

Health Ministry Said on Friday the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 90,344 With 270 More Iranians Killed by the Deadly Disease Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

The Iranian Parliament Speaker's Special Aide for International Affairs Said That Syria Had Entered a New Phase of Economic Cooperation With Various Countries, Especially The Islamic Republic of Iran

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U.S. Refused to Back Off From Its Hostile Stances in Vienna

TEHRAN (PressTV) - A high-ranking Iranian diplomat reflects on a warning recently issued by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei about the West's intention to use the 2015 nuclear deal to enable interference in the country's affairs.

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's permanent ambassador to Vienna-based international organizations, made the remarks in an interview published on Ayatollah Khamenei's official website, Khamenei.ir, on Wednesday.

He referred to the warning issued by Ayatollah Khamenei on Wednesday, during the Leader's last meeting with the outgoing Iranian administration's officials.

During the meeting, the Leader cited the administration's experience of dealing with the West on the issue of the nuclear agreement as an important case in point that had clearly shown "trust in the West does not work and will not work [in the future either]."

Ayatollah Khamenei noted to the outgoing officials how the Western side had been trying -- during the recent talks concerning the nuclear deal -- to set up a condition in the deal that would turn into an excuse for the West's subsequent interference in Iran's affairs.

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Tehran Slams UNSC's Seven Decades of Silence Over Israeli Atrocities

TEHRAN (PressTV) - An Iranian envoy to the United Nations has censured the UN Security Council's seven decades of utter silence against all unlawful acts committed by the Israeli regime, saying the history of mankind testifies that when unlawful acts go unpunished, they are repeated.

"The Council's decades-long utter and inexcusable inaction has seriously emboldened that regime to commit more crimes with more brutality," Zahra Ershadi, the deputy permanent representative of Iran to the UN, said on Wednesday before a UN Security Council session on "The Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question."

She also slammed the U.S. for encouraging Israel by systematically shielding the regime against any action by the Security Council.

"The latest example of such measures was the act of the United States, in May 2021, in blocking the Security Council from issuing even a simple press statement calling for an end to Israel's bombardment of Gaza," She said.

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Vienna Talks Proved "Trust to West Does Not Work"



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has said that one key lesson for future administrations to learn from the experience gained during the tenure of outgoing President Hassan Rouhani is that there is no benefit in putting one's trust in the West.

Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks during his last official meeting with President Hassan Rouhani and his cabinet members on Wednesday.

"The others should use your experience," Ayatollah Khamenei told the meeting. "There is a specific experience... that I have noted to you and the people many times before, and let me repeat the same thing here, which is [the need for] a lack of trust in the West."

"This is an experience that the posterity should use. As it became manifest during the tenure of this administration, nothing can be gained from putting one's trust in the West," the Leader said.

President-elect Ebrahim Raisi's swearing-in ceremony will be held on August 5. Raisi won the June 18 presidential election in a landslide, garnering over 18 million votes.

The Leader added that domestic programs should in no way be tied to Western states under any circumstances due to the proven failure of such an approach.

"Wherever you tied your work to the West, you failed, and wherever you rose and moved forward without trusting the West, you succeeded," he said in an address to members of the outgoing administration.

"Wherever you tied issues to an agreement or talks with the West, America and the like, you failed to move forward," he said. "Because they don't help. They are the enemies, of course."

Making a reference to the ongoing talks in Vienna, Austria, to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, Ayatollah Khamenei acknowledged the endeavors made by Iranian diplomats, saying, however, that the Americans insisted on their hostile stance against Iran and did not move even one step forward during the talks.

"The Americans say [in words] and promise that 'we will remove the sanctions' but they have failed to do so," said the Leader, denouncing the U.S. attempts to add new terms to the agreement to push Iran to begin talks on other issues.

By adding such a clause, according to the Leader, the Americans are seeking to gain an excuse for further meddling acts regarding the JCPOA, Iran's missile program and regional issues.

"And if Iran refuses to talk about [those issues], they would say 'you have violated the JCPOA and therefore there won't be an agreement anymore,'" he added.

Ayatollah Khamenei drew attention to the fact that the U.S. has refused to provide Iran with a guarantee that it will not violate its commitments again.

He noted that Washington will not shy away from violating its contractual commitments in the same manner it did in 2018, a move that was "completely costless" for them.

Two Rockets Fired Toward U.S. Embassy in Iraq

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Two rockets have been fired toward the US embassy in Baghdad, which is located inside the highly secured Green Zone of the Iraqi capital, local media report.

According to Iraq's Sabirin News, the rockets were fired on Thursday morning at the Third al-Tawheed Base in the U.S. embassy, with the base's air defense system and rocket alarm failing to get activated.

