanistan must take difficult decisions for the future of their country.”

He warned against the dire consequences of ongoing disputes in Afghanistan and said returning to the intra-Afghan negotiating table with a commitment to political solutions is the best option for the country’s leaders and political movements.

Zarif said the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to help advance the process of talks between Afghanistan’s factions in order to resolve the conflicts and crises in that country.

The Taliban say they will present a written peace proposal to the Afghan government as soon as next month even though they have gained the “upper hand on the battlefield” in recent weeks.

The chief Iranian diplomat also underscored Iran’s commitment to contributing to Afghanistan’s all-out political, economic and social development after the establishment of peace there.

Iran recent months, Iran has repeatedly voiced its support for measures aimed at establishing peace in Afghanistan. Last week, Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh underlined the necessity for an inclusive government that would involve all Afghan groups in Afghanistan, saying the Taliban represents only a part of Afghanistan, not the whole present and future status of the country.

Speaking at his weekly press conference on June 28, Khatibzadeh noted that Iran is closely and seriously monitoring the situation in Afghanistan at the high security and political levels and is negotiating with all Afghan groups.

Tehran’s peace efforts follow the withdrawal of U.S.-led coalition forces last week from the largest military base in Afghanistan, located in the ancient city of Bagram, about 45 miles north of Kabul.

On Friday, the Taliban said it considers the U.S. withdrawal a “positive step” to get closer to peace and stability.

Japanese FM Is To Visit Tehran

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Japan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Toshimitsu Motegi is going to travel to Iran to meet new administration officials, Japanese TV said on Wednesday.

Japanese TV NHK said that Motegi was expected to meet Iran’s foreign minister and other officials in the new Iranian administration and ask them to play a constructive role in de-escalation and stabilization of the Middle East region.

He is also expected to express Japan’s willingness to strengthen its tradition friendship with Iran, as said by NHK.

Motegi and Iranian officials will probably talk about the indirect negotiations between Iran and the United States about the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, as well.

Japan’s Foreign Minister would also visit the Zionist regime, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq, and Qatar in this trip.

Motegi is expected to invite the Israeli regime and Palestine to maintain ceasefire.

Iran to Soon Produce Enriched Uranium Metal

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran’s representative to the international organizations in Vienna says the Islamic Republic would soon produce enriched uranium metal and that the country had earlier informed the United Nations nuclear watchdog of the move.

Kazem Gharibabadi made the announcement on Tuesday and said the uranium silicide plate enriched to 20 percent purity would be used as fuel for a research reactor in the capital, Tehran.

“Research and development regarding this issue with natural uranium began about three months ago. In the new process, a new fuel plate will be produced using 20 percent enriched uranium,” Gharibabadi told reporters.

“This measure, which will significantly improve the quality and quantity of radiopharmaceutical production, will make the Islamic Republic of Iran one of the leading countries in the field of nuclear technology,” the Iranian diplomat added.

Iran’s representative to the international organizations in Vienna also stressed that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had been informed of the Tehran’s move nine days earlier and the relevant operations had begun right afterwards.

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Iran Decries Double Standards in Combatting Terrorism

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran’s ambassador to the United Nations strongly rejected double standards and unlawful unilateral actions under the pretext of combating terrorism, saying that unilateral listing of UN members in order to pursue a political agenda contradicts the UN Charter principles.

Addressing a UN General Assembly debate on adoption of a resolution on the 7th review of Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GCTS) on Tuesday, Majid Takht Ravanchi said Iran strongly rejects double standards as well as unlawful unilateral actions under the pretext of combating terrorism.

Adopted in 2006, the GCTS is a global instrument to enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter-terrorism.

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IRGC Gets New Weapons

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Ground Force on Wednesday took delivery of a broad range of modern weapons, including the ground-launched version of Almas (diamond) anti-tank missile with a range of 8 kilometers.

In a ceremony attended by top commanders, the IRGC Ground Force received various modern combat and defense gear, including missiles, anti-armor weapons, vehicles, drones, and electronic warfare systems.

The IRGC also unveiled the ground-launched version of Almas anti-tank missile.

The homegrown anti-tank missile is a top attack weapon that can hit targets within a range of 8 kilometers.

The IRGC had already developed the air-launched version of Almas missile fired by the Ababil-III drones.

The other major products unveiled on Wednesday include Me’raj-113 and Hanif unmanned aerial vehicles.

The IRGC forces have also managed to furnish the combat choppers with Qaem-114 missiles.

Iranian officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, and that Iran’s defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.

Back in February 2018, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei called for efforts to maintain and boost Iran’s defense capabilities, hitting back at the enemies for disputing the country’s missile program.

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Power Supply to Makran Division From Iran Suspended for 2nd Day

GWADAR (Dispatches) - Three districts of Balochistan’s Makran Division facing a prolonged outage of power for two days owing to suspension of supply from Iran without prior intimation, ARY News reported on Wednesday.

Makran region of Balochistan, depends for its power needs to the import of the electricity from neighboring Iran. The power supply to three districts of Makran including Gwadar, from Iran has been suspended since Tuesday morning, sources said. Earlier, the locals of Makran division complained that they have been suffering the outage for a long duration but were not heard by anyone as yet.

Separately, the district authorities said that they had reached out to Quetta Electric Supply Corporation (QESCO) and asked the officials to intimate people over the development on the matter.

It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan and Iran were entered into an agreement in year 2002, for supply of 34MW electricity, which was further increased by 30MW. Then another 30MW of electricity from Iran was inducted in the national grid in 2016 jacking the electricity import from the country to 104MW.

Pakistan’s emerging port city of Gwadar has been situated in Makran division of Balochistan, which requires increasing power supply to meet the needs of the developing port region.

Mostly, Iran’s power supply is not optimally available due to the country’s own energy demand. The average supply from Iran hovers around 40-70 MW, according to some sources.

Earlier Chairman China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Lt. Gen. (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa said that work for Iran’s trade through the Gwadar Port (in and out) was in progress and the trade would start soon through the port.

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Iran, Russia to Hold 2nd Int'l Conference on Bilateral Relations

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Second international conference on relations between Iran and Russia with regard to new regional developments with the axes of recent geopolitical developments in the south Caucasus, the prospect of instability and crisis in Central Asia and the role of Iran and Russia in resolving these crises will be held on February 28, 2022.

Second international conference on Iran-Russia relations will be

held with regard to new regional developments along the Iran-Russia-Afghanistan axis after the withdrawal of NATO forces, recent geopolitical developments in the South Caucasus, the prospect of instability and crisis in Central Asia and the Caucasus and the role of Iran and Russia in resolving these Crises, Russia's view of Iran's activism abroad and the need for Iran-Russia cooperation in West Asia.

Theater, Magnitude of Any Battle to Be Determined by Iran

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Major General Hossein Salami said his forces' doctrine is based upon defense, but cautioned the enemies that the Islamic Republic is the one to determine the battlefield and the depth and quality of any confrontation.

In remarks after unveiling a range of new military equipment on Wednesday, Major General Salami reminded the enemies that it is Iran that would choose the battlefield as well as the depth and the quality of a war.

"Of course, our strategy is defensive, meaning that we're not belligerent. Our policies are defensive, but our strategies are all operational, and this is a fact," he stated.

The commander also stressed that the IRGC Ground Force's perspective entails the defeat of enemies by "targeting the adversaries from the origin," saying such a policy gives the IRGC depth of power. "Therefore, we employ our weapons according to such a thought."

Salami reiterated that the IRGC will never begin a war, but it will adopt offensive formations after the first offense from the enemy, because it is protecting Iran's territorial integrity.



The IRGC's defense power is endless and should never come to a halt, the commander underlined.

The IRGC Ground Force has taken delivery of a broad range of modern weapons, including the ground-launched version of Almas (diamond) anti-tank missile with a range of 8 kilometers.

"We have been exposed to the policies of evil powers and big and small villains for decades. During this time that we gained political independence and dignity, the strategic planners of insecurity, from the aggressive US to its European allies and regional partners and local terrorists, are all constantly plotting against the Iranian nation whenever they can," he said.

Stating that "we have learned to foil the enemy's plot from the origin", Salami said, "The defeat of the enemy at the origin is a definite strategy for us, and the firearm is the last strategy that the IRGC ground force takes."

Gov't Urged to Accelerate National Vaccination Against COVID-19

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's High Council of Human Rights has called on the government to accelerate the general vaccination across the nation against the coronavirus disease.

In a Twitter post on Tuesday, the council said that the young Iranian scientists have produced the domestic COVID-19 vaccine and it is now time for the government, the Ministry of Health and other related organizations to accelerate the mass production of the vaccine so as to save the people's lives.

People are waiting for the authorities to clarify the implementation of the general vaccination plan and the amount of production as well, the council said.

New Iran Envoy to London To Focus on Economic Ties

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's new ambassador to the United Kingdom says his top priority will be to work to improve economic relations between Tehran and London.

Mohsen Baharvand said on Tuesday that he will pursue the interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran in various fields with a focus on economic ties during his time as ambassador in the UK.

Baharvand made the remarks in an interview with the official IRNA and IRIB News agencies in London as he prepared to submit his credentials to Britain's Queen Elizabeth II.