Russia Today, citing its correspondent in Baghdad, also reported that the embassy was targeted with two "Katyusha rockets."

Citing an Iraqi security source, AFP reported that the attack caused no casualties or damage.

One rocket landed in a parking lot inside the Green Zone and a second one hit a nearby empty area, AFP quoted sources as saying.

No group has claimed responsibility for the rocket fire.

The attack comes as Iraq and the US are engaged in talks over what is called a withdrawal of US troops from the Arab country, with US President Joe Biden and Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi declaring on Monday that the US mission in Iraq will transition from combat to "advisory" role by the end of the year.

"The delegations decided, following recent technical talks, that the security relationship will fully transition to a training, advising, assisting, and intelligence-sharing role, and that there will be no US forces with a combat role in Iraq by December 31, 2021," Baghdad and Washington said in a joint statement on Monday.

The agreement, which has effectively given a mere new name to the US military mission in Iraq, has enraged Iraqi resistance groups, which have played a significant role in defeating the Daesh terrorist group in Iraq in 2017.

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ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

JCPOA Apparently A Dead Deal

After weeks of talks in Vienna over revival of the JCPOA and rejoin of the U.S. to the JCPOA seems to be dead and the Islamic Republic of Iran should not trust on the Western sides any longer for reaching any agreement because it is the nature of the West to prolong the talks for imposing its irrelevant and hegemonic demands.

As the senior Iranian officials had repeatedly reiterated, the U.S. and its allies seek come unacceptable demands from the Islamic Republic of Iran that the latter will not give in because once in 2015 trusted the West and saw its result.

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's permanent ambassador to Vienna-based international organizations, reflected on a warning recently issued by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei about the West's intention to use the 2015 nuclear deal to enable interference in the country's affairs.

He referred to the warning issued by Ayatollah Khamenei on Wednesday, during the Leader's last meeting with the outgoing Iranian administration's officials.

During the meeting, the Leader cited the administration's experience of dealing with the West on the issue of the nuclear agreement as an important case in point that had clearly shown "trust in the West does not work and will not work [in the future either]."

Ayatollah Khamenei noted to the outgoing officials how the Western side had been trying -- during the recent talks concerning the nuclear deal -- to set up a condition in the deal that would turn into an excuse for the West's subsequent interference in Iran's affairs.

The Leader reiterated that "trust on the West does not work" and he really is right.

On Thursday U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken rudely said that nuclear talks with Iran "cannot go on indefinitely" but that Washington was "fully prepared" to continue negotiations.

The deal was torpedoed in 2018 by then US president Donald Trump, who unilaterally withdrew from the agreement and imposed punishing sanctions.

"We're committed to diplomacy, but this process cannot go on indefinitely... we look to see what Iran is ready to do or not ready to do and remain fully prepared to return to Vienna to continue negotiations," Blinken said during a visit to Kuwait. "The ball remains in Iran's court," he noted.

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U.S. Plans Sanctions Campaign on Iran's Drones And Guided Missiles Program

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States is reportedly planning a sanctions campaign against Iran's defensive drones and guided missiles program, six months after the administration of Joe Biden, who had promised to rejoin the Iran nuclear deal and remove anti-Iran sanctions, assumed office.

The Wall Street Journal reported that US officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the sanctions are aimed at disrupting the development of Iran's weapons program.

"It's part of a comprehensive approach so we're dealing with all aspects of the Iranian threat," a senior U.S. official told the news outlet.

While the U.S. has already imposed sanctions against some aspects of Iran's missile program, the new sanctions, according to the officials, would specifically target groups that provide parts used to build drones and missiles and other weapons supply networks.

Another U.S. official said, "Iran's drones are becoming an increasing threat to our allies in the region."

The officials said that the sanctions are separate from the Biden administration's attempts to coerce Tehran to return to full compliance with the 2015 nuclear agreement and to engage in talks to negotiate a new deal.

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Iran Ready to Help Restore Peace Between Azerbaijan, Armenia

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh on Thursday voiced Tehran's readiness to help restore peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Khatibzadeh expressed concern about continuation of border conflicts between Azerbaijan and Armenia, calling on both sides to exercise restraint.

The Iranian spokesman stressed the need to find a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

Syria an Exceptional Opportunity for Iran's Trade

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN – Majlis Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, before departure Tehran to Damascus, said that the situation in Syria is an exceptional trade opportunity to Iran.

Before leaving Tehran for Damascus, Qalibaf said that the visit is done due to the official invitation of Syria to negotiate and consult with the high officials of this country on bilateral economic and regional cooperation.

Congratulating the re-election of Assad as the Syrian President, he described the trip as an opportunity to expand economic, political, and cultural relations with Syria.

The military and security situation in Syria is better and the threats posed by terrorist groups and ISIS are over, and the country is on the path to economic development, he added. He highlighted that during this trip and according to the agreement on comprehensive cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian government, serious negotiations will be held and agreements will be approved by both countries Consultative Assemblies in the near future.

Syria's position is an exceptional opportunity to develop Iran's trade and to get closer to the markets of Europe and the Mediterranean. Also, there are great opportunities for cooperation in the industry, agriculture, tourism, and oil, the speaker underscored.

In the end, he expressed hope that this trip would be a basis to create new opportunities for businessmen and the beginning of more cooperation in economics, politics, and culture. In Damascus, Qalibaf and Syrian Prime Minister Hussein Arnous met during which the two sides stressed expanding bilateral economic relations.

"Today, the Axis of Resistance is facing an economic war, and we can defeat the enemy in the economic war through joint cooperation in the economic and trade fields," the Iranian parliament speaker told the Syrian Prime Minister Arnous in the meeting in an apparent reference to the sanctions imposed on both countries of Iran and Syria.

Meanwhile, Qalibaf expressed his dissatisfaction over the level of trade and economic relations among the countries in the Axis of Resistance, underlining "If we continue like this, there will be a serious danger to the axis of resistance."



He further pointed to the grievances of the economic activists and traders and said, "The fact that a company or economic activist (businessman) cannot do his job and is not motivated contradicts the basic movement we need for [fighting in] economic warfare and is not appropriate for fighting the enemy in the economic field, so solving these problems is a serious need for an economic war."

The Syrian prime minister, for his part, expressed his appreciation for Iran's help in the fight against terrorism, saying that the Syrian nation will never forget the Iranian sacrifices.

Arnous also referred to Bashar Assad's order to improve relations with the Islamic Republic in all fields and said that "At the moment, good things are taking place within the framework of the comprehensive agreement between the two countries, but this issue should be pursued and we believe that the trade relations between Iran and Syria must be promoted as much as possible."

The Syrian Prime Minister also touched upon the grievances of businessmen and traders and stressed that he will issue necessary orders to solve some of the banking problems the private sector activists are facing immediately.

"Our goal and focus is to help the private sector increase the level of trade between the two countries," Arnous said.

The United States has announced fresh sanctions targeting the Syrian government and other groups operating in the Arab country just hours after Qalibaf met Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to declare Tehran's economic support for the war-ravaged country.

Qalibaf said in his meeting with Assad that Iran and Syria would try to replicate their success in cooperating in fight against terrorism by expanding trade and economic ties that would undermine US policy of pressuring sovereign nations through economic sanctions.

Judiciary Pardons, Reduces Sentences of 2019 Unrest Convicts

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran Judiciary said Wed. that a large number of convicts who were detained in the riots that followed the hike in gasoline prices in late 2019 have been pardoned or their sentences have been commuted.

The Iranian Judiciary said in a statement on Wednesday that the convicts received reduced jail sentences or are freed on bail after the new Judiciary Chief Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Eje'i recently held meetings with the families of those convicts.

The statement also said that prior to this, on a number of different other religious occasions, as many as 100 convicts who had been charged on acting against the country's security were pardoned or received commuted sentences after the Judiciary shortlisted them and sent their list to the Leader of the Islamic revolution.

It also said that among the 100 convicts that were pardoned or received commuted sentences, there were some who had been detained in the late 2019 riots.

The Judiciary also noted that the pardons and commuted sentences took place in accordance with legal procedures, adding that the detainees who have not been convicted yet are not included among the reduced jail sentences or pardons.

IRGC Navy Commander Underlines Maintaining Highest Level of Preparedness

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Navy said the forces should maintain the highest level of preparedness and be ready for the toughest missions.



In a meeting with a group of the IRGC Navy's forces in southern Iran on Thursday, Rear Admiral Ali Reza Tangsiri said the forces must maintain their preparedness at the highest level, strengthen their spiritual life and get ready for the toughest missions.

The senior commander also said that if the enemy makes any irrational move or act of aggression against the country, it should be confronted decisively and its move must be nipped in the bud.

Iranian officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will not hesitate to enhance its level of defense preparedness and strengthen its military capabilities, which are entirely meant for defense.

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.

"Without a moment of hesitation, the country must move to acquire whatever is necessary for defense, even if the whole world is opposed to it," Ayatollah Khamenei said at the time.

Iran Mulls End to 5-Year Ban On Umrah Pilgrimage

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iranian authorities say pilgrims may be able to resume visits to Saudi Arabia for performing umrah rituals after a five-year ban and amid reports that Saudi Arabia has agreed to guarantee the safety and dignity of the Iranian travelers.