"We have multi-dimensional ties with the UK of which we will try to manage the bilateral aspect in a logical manner and in a realistic situation," he was quoted as saying in a report by IRNA.

The remarks come more than a month after Iranian and UK officials and businesses met in embassies in Tehran and London to discuss prospects for increased trade ties amid ongoing talks between Iran and world powers to revive a nuclear deal abandoned by the United States in 2018.

The UK is a signatory to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and representatives from the country have been engaged in talks in the Austrian capital Vienna since April in an attempt to revive the agreement.

Baharvand said that he will seek to engage in dialogue with UK authorities to resolve international issues over which the two countries have disagreements.

He also said that the Iranian embassy in London will devote more time and energy to address issues related to Iranians living in the UK.

Baharvand served as deputy for legal affairs in the Iranian foreign ministry before his appointment to the UK mission. He replaces Hamid Baedinejad who served in the post for the past five years.



Tehran, Baghdad Confer On Regional Developments, Mutual Ties



TEHRAN (MNA) - In a phone talk on Tuesday, Advisor to Iran's Leader Ali Akbar Velayati and Iraqi President Barham Salih conferred on the latest regional developments and deepening of relations between the two countries.

In his conversation with Salih, Velayati referred to the positive measures of the President of Iraq, as well as his meetings with Iraqi officials and brothers, and hailed the positive view of high-ranking officials of the two countries regarding the development of relations.

"Iran and Iraq have many and deep similarities, and what happened during Saddam's time is an exception in the common history of the two countries, which had nothing to do with the wishes of the two nations," he said.

"Iraq and Iran are the two countries that experienced about 8 years of war with each other but after the war, they have treated each other with brotherhood and sincerity," Velayati noted.

"The Leader of the Islamic Revolution has always underscored expansion of all-out ties with Iraq," he said.

"One way to develop and deepen relationships is to strengthen scientific and educational interactions at higher levels," Velayati said, voicing Iran's readiness to establish universities in various areas of Iraq.

Salih, for his turn, asked Velayati to give his best to the Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khamenei, and welcomed the positive and optimistic stance of the Islamic Republic towards Iraq.

The Iraqi President also expressed a tendency for the development of bilateral ties with Iran in different sectors.

President Salih invited Velati to pay a visit to Baghdad in near future.

"Iraq counts on communication, cooperation, interaction, assistance and fraternity of leadership, nation, and government of Iran," he said.

Iran Diplomatic Delegation Visits Kazakhstan for Astana Talks

TEHRAN (MNA) - An Iranian diplomatic delegation left Tehran for Kazakh capital Nur-Sultan on Tuesday to attend another round of Astana talks.

Russian media reported the visit of Iranian diplomatic delegation to the city of Nur-Sultan in Kazakhstan to continue Syrian talks called "Astana Peace Process".

Russian and Syrian delegations arrived in Kazakh capital Nur-Sultan to attend the 16th International Summit on Astana Peace Process, Kazakh Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Tuesday, TASS news agency reported.

"Russian and Syrian delegations have already arrived in Kazakhstan, the Kazakh Foreign Ministry spokesman added. Representatives of Turkish government and Syrian opposition also arrived in Nur-Sultan, capital of Kazakhstan. It is expected that UN Special Representative for Syria Geir Pedersen will arrive Kazakh capital Nur-Sultan late on Tuesday.

Senior Assistant to Iranian Foreign Minister in Special Political Affairs Ali-Asghar Khaji, who chairs Iranian delegation at the meeting, will arrive in Nur-Sultan in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

It should be noted that city of Nur-Sultan will host the 16th International Meeting on Syria within Astana Peace Process on July 7-8, which will be attended by delegations representing Russia, Iran and Turkey, the Syrian government and Syrian opposition.

Tehran Holds Meeting on Dark Side of American Human Rights

TEHRAN (IP) - A meeting to expose the dark side of American human rights was held on Tuesday evening at the former U.S. embassy in Tehran.

During the meeting, Deputy Attorney General Saeed Omrani said the people of the world are thirsty to know the facts, and it is a pity that no real genuine activities have been done in this area.

Deputy Attorney General added that the world's people became more aware of the U.S.' evil intentions after September 11, 2001.

Saeed Omrani said that the U.S. sanctions against Iran had targeted the ordinary people, and even current difficulties such as power cuts result from U.S. sanctions.

"Of course, the important thing is that the U.S. is using human rights as a new weapon," said Omrani.



Mohammad Nargesian, Special Investigator for U.S. Sanctions, also said that the source of the strained relations between Iran and the United States was the hostage-taking of American diplomats and that the Americans imposed primary and secondary sanctions, which are cruel ones against the Iranian people.

Even after the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the United States did not lift the above-mentioned sanctions; they only were suspended.

Mohammad Nargesian said the harsh sanctions against Iran have even included food and medicine, which is a violation of human rights, and that unilateral US sanctions have targeted the lives of the Iranians.

Raisi's Message to Putin Handed Over by Iran Ambassador

TEHRAN (MNA) - President-elect Ebrahim Raisi responded to a congratulatory message from the Russian president Putin in a letter that was delivered by the Iranian ambassador to Moscow to the special assistant to the Russian president.

The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Russian Federation, Kazem Jalali, met today with the Special Assistant to the President of Russia Andrei Fursenko during which the Iranian diplomat handed over a letter in response to the Russian president's congratulatory message on Ayatollah Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi's victory in the June presidential elections in Iran to the Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Raisi's message to Putin handed over by Iran ambassador

During the meeting, Jalali expressed his hope that the new presidential term in Iran will be a period of growth and flourishing of bilateral cooperation between Iran and Russia.

He also raised the issue of problems faced by the Iranian students and businessmen due to the travel bans by Russia and called for a solution.

The Russian presidential aide, for his part, called the strengthening of Iran-Russia relations in the complicated global situation an inevitable necessity and said, "I strongly

believe that resilience, stability and independence have made the Islamic Republic of Iran a role model for many countries and Iran is one of the most independent countries in the world."

Fursenko also touched upon the difficulties faced Iranian students and businessmen when they enter Russia, saying that "I will talk to the government officials, the deputy prime minister and the ministry of science in this regard and I will try to resolve the existing barriers, including injection and dispatching vaccines."

It is noteworthy that Vladimir Putin was the first foreign leader to congratulate Ayatollah Raisi on his victory in the 13th round of the presidential election in Iran. In his message, Putin pointed to the good neighborliness and friendly relations between Iran and Russia and expressed hope that during Raisi's term in office the two countries will see the increasing expansion of bilateral cooperation between the two countries."



Iran Envoy Consults With Turkish Official on Security Cooperation

TEHRAN (IP) - The Iranian ambassador and the Turkish deputy interior minister met to discuss expanding cooperation between the two countries on the border and the fight against drugs and terrorism.

The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Ankara, Mohammad Farazmand, referring to the meeting with Muhterem Ince, the Deputy Minister of Interior of Turkey, tweeted: Cooperation between the two neighboring countries covers a wide range of vital issues, including cross-border cooperation, counter-narcotics,

terrorism, and security cooperation.

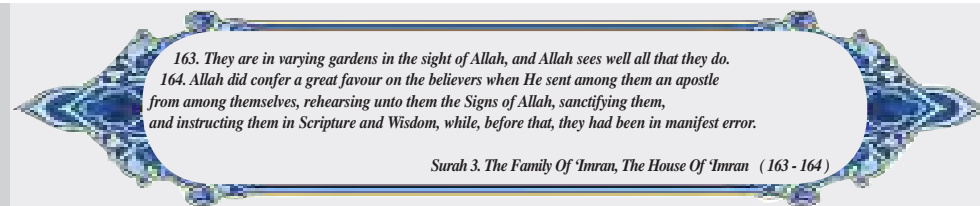
"Today I hosted Iranian Ambassador Mohammad Farazmand to discuss the two countries' cooperation, especially in security," Turkish Deputy Interior Minister Muhterem Ince also tweeted. 219





PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:09
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:44
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:12
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	05:56



Iran Exports to Iraq Doubled Last Month

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Deputy Head of Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce says statistics show that Iran's exports to Iraq in the last month of Iranian calendar year, Khordad, soared from \$950m to \$2.350b and it was almost doubled and this rise is not normal and it seems major part of exports belongs to gas revenues whose bill and payment in several months has been accumulated in the last month statitics.

Seyed Hamid Hosseini said some countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE have expressed their interest for expansion of trade with Iraq and said today Iraq is an important market and the issue is which country is to replace China and India whose connections with Iraq have become tough due to the pandemic.

He added that Turkey, the UAE and Saudi Arabia seek to compensate the decline in their exports with exporting goods to Iraq. He said the fields that Iran can compete, Iran's rivals have no chance to compete, for example, in the field of oil and petrochemical products that Iran's rivals have no access to Iraqi Kurdistan, or in the field of food and agro products, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are unable to compete with Iran in terms of quality, freshness and taste of goods.

Hosseini admitted that in the field of services, the rivals are winning the market and Iran is losing some part of the market and sanctions should be blamed because they make Iran unable to participate in the tenders and therefore, other countries replace Iran but they have no chance to compete with Iran in the field of goods.



He said the Chinese commodities are not similar to Iran's in order that both countries replace each other, adding that China's exports to Iraq are mainly electronic items and oil equipment and India's exports to Iraq are textile, sanitary products, tile and ceramic and for this reason India cannot be considered a rival for Iranian products.

Hosseini went on to say that Iran, India, Jordan, Turkey and China each has its own share of Iraq's market and if Iraq market suffers, all of the players in the market will suffer and now it seems Turkey's condition in this market is improving.

On the possibility of Iran replacing India in Iraq market, he said Iran has problem to get hold of India's share in Iraq market which has declined due to the pandemic, adding that for example, export of sanitary items to Iraq due to the domestic consumption needs are restricted or banned.

Hosseini also said that exports to Syria are done via Iraq and the statistics of the Customs Administration regarding the trade with Iraq are unreliable because some of exports to Syria are done via Iraq's Kurdistan and there are also smuggled goods into Iraq which are not registered in the official data and for this reason what is said by the customs administration does not mean the full detail of Iran's trade with Iraq.

Tabriz Chamber of Commerce, Azerbaijan to Boost Cooperation

TABRIZ (IRNA) - A memorandum of cooperation was signed between the Chamber of Commerce of Tabriz, the center of Iran's East Azarbaijan province, and the National Confederation of Job Creators of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Tuesday in Baku, to facilitate cooperation between the two economic foundations.

The document was signed in the presence of Ali Jahangiri, the deputy East Azarbaijan province for economic affairs and Jamshid Barzegar, a member of Tabriz Chamber of Commerce at the building of the



National Confederation of Entrepreneurs of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku.

The preliminary preparations for signing the memorandum of cooperation were made in a webinar participated by the head of Tabriz Chamber of Commerce and the members of the National Confederation

of Entrepreneurs of Azerbaijan.

The two sides agreed on the need for increasing economic interactions between the Iranian northwestern province and its northern neighboring republic, and also provision of the required foundation stones for the purpose, including singing this memorandum of cooperation.

50% Rise in Export Capacity of Mahshahr Port

TEHRAN (IP) - the head of the export terminal of Mahshahr Port said with the implementation of the development plan, the storage capacity of this export terminal has increased by 50% from one billion liters to 1.5 billion liters, and the berth capacity of vessels in this port has increased from 45,000 tons to 105,000 tons.

In a press conference in Mahshahr Port, Hossein Alizadeh underlined the need to increase the storage capacity of petroleum products and the export transfer capacity of this terminal, adding: "Development of this terminal has been discussed since 2006."

Alizadeh pointed out that out of eight active docks in this terminal, five docks are now fully operational with various petroleum products, and noted the product transfer capacity in Mahshahr Export Terminal has tripled this has caused the power of supply to exceed demand. As a result, vessel services will increase significantly.

The head of the export terminal of Mahshahr Port stated: "With the measures taken, this port will become one of the strategic ports of Iran because we do not have such a capacity in the Middle East.

Iran to Join Int'l Museum With No Frontiers

TEHRAN (MNA) - An official from the National Library of Iran announced on Tues. that the country aims to be a member of the International Museum With No Frontiers (MWNF).

According to Alimohammad Tarafdari, Iran will officially join the international museum to introduce Iranian and Islamic art and architecture.

Museum with No Frontiers | Digital meets CultureHe expressed hope that by becoming an MWNF member, new gateways will be opened to improve Iranology.

MWNF is an international non-profit organization founded on the initiative of Eva Schubert in 1995 in the

context of the Barcelona Process Euro-Mediterranean Partnership re-launched as the Union for the Mediterranean).

MWNF provides a platform that enables all partners to interact productively and contribute to a transnational presentation of history, art, and culture based on equal voices and the equal visibility of all concerned.

For that purpose, MWNF develops exhibition formats that do not require moving the artworks, but instead, artifacts in museums, monuments, and archaeological sites are presented in situ (Exhibition Trails) or in a virtual environment (the MWNF Virtual Museum).

Iran Finally Builds Its Own Cars

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's auto sector has started standing on its own feet after years of reliance on imported car kits which foreign companies stopped to supply when the US reimposed sanctions on the Islamic Republic in 2018.

Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Alireza Razm Hosseini said last week that the total value of imported contents used in car manufacturing had been cut by \$2.5 billion - a figure which is enormous at a time of severe foreign exchange crunch due to the draconian sanctions.

"Thanks to the efforts of automakers and component makers, the \$4 billion dependence of the automotive industry on foreign companies has been reduced to \$1.5 billion today, and the depth of internalization has increased," he said at a signing ceremony. This is down to the continuation of sanctions and Iran's attention to internal capacities in manufacturing car components, secretary of the Iranian Auto Parts Manufacturers Association (IAPMA) Arash Mohebinejad said on Tuesday.

"The achievement is due to the blessings of sanctions, and with the cooperation of auto parts manufacturers and the support of car manufacturers, we have succeeded in localizing a large part of car components," he told IRNA news agency.

According to IAPMA head Mohammad Reza Najafi-Manesh, Iranian-made cars now use up \$1,500-\$1,700 of foreign exchange to complete, saying the figure can be cut further with government support for localization and reducing foreign content.

Gov't Reduces Power Supplies to Industries to Minimize Outages



TEHRAN (PressTV) - The government has decided to significantly reduce electricity supplies to industries as it struggles to minimize power outages in large cities during the current summer heat wave.

Vice-President Es'haq Jahangiri issued a decree on Tuesday allowing the Energy Ministry to impose a cap on electricity consumption by major industries.

"The Energy Minister is allowed from tonight to prohibit industries from using more than 10% (of their normal consumption) and any breach will with be dealt by the required action," Jahangiri was quoted as saying by semi-official ILNA news agency.

The remarks were made after Jahangiri paid a visit to a newly-launched national center for electricity dispatching. It came after Iranian President Hassan Rouhani offered his apology to the people for recurrent power cuts seen in cities in recent days.

Iran's state electricity company Tavanir issued a decree later in the day warning steelmakers and cement factories to reduce their electricity consumption to 10% of their normal usage.

Tavanir chief Mohammad Hassan Motavalizadeh said power cuts will be implemented in a handful of large manufacturing units where electricity consumption is high.

Authorities have blamed power cuts in recent days mainly on higher-than-expected demand for electricity, especially by illegal cryptocurrency miners, as well as on a heat wave and a drought that has caused the country to lose much of its hydroelectric capacity.

Energy Ministry authorities on Tuesday launched a coal mine in northeastern Iran that will provide fuel supplies to a power plant that is expected to come on line in the city of Tabas by 2024.

It was said during the inauguration ceremony of the mine that Iran will seek to diversify its fuel resources used for electricity generation by launching 5,000 megawatts of coal-fired power plants by 2041.

Bandar Abbas Oil Refining Co. Repairing Furnace by Its Experts

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - For the first time in the country and with relying on the Iranian knowhow, the ceiling of furnace at Distillation Unit No.2 of Bandar Abbas Oil Refining Company (BORC) is undergone repair and it is on the verge of mending.



According to the public relations of BORC, with participation of a knowledge-based company, some part of the ceiling of the furnace at the Unit No.2 of the distillation unit of the company which had been damage has gone under repair while the unit continues its services and it was mended in the shortest time due to efforts of engineers and experts of Bandar Abbas Refining.

Manager of the maintenance and repair office of the company Eng. Reza Khavarsangi said that some part of the ceiling of the furnace 71 at the Unit No.2 due to the high heat and suffering damages was forced to be repaired and the company in collaboration with a domestic knowledge-based company and by adopting stand-laying method and laying refractory foam and with the round-the-clock efforts repair the furnace in 4 days.

He added due to the need for constant production it was impossible to pull the furnace out of service and the repair operation in the furnace carried out while the furnace was serving and this happened in the country for the first time by the company.

Khavarsangi went on to say that during this operation, about 10 square meters of the ceiling of the furnace enjoyed stand-laying and injection of foam which is a world record as the previous record for repairing and fixing an active furnace belonged to an American company with record of 3 square meters.

He reiterated that one of the important goals of the company is constant production of good quality oil products and to avoid temporary switching off of the operational units.

KSC Official Reveals Developmental Investments, Growth of Production

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The CEO of Khorasan Steel Complex Company (KSC) in a brainstorming session with activists in the capital and stock market pointed to the achievements of this complex in providing raw material and boosting production despite existing hurdles and challenges in the past one year.



Mr. Kasra Ghafoori said that despite completing the production chain in the steel site in Neishabour, in the past one year, some 2,100b rials of investment has been carried out in the developmental and infrastructural grounds by the biggest industrial pole of the eastern country, Korasan Steel Complex Company.

He added that construction of the concentrate-making plant in the Sangan Khaf region is one of the most important and strategic developmental projects of this complex which can guarantee the sustainable steel in Khorasan Razavi through connecting the chain of the steel production to the ground, and added that the company has had over 1,100b rials of investments in creating the infrastructures in this field and since last year and due to constant efforts, a new blood has flooded in the veins of this project.

Ghafoori noted that provision of sustainable water is one of the fundamental challenges in the development of the national macro industries, adding that the super project of transferring water of the Persian Gulf with forming a consortium of big water consuming water industries with a goal for overcoming the water challenge and sustainable development of the region has been put on the agenda.

He went on to say that KSC with its 10 percent share in financing this macro project has fulfilled its commitment to the project with injecting 520b rials.

Ghafoori stated that in the same period, some 475b rials has been invested in the sub-set companies of KSC in the different development fields.

He also said that the company produced over 220,000 tons of pellet in the first quarter of the year which shows 33 percent growth, adding that in the second month and third month of this year, the company achieved the production growth of 8 and 3 percent respectively.

Belarus Jails Lukashenko Foe Babariko for 14 Years

MOSCOW (Reuters) - A court in Belarus jailed former presidential contender Viktor Babariko for 14 years on Tuesday after convicting him on corruption charges he denied, sparking condemnation from the West and the embattled opposition-in-exile.

Before his arrest last June, opinion polls suggested Babariko, 57, was veteran leader Alexander Lukashenko's main rival ahead of a presidential election which the opposition says was rigged last August to prolong Lukashenko's long rule.

In power since 1994, Lukashenko claimed a landslide election victory and a new term as president, sparking the biggest protests in the modern history of the Moscow-backed ex-Soviet republic of 9.7 million. He denied electoral fraud.



Zuma Tries to Block Arrest As Police Hold Back

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) - Former South African president Jacob Zuma tried to block his arrest in court on Tuesday as top police officials said they would hold back while Zuma's two-pronged legal challenge unfolds.

The constitutional court sentenced Zuma a week ago to a 15-month jail term for contempt of court after he defied an order to give evidence at an inquiry into corruption during his nine years in power. more

The court gave Zuma five days to hand himself in, failing which police were instructed to arrest him by the end of today.



Xi Takes Dig at U.S. in Speech to Political Parties Around World



BEIJING (Reuters) - Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday urged political parties worldwide to oppose any country that engages in "technology blockades", an allusion to the United States which views China as its strategic competitor.

As U.S. President Joe Biden's administration has sought support from like-minded democracies including the European Union and Japan to coordinate a tougher stance against China, Beijing has doubled down on seeking support and affirmation from friendly nations such as North Korea and Serbia.

"Together, we must oppose all acts of unilateralism in the name of multilateralism, hegemony and power politics," Xi told a virtual gathering of representatives of 500 parties from 160 countries such as Russia, Zimbabwe, Cuba and Burkina Faso.

"Looking from the angle of 'My Country First', the world is narrow and crowded, and often full of fierce competition," Xi said in apparent reference to former U.S. President Donald Trump's "America First" policy.

Xi renewed a call to work towards "building a community with a shared future for mankind" and said any country that engages in "technology blockades" and "developmental decoupling" should be rejected.

Chinese diplomats have often criticized the United States for allegedly trying to hamper China's development by cutting off its access to U.S. technology.

In a speech last week to a domestic audience in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, Xi said foreign forces trying to bully China will "have their heads bashed bloody against the Great Wall of steel forged by over 1.4 billion Chinese people".

Xi, also General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, was on Tuesday speaking at the CPC and World Political Parties Summit, one of many events held by Beijing to commemorate the centenary of the ruling party.

The virtual gathering was meant to help the international community "adjust more quickly to the rise of China" and for Beijing to gain more "understanding, support and companionship," said Guo Yezhou, vice minister of the International Department, which organised the event.

China is increasingly worried about its international image, tarnished by anger towards its initial handling of the COVID-19 outbreak, its maritime and territorial assertiveness towards neighbours, its clampdown in Hong Kong and treatment of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, and its "wolf-warrior" diplomats who engage in a war of words with critics.

A survey of 17 advanced economies released last 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.

Recent Taliban Advances Forced Them to Take Up Arms

KABUL (Dispatches)- Zahir Salangi, a member of Afghanistan's parliament from the northern province of Parwan, had hoped to settle down on a "doshak" (cushion) to catch a quick nap when the sound of gunfire came pouring through the already damaged house he had set up as a base.

"I haven't slept in four days," he told Al Jazeera last week as he sat up to give orders to the nearly two dozen volunteer fighters he had recruited in the fight against the Taliban.

The volunteers say Taliban fighters routinely fire on them from the mountains surrounding the lush valley.

As Salangi rose to his feet, one of the fighters started to shout commands into the walkie-talkie. Piles of glass shards from previous gunfights broke into smaller pieces under the weight of his boots as he paced from one side of the room to the other. "Respond! Don't stop firing! Don't leave them without an answer," he said while the sounds of gunfire echoed from the mountaintops. The men are among at least 500 local residents who have picked up guns in recent weeks as the September 11 withdrawal deadline of the United States' forces creeps closer.

On Monday, Abdul Quayom Rahimi, governor of Logar province, gathered hundreds of men carrying guns and Afghanistan's tricolour flag in the provincial capital, Pol-e Alam.

Logar province's Governor Abdul Quayom Rahimi, second from right [Courtesy of Mujtaba Haris]

While anti-Taliban volunteers had begun to appear in Logar earlier this year, Rahimi said he has had hundreds of men asking to join his force in recent weeks. Rahimi said Monday's gathering was a "deliberate, public show of strength".

"The people know what is at stake and they want to show the Taliban that even if no one else is around to help, the people of Logar and every province themselves will take the fight directly to them," he told Al Jazeera.

Though the Ghorband Valley, 120km (74 miles) north of capital Kabul, has long been one of the most insecure districts of Parwan, the volunteers say recent events have compelled them to take up arms and defend their people against the Taliban.

In recent weeks, dozens of districts, including in Parwan, fell into Taliban hands. Many of those districts were retaken by Afghan forces within days.

But these men, most of them from Salang district, 95km (59 miles) to the east, say the stories they had heard of the Taliban's actions in the days they held sway over the areas were too much to handle.



Belarus Leader Threatens to Halt Transit of EU Goods Via His Country to East

KYIV (Reuters) - Alexander Lukashenko, the president of Belarus, on Tuesday threatened to stop the transit of European Union goods via his country to Russia and China in retaliation for EU sanctions.

The 27-nation bloc imposed wide-ranging economic sanctions on Belarus last month, targeting its main export industries and access to finance after Minsk forced a Ryanair flight to land and arrested a dissident blogger.

Rating agencies and analysts say the sanctions will leave Lukashenko largely unscathed and able to continue financing the economy and his security forces.

But officials in Belarus have spoken of economic warfare being waged on their country, and Lukashenko on Tuesday raised the prospect of counter sanctions that would halt the transit of EU goods via Belarus eastwards.

"First: not a step inside the Belarusian market; second: not a step through Belarus either," Lukashenko told a government meeting.

"Exactly the same should be done with the Germans. Let (them) supply their products to China and Russia through Finland. Or through Ukraine," he added. Lukashenko did not specify when transit could be blocked and which countries, beyond Germany, could be affected.

When asked about the potential transit block earlier on Tuesday, the Kremlin said disruption to supply chains could not be ruled out and that serious work would be required to minimise such problems if they occurred.

Belarusian Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko said his government would "look at the behaviour of our European partners" and take what he called appropriate measures that would not damage the Belarusian economy.

No Survivors From Plane Crash in Russia's Far East

MOSCOW (Reuters) - There are no survivors after a plane carrying 28 people crashed in the far east of Russia on Tuesday, Russian news agencies cited rescue officials as saying.

The Antonov An-26 twin-engined turboprop was en route from the regional capital Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky to Palana, a village in the north of the Kamchatka peninsula, when it lost contact with air traffic control, the emergencies ministry said.

Citing sources, Interfax reported that the plane was thought to have crashed into a cliff as it was preparing to land in poor visibility conditions.

Russia's civil aviation authority confirmed that the plane's crash site had been found after the emergencies ministry dispatched a helicopter and had deployed teams on the ground to look for the missing aircraft.

There were 22 passengers and six crew on board, the

ministry said. Olga Mokhireva, the mayor of Palana, was among the passengers, the TASS agency quoted local authorities as saying.

The weather in the area was cloudy at the time the plane went missing, Russian news agencies reported. TASS said the aircraft involved had been in service since 1982.

Russian aviation safety standards have improved in recent years but accidents, especially involving ageing planes in far-flung regions, are not uncommon.

The Soviet-era plane type, still used for military and civilian flights in some countries, has been involved in dozens of deadly crashes since it entered service around 50 years ago.

An Antonov-28, a similar plane, slammed into a Kamchatka forest in 2012 in a crash that killed 10 people along the same route. Investigators said both pilots were drunk at the time of the crash.



EU Urged to Unblock N.Macedonia Talks Before Special Balkan Summit

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - The European Union should let Albania and North Macedonia move ahead with membership talks by October before a special Balkans summit organised by Slovenia, which holds the EU presidency, its prime minister said on Tuesday.

Despite approval in March 2020 for both Balkan countries to proceed to formal talks, Bulgaria has blocked North Macedonia's progress over a dispute about their shared language. Albania's status is linked to North Macedonia by the EU.

"We know that the European Union makes big steps forward once it focuses on something," Prime Minister Janez Jansa told a news conference. "If we move it up the agenda we will be able to take concrete steps forward. Albania and North Macedonia can move forward by the next summit in October if we all concentrate on that," he said at the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

The EU-Western Balkans summit is set for Oct. 6 in Slovenia. EU ambassadors are due to have a first, closed-door discussion on Wednesday about it, with diplomats fearing a public relations disaster if Balkan negotiations remains frozen.

France, the Netherlands and Denmark are among EU countries wary of the "EU enlargement" process, after what many believe was the rushed accession of corruption-ridden Romania and Bulgaria in 2007. Albania is also seen as one of Europe's most corrupt countries that has failed to combat money laundering.

Chancellor Angela Merkel convened a gathering of Balkan and EU leaders in Berlin on Monday to try to breathe new life into enlargement. She said she saw the six Western Balkan states as future members of the EU for strategic reasons read more , a view echoed by Jansa.

"In Europe, there is a dilemma over whether enlargement is of strategic importance or not. My opinion is that it is," he said, adding that the EU had shrunk after Britain's departure. He also said the EU had stood idly by while Russia sought to stop Georgia and Ukraine from joining the 27-member bloc.

Bulgaria says North Macedonia cannot join the EU until it agrees that Macedonian is not a separate, official language but rather a dialect of Bulgarian. EU officials say the Balkan region has shared identities and languages, but no EU leaders have been able to break the deadlock.





Shanon
(adviser)

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S/pool, S, J, gym
balcony, yard, F.F

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S, J, balcony, & F.F

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Petronas May Not Bid for South Sudan Oil License

KUALA LUMPUR (Reuters) - Malaysian state oil firm Petronas may not join an oil licensing round in South Sudan this year as the company reviews its assets due to challenging market conditions, it said on Tuesday.

"Petronas is undertaking a strategic review of its assets to ensure that its portfolio remains resilient and commercially viable," the company said in an emailed statement to Reuters.

"Therefore, Petronas may not be participating in the South Sudan's first licensing round this year." Last month, South Sudan officially launched its first oil licensing auction with five blocks on offer.



Euro Zone Bond Yields Fall as Economic Uncertainty Weighs

LONDON (Reuters) - Government bond yields across the euro area fell to their lowest levels in at least three weeks and safe-haven German bonds showed their best performance since March on Tuesday as caution surrounding the global economic outlook crept in.

The spread of the more infectious Delta coronavirus variant has led some countries to delay elements of their return to normal life, raising concerns about the impact on economic growth more than a year after the pandemic began.

"There is a deterioration in the macro economic outlook and this is playing out in the rates markets," said ING senior rates strategist Antoine Bouvet.

The rally in euro zone bonds intensified after the U.S. session open, which eventually saw the 10-year U.S. Treasury yield - closely correlated with peers in the euro area - fall to its lowest since February, a move analysts attributed to positioning and weak services data.

Germany's 10-year Bund yield fell almost 6 bps on the day - slightly less than U.S. Treasury yields - to as low as -0.271%, its lowest level in around three weeks and its biggest daily fall since March 1.

Its 30-year yield fell nearly 8 bps in the biggest daily fall since June 2020.

Italian and French 10-year bond yields fell nearly 7 bps to as low as 0.735% and 0.056% respectively, their lowest since April.

The balance of risks facing the global economy is more negative than previously, partly because of the global spread of the Delta variant, Deutsche Bank said in its latest House View note.

The renewed fall in borrowing costs came as oil prices rose to their highest levels since 2018, with investors confident in a belief that the European Central Bank will keep stimulus in place.

Oil prices extended gains to near \$80 a barrel after Ministers of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies, a group known as OPEC+, abandoned oil output talks.

A key measure of long-term inflation expectations in the euro area extended its rise to above 1.6481%, its highest since late 2018.

"If you look at the move in the price of oil, it's not as significant as you'd expect it to be at face value given that OPEC+ has been unable to reach agreement to boost output just as demand surges as lockdowns ease," said Richard McGuire, head of rates strategy at Rabobank in London.

"Markets have also been of the mind that inflation is of a transitory nature, higher inflation now means lower inflation later because of its cost-push nature." Elsewhere, investor sentiment in Germany remained high in July despite a greater-than-expected drop as forecasts for a strong economic recovery rose, the ZEW economic research institute said.

In the primary market, France raised 5 billion euros from a new 30-year bond sold via syndication, which received over 28 billion euros of demand, a lead manager said.

Goldman Sees Crude Oil Output Path Uncertain as OPEC+ Talks Cease

LONDON (Reuters) - Goldman Sachs said on Tuesday the collapse of OPEC+'s oil output talks have introduced uncertainty into the group's production path, while maintaining its view of \$80 a barrel Brent price for this summer and gradual increase in output early next year.

Ministers of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies, a group known as OPEC+, called off oil output talks on Monday and set no new date to resume them, after clashing last week when the United Arab Emirates rejected a proposed eight-month extension to output curbs.

Oil prices soared to multi-year highs on Tuesday bolstered by the stalemate.

"The differences between both parties seem surmountable as they agree on ramping-up production into year-end with the still high uncertainty for 2022 oil balances making a pledge to any long-term commitment unnecessary today," the bank said in a note.

OPEC+ had agreed on record output cuts of almost 10 million barrels per day (bpd) last year, as the pandemic hit.

Goldman maintained its view for a gradual increase in production in the second half this year, followed by similar increases in production in the first quarter of 2022 to finally bring the fall in inventories to an end.

Also given its forecasts for rising demand, slow global production recovery and a decline in productive capacity it expects the UAE, Saudi and Russia to bring production to or near quarterly average records, helping meet all their preferences.

France's Economy Could See a Steep Recovery

PARIS (Dispatches) - France might still be in the throes of the coronavirus pandemic as the delta variant spreads rapidly, but officials and business leaders are looking ahead to a period of recovery and reflecting on the wider outlook for France's political and economic future.

"The rebound is very steep, it's even steeper than last year. So we are quite happy with that," Agnès Bénassy-Quéré, chief economist at the French Treasury, told CNBC Sunday,

pointing to the national statistics office raising its growth forecast for France in 2021 to 6%.

"The official forecast is still at 5% for 2021 because we are still cautious about the fall. As you were saying, there is a delta variant, and we have kept some restrictions up to the end of the year. So already in the spring, when this forecast was made, it included some restrictions, light restrictions of the second half of the year. So far, we have not changed this forecast, then we will see what happens when we have to build the 2022 budget," he said, speaking to CNBC's Charlotte Reed while attending an economic forum in Aix-en-Provence.

Of course the Covid-19 pandemic has left a lot of destruction in its wake and no less in France, where over 5.8 million infections have been recorded and over 111,000 deaths to date, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

Like other countries, France introduced emergency measures to support the economy, businesses and employment during the pandemic and there are now some concerns that the tapering of that support could cause job losses and some firms to shut down.

Bénassy-Quéré said the government had been "very cautious about that," but that the labor market was currently resilient.

"There is a tapering, phasing out of the support, the emergency support, which is gradual over the summer. And there will still be some support, for instance [the] long-term unemployment scheme, which will still be in place in the fall for such activities as [the] aircraft industry, where we really want to keep the skills in the industry, and so there will be some reskilling programs."

However, he noted that while activity in some industries was already above a pre-crisis level, some are lagging behind, such as tourism. As well as an unequal recovery, another problem for the government is that huge amounts of borrowing has pushed up France's debt pile to a record high. Earlier this year, France's national statistics office Insee reported that government debt stood at 115.7% of GDP at the end of 2020, up from 97.6% in 2019.

Asian Oil Buyers Fret Over Margin Impact of Cancelled OPEC+ Meeting

SINGAPORE (Reuters) - Crude oil buyers in Asia are concerned that an unexpected cancellation of an OPEC+ meeting to discuss a rise in output could drive oil prices even higher and hurt their margins.

They are now awaiting Saudi Arabia's official selling prices (OSPs), which were delayed until after the OPEC+ meeting and set the tone for prices of a majority of Middle East crude sales to Asia, to assess the oil market's direction.

Brent crude oil prices rallied to above \$77 a barrel, the highest since 2018, on Monday, after ministers of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies, a group known as OPEC+, called off oil output talks and set no new date to resume them.

"The OPEC no decision and resulting high price will have short-term negative impact on Chinese refiners, as they will see margins pinched due to often lagging domestic fuel prices," a Singapore-based crude oil trading executive familiar with Chinese refineries' thinking said.

"That could force them to cut runs, which should lift margins again and bolster their crude oil buying," the source added. China is the world's second largest oil consumer and top overall importer.

The talks were cancelled following a clash between top producer Saudi Arabia, which wants to maintain output curbs, and the United Arab Emirates, which has pushed for increased output.

No date has been set for the next OPEC+ meeting, which has left some sources speculating there would be no output increase in August while others expect the group to convene a new meeting within days in order to secure an agreement.

Still, buyers in Asia are optimistic the row will be temporary. "Buyers would like prices to be reasonable and early release of additional barrels will help us ... this is more of a temporary phenomenon and would settle eventually," a source with an Indian refiner said.

For now, Asia's physical crude market remains adequately supplied even as global fuel demand gradually recovers from the coronavirus pandemic, refining sources said. Asia is the top oil consuming region, accounting for roughly 37% of world use.

The near-term impact on Asia's physical market would only be marginal even if OPEC+ had agreed to increase volume, because the proposed output rise appeared to be only 400,000 barrels a day, said a source with a Japanese refiner.



Turkey-EU Trade Deepens, Could Grow More

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Trade between Turkey and its largest market, the European Union, has been expanding so far this year amid closer economic links despite disagreements that have been overshadowing the ties between Ankara and Brussels.

Trade officials say efforts for a more positive agenda as well as concrete steps to move forward with the modernization and expansion of the scope of the current EU-Turkey Customs Union would fold further the bilateral exchange of goods.

Turkey's exports to the bloc's member states have seen a double-digit rise in the first half of this year, according to official data, in a rebound from the fallout of the coronavirus outbreak. Sales were up 42% from a year ago to nearly \$40.86 billion (TL 354.38 billion) from January through June, the data compiled from the Turkish Exporters Assembly (TIM) showed.

The bloc accounted for nearly 39% of the nation's overall exports, which saw an almost 40% increase to \$105 billion in the first half of the year.

The automotive industry led the way with sales worth \$9.52 billion. Ready-to-wear followed with \$5.65 billion and chemicals with \$4.77 billion, the data showed. Steel sales to the bloc amounted to some \$3.27 billion.

Germany remained Turkish exporters' top market, receiving \$1.57 billion worth of goods, a 33.2% increase from nearly \$1.18 billion a year ago.

TIM Chairperson Ismail Güllü said sales to the EU saw a nearly 50% year-on-year rise in June alone, amounting to \$8.2 billion. The bloc accounted for 41.7% of the overall sales the nation made last month. "Adding to this other European nations, the share of the European continent in our exports in June was 56.3%," Güllü said.

He went on to say that exports to the bloc continued to increase despite the fact that some nations extended or increased their coronavirus curbs.

This, Güllü said, proves the fact that "Turkey is now a safe harbor in supply."

He pointed out Turkey's several major advantages, including its goods and sector diversity, developed sub-industry, flexible and fast production structure, compliance with EU in product standards, strong logistics services, high port and shipping capacity, and developed export financing opportunities.

"Turkey is able to reach a \$30 trillion market with a population of 1.6 billion within a four-hour flight radius," Güllü noted.

He dubbed of critical importance the recent meetings between Trade Minister Mehmet Muş and EU officials on bilateral trade and customs union agreement.

Weak Global Demand Curbs German Industrial Orders in May



BERLIN (Dispatches) - Weak demand from abroad caused German industrial orders to fell sharply in May, as the COVID-19 outbreak continues to pummel Europe's top economy, official data showed Tuesday.

Orders were down by 3.7%, according to the federal statistics office Destatis, dashing the hopes of analysts polled by Factset who had penciled in a rise of 0.8% compared to April.

However, a year-on-year comparison showed a whopping 54.3% increase compared to May 2020, when the economy came to a screeching halt during the first wave of the global pandemic.

International orders in May sank particularly sharply, by 2.3% from eurozone countries and 9.3% from the rest of the world according to month-on-month data.

Industrial orders are closely watched as a key indicator of future economic activity, especially in manufacturing powerhouse Germany.

Germany's economy shrank in the first quarter as restrictions were imposed to counter a winter surge in COVID-19 cases.

However, ING analyst Carsten Brzeski suggested the disappointing May industrial orders data should be taken with a "pinch of salt."

He noted that "ongoing supply chain disruptions, delivery delays and lack of materials and intermediate goods" due to the pandemic have "blurred the traditional link between industrial orders and production."

"Consequently, the industrial rebound could be a bit more erratic than previously anticipated," he said.

"Order books are more than richly filled and reducing backlogs is a bigger problem for German companies than acquiring new orders."

Last week German business confidence rose to a near three-year high in June, buoyed by reopenings and falling coronavirus infection rates, according to the Munich-based Ifo institute's monthly confidence barometer.

Mining Exploration by GIS 16% More Than Schedule

TEHRAN (MNA) - Head of Geological Survey and Mineral Explorations of Iran (GSI) said his organization has carried out 16 percent more mining exploration in the county compared to the targets set for the Sixth National Development Plan (2016-2021), IRNA reported.

Referring to the targeting of 425,000 square kilometers of exploration in the Sixth Development Plan, Alireza Shahidi noted: “The performance

achieved is 16 percent ahead of the plan, which indicates good productivity as a result of centralized, scientific and resource-oriented decision-making.” “Despite all the restrictions and limitation [created by the U.S. sanctions and the pandemic], more than 490,000 square kilometers of exploration operations were carried out in this organization during the Sixth [National] Development Plan,” Shahidi said.



Pakistan PM Khan Launches Various Mega Projects in Gwadar



ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) – Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday performed the ground-breaking of several mega projects and launched a number of other infrastructure ventures under the ambitious China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Pakistan’s strategic coastal city of Gwadar.

The CPEC, which connects Gwadar Port in Pakistan’s Balochistan province with China’s Xinjiang province, is the flagship project of China’s ambitious multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It will give China an opening to the Arabian Sea.

The BRI is seen as an attempt by China to further its influence abroad with infrastructure projects funded by Chinese investments all over the world.

Khan inaugurated the North Gwadar Free Zone 2, Gwadar Expo Centre and Henan Agricultural Industrial Park as well as the opening of three factories including Gwadar Fertilizer Plant and Gwadar Animal Vaccine Plant.

He also witnessed the signing of various MoUs with China that aimed at constructing a modern hospital, an international airport and a vocational institute as well as addressing the water and power problems of Gwadar.

He was also given a briefing on the progress of the south Balochistan development package in line with the government’s efforts of focusing on the province.

In his address, Khan said that Pakistan was on its way to becoming a “great country”. “I dream of Pakistan’s future - and I have grown up with Pakistan. This nation is headed towards becoming a great country,” he said.

Khan said he had come to visit Gwadar for two reasons: to inaugurate the Gwadar Free Zone Phase 2 and for the development of Balochistan. “Gwadar is becoming a focal point for Pakistan, which will benefit the country and especially Balochistan,” he said.

He said the Gwadar International Airport being constructed with the help of China would connect the city with the world and help boost trade.

He said that Chinese investors under the CPEC were aiming to install such industries that would help Pakistan increase its exports.

“Unfortunately, we have never focused on exports, and it will help bring in dollars,” he said, adding that Pakistan had always been at the mercy of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong said on the occasion that China was committed to developing the CPEC project under the vision of shared prosperity.

“We are committed to push forward with the programme to ensure Pakistan’s economic development,” he said.

He said Beijing would provide strong support to Islamabad, both geopolitically and

geo-economically. “The project will bring about an economy of a great scale, create more job opportunities and enhance the manufacturing sector.”

Among the projects launched was the high value 2,200 acres North Gwadar Free Zone 2 to create a hub of industries. According to Federal Planning Minister Asad Umar, it was far bigger than phase 1 comprising 60 acres and would help to expedite the industrialisation of Pakistan.

“This reflects the growing interest of Chinese and other investors in the Gwadar free zone,” he tweeted.

The CPEC is a collection of infrastructure and other projects under construction throughout Pakistan since 2013. Originally valued at \$46 billion, the projects were worth \$62 billion as of 2017. India has protested to China over the CPEC as it is being laid through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

Chairman CPEC Authority Lieutenant-General (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa said that Iran’s trade through the Gwadar Port would start soon as infrastructure was being developed for it.

Lee Says World Is Run by Gangsters



CANNES (Dispatches) - The Cannes film festival kicked off with a heavy political tone on Tuesday, with jury president Spike Lee denouncing authoritarians and the fact that black people are still “hunted down like animals” in the U.S.

Lee -- the first black person to lead the festival’s jury -- used his favorite nickname for Donald Trump, “Agent Orange”, and sported a cap reading “1619”, referring to the year in which the first slaves arrived in the Americas.

“This world is run by gangsters,” Lee said in response to an emotional appeal from a Georgian journalist who spoke about a recent crackdown on a Pride celebration in her country, which she blamed on Russian influence.

“Agent Orange, this guy in Brazil, and Putin are gangsters. They have no morals, no scruples. That’s the world we live in. We have to speak out against gangsters like that,” Lee said.

Asked about his 1989 classic “Do the Right Thing” on race relations in his native New York, Lee mentioned recent victims of police violence and said: “You would hope 30-some fucking years later, that black people would stop being hunted down like animals.”

Five of the nine jury members are women (a majority for the fourth time in the festival’s history), and the issue of female representation was also raised at the press conference.

“When women are listening to themselves and really expressing themselves, even inside of a very, very male culture, we make movies differently, we tell stories differently,” said actor Maggie Gyllenhaal.

She spoke about needing “an extra muscle” when she watched the male-dominated films of her youth -- “to turn them into something that I could relate to,” and how deeply inspired she was when she saw Jane Campion’s “The Piano” in 1993 -- still the only film by a woman to win the Palme d’Or at Cannes.

One controversy that jury member Tahar Rahim, star of Netflix hit “The Serpent”, did not seem keen to address was the fact that his wife Leila Bekhti was among those being judged, as she stars in competition entry “The Restless”.

“She’s an actress like any other. I don’t see the problem. We’ve both played in films by Jacques Audiard,” he said, referring to the French director whose latest film “Olympiades” is also in the running for the top Palme d’Or prize.

“It doesn’t change anything,” Rahim told AFP.

Settlement Reached to Release Ship That Blocked Suez Canal

CAIRO (Dispatches) - The Suez Canal Authority says it has reached an agreement to settle a financial dispute with the owners of a hulking container ship that blocked the crucial waterway in Egypt for nearly a week earlier this year.

The authority did not reveal details on the settlement deal with the Shoen Kisen Kaisha Ltd., the Japanese owner of the Ever Given. It said the deal will be signed in a ceremony in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia on Wednesday.

The vessel would be also freed Wednesday, it said.

“Preparations for the release of the vessel will be made and an event marking the agreement will be held at the Authority’s headquarters in Ismailia in due course,” Faz Peermohamed of Stann Marine, which represents owner Shoen Kisen and its insurers, said in a statement on Sunday, without providing details of the settlement.

The head of Egypt’s Suez Canal Authority, Osama Rabie, said last month the parties had agreed on a compensation amount. But he said it would not be made public as they had signed a non-disclosure agreement until the signing of the final contract. He said the canal will receive a tug boat with a pulling capacity of about 75 tons as part of a settlement, without mentioning any other details.

“We preserved the rights of the authority in full, preserved our relationship with the company and also political relations with Japan,” he told a private TV channel on Sunday evening.

The vessel had run aground in the single-lane stretch of the canal on March 23 before it was extracted six days later after a huge salvage effort by a flotilla of tugboats.

Since it was freed on March 29, the Panama-flagged, Japanese-owned vessel, which carries cargo between Asia and Europe, has been ordered by authorities to remain in a holding lake mid-canal, along with most of its crew, as the two sides negotiated a settlement. The disagreement had centred on the compensation amount the Suez Canal Authority is claiming for the salvage of the vessel.

The money would cover the salvage operation, costs of stalled canal traffic, and lost transit fees for the week the Ever Given blocked the canal.

At first, the Suez Canal Authority demanded \$916m in compensation, which was later lowered to \$550m.

The two sides have traded blame for the vessel’s grounding, with bad weather, poor decisions on the part of canal authorities, and human and technical error all being suggested as possible factors.

The six-day blockage disrupted global shipping. Hundreds of ships waited in place for the canal to be unblocked, while some ships were forced to take the much longer route around the Cape of Good Hope at Africa’s southern tip, requiring additional fuel and other costs. The canal earned revenue of \$3bn in the first six months of 2021, up 8.8 percent compared with the same period last year, despite the Ever Given accident, Rabie said.

Scientists Seek Covid Protection Boost for People With Weakened Immunity

PARIS (Dispatches) - How effective are Covid vaccines if your immune system is compromised by HIV, cancer or a recent organ transplant?

Faced with very little data -- and fears that some of these patients could be particularly vulnerable to the virus -- scientists are seeking to figure out how to best protect them.

In one of the largest research projects into the issue so far, dozens of French hospitals have launched a two-year study of some 10,000 people to help shine light onto how people with these conditions respond to immunization for the coronavirus.

“The goal is to find out how we can best protect those patients,” the study’s head Odile Launay told AFP.

Authorities like the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say people with compromised immune systems can receive the vaccine, but stress that there is still little data on safety.

“If you have a condition or are taking medications that weaken your immune system, you may NOT be fully protected even if you are fully vaccinated,” the CDC adds, urging people to continue to take precautions and to consult their doctor. People’s immune systems can be suppressed by disease -- or by treatments taken to deal with other conditions -- and this may mean their body has trouble producing the antibodies vaccines are meant to trigger.

Power Supply to...

FROM PAGE 1

“The Ramadan-Gabd crossing point near Gwadar is active and fully functional now, fencing work with Pakistan-Iran border is going on rapidly and new border markets are being established at the crossing points,” he said adding the smuggling to and from Iran is decreasing due to increase in regulated trade.

In his video message here, the Chairman said after completion of development works of Gwadar Port and first phase of Gwadar Free Zone, Prime Minister Imran Khan was going to perform the ground breaking of second phase of the Zone.

He said as compared to the first phase which comprised of 60 acres of land, the second phase would be a huge project comprising of 2200 acres of land.

Chairman Bajwa said around 7 to 8 big Chinese investors from Shanghai would also participate in the ground breaking ceremony where they would make commitments in Gwadar Zone and inform about their future plans in Pakistan.

Problems Remain as...

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He added: “Currently, there is no money to complete industrial projects. Money is gained when we can win an economic war and lift sanctions. We can also finalize the FATF.”

Rouhani said: “Now we cannot sell oil, and we do not have a good relationship with a foreign bank. Therefore, we cannot use their credits. When there is no capital, big projects cannot be implemented.”

The president said that 15,000-megawatt projects are financially suspended and need money to progress.

Rouhani noted: “In recent years, four and a half billion dollars were supposed to be prepared for investment in utility projects, but sanctions imposed by the former US administration and the country’s withdrawal from the JCPOA became problematic.”

“We can approve the FATF tomorrow to change our relationship with the banks,” the president said.

Iran to Soon Produce...

FROM PAGE 1

Gharibabadi described the silicide plate as a modern type of nuclear fuel whose technology is only available to a handful of countries.

The IAEA said in a statement on Tuesday that Iran intends to use domestically enriched uranium (U-235) with 20 percent purity as fuel in the Tehran reactor.

“Today, Iran informed the Agency that UO2 (uranium oxide) enriched up to 20% U-235 would be shipped to the R&D laboratory at a plant in Esfahan, where it would be converted to UF4 (uranium tetrafluoride) and then to uranium metal enriched to 20% U-235, before using it to manufacture the fuel,” the statement said.

The IAEA also said the process would be a multi-step measure, suggesting that it would take much time.

Reacting to the news, Russia referred to the Iran’s move and the US continuation of the so-called maximum pressure by former President Donald Trump as a “vicious circle” and said the only way out of it was resuming the Vienna talks on the revival of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and the full implementation of the landmark accord.

“The IAEA reports that Iran moves to production of uranium metal enriched up to 20%. The US in its turn maintains maximum pressure policy of D.Trump. The only way out of this vicious circle is resumption of Vienna Talks without delay and full restoration of JCPOA,” Russia’s Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov wrote in a tweet.

Iran Decries...

FROM PAGE 1

The UN General Assembly reviews the GCTS every two years, making it a living document attuned to member states’ counter-terrorism priorities.

In his speech, Takht Ravanchi said, ““I would like to join the previous speakers in expressing my appreciations to Ambassador Mohamed Al Hassan of Oman and Ambassador Agustin Santos of Spain for their able leadership in the facilitation of the 7th review of the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy.”

He added, “I begin by paying special tribute to the victims of terrorism particularly Major General Qassem Soleimani, a prominent figure in the fight against Daesh in Iraq and Syria, who was assassinated in a terrorist attack perpetrated by the US forces on 3 January 2020 in Baghdad International Airport.

While emphasizing national ownership and leadership in combating terrorism, and recognizing the pivotal role of the General Assembly in this process, the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its unwavering commitment to combat terrorism and rejects all acts and methods of terrorism.”

Takht Ravanchi noted, “The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that terrorism can only be countered through international cooperation as well as methods that primarily address its root causes. Still, in most parts of the world, socioeconomic and political problems, illegitimate military presence and foreign military intervention and occupation, constitute the main sources of terrorism and violent extremism.

He went on to say, “However, our longstanding legal position is that any resistance against occupation and foreign intervention in the exercise of self-defense cannot be considered terrorism. In this context, the Palestinian people have every right to resist the occupation of their territory by the Zionist regime.It is also our strong belief that under the pretext of fighting terrorism, no State has the right to commit acts of aggression, interference in the internal affairs of other States, or condone flagrant violations of human rights and humanitarian law, such as torture, kidnapping, illegal detention, disappearance or extrajudicial execution and targeted killing.”

Guendouzi Joins Marseille on Loan

LONDON (Dispatches) - Arsenal midfielder Matteo Guendouzi, who spent last year at Hertha Berlin, has joined Marseille on loan, the French Ligue 1 club announced on Tuesday.

Marseille signed the 22-year-old Frenchman on a one-year deal with an option to buy.

Guendouzi made his Ligue 1 debut for Lorient in 2016 before joining Arsenal two years later.

He made 82 appearances for the Gunners, scoring one goal and came off the bench in the 2019 Europa League final against Chelsea.

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Leeds Sign Junior Firpo From Barcelona

LONDON (Dispatches) - Leeds have completed the signing of fullback Junior Firpo from Barcelona, the two clubs announced on Tuesday.

Leeds boasted on their website that they had "beaten off competition from a number of clubs to secure the services of the 24-year-old."

The Premier League club said that, after completing quarantine and a medical, the player had signed a four-year contract on Tuesday.

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SPORTS

THURSDAY JULY 8, 2021

Italy Beat Spain on Penalties to Reach Euro 2020 Final

ROME (Dispatches) - Italy beat Spain 4-2 on penalties after a 1-1 draw in a magnificent Euro 2020 semi-final at Wembley on Tuesday, as Jorginho converted the decisive kick to take the Azzurri through to the final where they will face either England or Denmark.

Italy were not always on top though, with Spain the better side for long spells of an epic contest before Federico Chiesa, the Juventus forward, gave Italy the lead with a fabulous finish an hour into a match watched by a crowd of almost 58,000.

The much-maligned Alvaro Morata, who was dropped from the starting line-up, came off the bench to equalize with 10 minutes of normal time left.

No further scoring in extra time meant penalties again for Spain, who had beaten Switzerland in a shoot-out in the quarter-finals.

They had also beaten Italy on penalties at Euro 2008, but this time misses from Dani Olmo and then Morata saw Spain give up the advantage they had been handed when Manuel Locatelli failed with the first kick in the shoot-out.

The Italians celebrated at the end with a large contingent of their UK-based supporters, and a team that has been rejuvenated under Roberto Mancini continues to dream of winning a first European Championship since 1968.

Now unbeaten in 33 games, they go through to Sunday's final to face either England or Denmark, who meet in Wednesday's second last-four tie. "I have to thank the players because they believed right from day one that we could do something incredible," said Mancini.

Cavendish in Inspirational Mood as Merckx Record Looms

PARIS (Dispatches) - Mark Cavendish won his third stage on the 2021 Tour de France on Tuesday to move within one of Eddy Merckx's all-time record of 34 wins on Tuesday, but said he is motivated more by inspiring people to overcome difficulties.

At the end of a flat run from Albertville to Valence, the 36-year-old Briton edged Belgians Wout van Aert and Jasper Philipsen over the line to also keep a firm grip on the sprint points green jersey with his 33rd win on the world's greatest bike race.

Cavendish was a surprise late inclusion on Deceuninck's Tour roster and has seized his opportunity, ending a five-year barren patch in the race with wins on stages four, six and now 10.

Known as the Manx Missile Cavendish was teamless in December before being taken in by former mentor Patrick Lefevere at the Belgian team Cavendish calls home, and where he finally put behind him the after effects of a tiring virus.

"I've been blown away by the love and support from around the world," a beaming Cavendish said.

"People can be inspired by some kind of comeback if you think things are over, if anyone can use that to get inspired that is the greatest joy for me," said Cavendish, who had Epstein Barr virus.

Cavendish cut a much lighter character when interviewed after coming over prickly on his previous two triumphs here.

"I didn't do anything today, they just delivered me, it was phenomenal again," he said.

Cavendish refuses to discuss the Merckx stage milestone, the Belgian is remembered as a five-time Tour de France winner.

The Briton is described by Tour director Christian Prudhomme as the greatest ever sprinter on the Tour, but will never win the Tour itself.

On Sunday he scraped over the line just inside the time cut on a major mountain stage, and described this feat as maybe his greatest victory.



Spain won the first two of those meetings, but the last two have now gone to Italy. "It is not a sad night for me by any means," said Spain coach Luis Enrique. "We can go home knowing we competed and were among the best teams."

This meeting took place in the chill of a damp July evening in London, but the atmosphere at Wembley was no damp squib. There were no travelling supporters, given the obligatory quarantine for all visitors to the United Kingdom.

However, the large Spanish and Italian communities already in Britain meant a combined 20,000 fans of the two teams were in the 57,811-crowd allowed inside Wembley.

They added a noise and color so sadly lacking at major sporting events since the pandemic began, and that provided the perfect stage.

The football itself was absorbing and of the highest quality, particularly in midfield where Italy's outstanding trio of Jorginho, Marco Verratti and Nicolò Barella met their match in Spain's Sergio Busquets, Koke and the brilliant Pedri, a frightening talent at just 18. But it was Italy who reached their 10th major tournament final and ended Spain's hopes of a record fourth European crown.

- Southgate's England 'breaking barriers' -

Standing in the Azzurri's way will either be England, who have never reached a Euro final, or Denmark,

Inter Wing-Back Hakimi Joins PSG

PARIS (Dispatches) - Paris Saint-Germain announced on Tuesday they had signed Morocco wing-back Achraf Hakimi from Inter Milan on a five-year deal.

According to reports the Parisians have paid around 60 millions euros (\$71 million) for the 22-year-old who won Serie A with Inter last season.

Hakimi started his career with Real Madrid before joining Borussia Dortmund for a season and then heading to the San Siro.

"I feel a great sense of pride today," Hakimi said in a PSG statement.

"After Spain, Germany and Italy, Paris Saint-Germain offers me the chance to discover a new championship with one of the most prestigious clubs in the world," he added.

The nine-time French champions are also reportedly interested in Hakimi's former Real Madrid team-mate Sergio Ramos as well as AC Milan's Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma but have already signed Netherlands midfielder Georginio Wijnaldum.

Despite 2011's multi-million takeover by Qatar Sports Investment and signing Brazil's Neymar for a world record fee they have failed to win the Champions League.



The Pole has only met Federer once -- a straight sets loss at Indian Wells in the

Hurkacz Reaches Wimbledon Semis

LONDON (Dispatches) - Hubert Hurkacz became just the fourth Polish man to reach the Wimbledon quarter-finals on Tuesday with a five-set win over Russian second seed Daniil Medvedev.

World number 18 Hurkacz triumphed 2-6, 7-6 (7/2), 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 in a match held over from Monday due to rain and will now face Roger Federer for a place in the semi-finals.

"For this sport, Roger is unbelievable, what he does, how he plays and the titles he has won throughout his career. He inspired so many people and it's going to be fun," said Hurkacz.

quarter-finals in 2019.

His run to the Wimbledon last-eight is impressive as he had won just one match on tour between his surprise Miami Masters title in March and the start of Wimbledon.

That dismal streak included defeat in the first round of the French Open to world number 154 Botic Van de Zandschulp and first-up losses in the grass court events at Stuttgart and Halle.

The defeat in Stuttgart was particularly painful as it came at the hands of Dominic Stricker, ranked a lowly 335 at the time.

Hurkacz's last-16 tie had started on Court Two on Monday but was suspended with him 4-3 up in the fourth set.

It was completed under the Centre Court roof in front of a capacity crowd of 15,000.

"Playing on this unbelievable court, the best court in the world with this magnificent crowd, is so special and means a lot to me," said Hurkacz.

"Daniil is an unbelievable player, we were battling on Court Two, then we came back to finish the match.

German Football Gets Green Light For Fan Return

BERLIN (Dispatches) - Bundesliga clubs and other German sports venues will be allowed to welcome up to 25,000 spectators from next month, the city of Berlin said Tuesday after a meeting of officials from Germany's 16 states.

Most matches in Germany's top football league were played behind closed doors last season because of the Covid-19 virus.

The new Bundesliga season starts on August 13 and with infection rates having fallen sharply, sports stadiums could be at 50 percent capacity, with the total number per match or event capped at 25,000.

The only exception is reigning Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich, where up to 20,000 fans will be allowed into home games at the 75,000-capacity Allianz Arena because officials in Bavaria are allowing only 35 percent of capacity.

The new rules apply until September 11 and amid concerns in Germany about the Delta variant of the coronavirus, incidence rates must not exceed 35 new infections per 100,000 people over the previous seven days.

If that happens, and "the infection cannot be clearly contained", a maximum of 5,000 spectators will be allowed into sports events, German officials warned.

Only fans who can prove they are vaccinated or present a negative test will be allowed into stadiums and hygiene rules must be followed. An easing of the regulations meant crowds of around 14,000 were allowed to attend Euro 2020 matches at Munich's Allianz Arena over the last three weeks, but fans were largely kept out of German league games last season.



Barty Wins Aussie Battle to Reach Wimbledon Semis

LONDON (Reuters) - World number one Ash Barty outclassed compatriot Ajla Tomljanovic 6-1 6-3 to reach the Wimbledon semi-finals on Friday and set up a meeting with 2018 champion Angelique Kerber.

In the first all-Australian women's Grand Slam quarter-final since the 1980 Wimbledon championships, the 25-year-old Barty produced a calm and composed display on Centre Court.

Tomljanovic had battled past British wildcard Emma Raducanu the night before to reach her first Grand Slam quarter-final, but was nowhere to be seen in a one-sided first set.

But the 28-year-old did make more of a match of it in the second, breaking the Barty serve twice.

Barty always had another level though and ended Tomljanovic's resistance in little over an hour.

"Ajla is an incredible competitor -- I've played with her a lot, I've practiced with her, all Aussies back home are proud of her and it was bloody nice to share the court with her today," top seed Barty, who had made the singles quarter-finals at the All England Club for the first time, said on court.

"This is a dream come true. I know you hear that a lot but this is my dream and I'm extremely grateful to have an opportunity to live out what I love to do this afternoon."

Barty has made no secret of her desire to win her first Wimbledon title, 50 years after Evonne Goolagong, who also has indigenous Australian heritage, won her first title.

She wears an elegant FILA trailblazer outfit modelled on Goolagong's and her stylish all-court game would not have looked out of place in any era. Barty won the French Open in 2019, becoming the first Australian to do so since Margaret Court in 1973.