A Wednesday report by the semi-official ISNA news agency said that Iran and Saudi Arabia have been discussing the issue to allow a resumption of umrah pilgrims by Iranians to the holy sites in the Arab country.

Figures by Iran's Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization show that some 5.8 million people are on a waiting list for travelling to Saudi Arabia to perform umrah, a pilgrimage to Islam's two holiest sites in Saudi Arabia's Mecca and Medina which can be undertaken at any time of year.

Umrah differs from Hajj in that the latter is a lengthier visit which is done once a year and performed once in a lifetime by able-bodied Muslims who can afford it.

That came nearly a year before the two countries cut their diplomatic relations over incidents affecting Saudi missions in two Iranian cities of Tehran and Mashhad.

However, a senior official in Iran's Hajj organization said that umrah trips by Iranians could resume if Saudi Arabia gives assurances about the safety of the Iranian pilgrims.

Akbar Rezayi, who serves as the deputy head of the organization, said that the host country has given "a positive message" about the presence of Iranian pilgrims in umrah this year amid ongoing talks on the issue between authorities of the two countries.

He said that the Saudi government had announced plans for hosting Muslims for umrah pilgrimage after holding a limited hajj ceremony earlier this month.

Only 60,000 pilgrims from Saudi Arabia were allowed to participate in hajj ceremony this year as the kingdom barred foreign visitors for a second year running to minimize the risk of coronavirus infections.

Japan Sends 1.8m Doses of AstraZeneca to Iran



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Japan sent 1.8 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccine to Iran, the Japanese ambassador to Tehran said. "According to the announcement of the Japanese government, 1.1 million doses of the vaccine produced by this country have been delivered to Iran so far, and it is expected that in two days, 1.8 million doses of the Japanese AstraZeneca vaccine will be delivered to Iran," said Ikawa Kazutoshi, the Japanese ambassador to Tehran. According to reports, the vaccines arrive into the country on Thursday.

He added: "Tokyo wants to fight coronavirus, and this is a gift from Japan to the people of Iran."

Alireza Zali, the head of the headquarters to manage operations against coronavirus in Tehran, also said: "Japan has provided great assistance to Iran in the fight against coronavirus and some of the World Health Organization's shipments have arrived in Iran through Japan." On Friday, 23 July, Iran received the first batch of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine at Imam Khomeini International Airport, with the Japanese envoy in Tehran, Aikawa Kazutoshi attending.

Earlier in the day the Head of Tehran's Task Force for Combating Coronavirus and the Japanese ambassador to Tehran visited the Niyavaran collaborative COVID-19 vaccination base.

Zali stated that 340 doses of Japanese-made AstraZeneca vaccine were injected, and more than 8.1 million doses of it would be imported to Iran on Friday, July 30.

During his visit to the Niyavaran collaborative COVID-19 vaccination base, Zali said: "In line with humanitarian goals, in light of the friendship between Japan and Iran, and based on the coronavirus outbreak in Iran, the Japanese government has donated the AstraZeneca vaccine, which is of a high standard."

"Japan has been a great help to us to contain the disease, and the World Health Organization (WHO) has also been helping Iran through Japan," he added.

For his part, the Japanese Ambassador to Tehran, Aikawa Kazutoshi said: "The Japanese government has announced that 1,100,000 doses of the Japanese-made AstraZeneca vaccine have been sent to Iran."

Iran, Austria Stress Judicial, Human Rights Cooperation

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Member of the Provincial Government of Lower Austria and Deputy Secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights emphasized expansion of bilateral cooperation on judicial and human rights issues and exchange of information and experience between the two countries.

Martin Eichtinger, member of the Provincial Government of Lower Austria, and Barbara Grosse, the First Secretary of Austrian Embassy in Iran, attended Iran's High Council of Human Rights on Wednesday to meet officials there.

The met Majid Tafreshi, Deputy Secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights, and discussed bilateral ties between Iran and Austria.

Eichtinger pointed to the 700 years of relationship between the two countries, stressed that Tehran and Vienna



have established official political ties since 150 years ago and have had constant cultural relationship for over 60 years.

He also expressed hope that political and economic ties, judicial and legal cooperation, exchanging specialized delegations and cultural cooperation would continue in the next administration in Iran, referring to the President-elect Ebrahim Raisi taking office next week.

Tafreshi, in turn, thanked Austria for its strong determination to expand bilateral ties with Iran and pointed to the good relationship between the two countries during the four decades after the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

He said that presuming a superior position wouldn't help international relations in today's world.

He also highlighted the importance the 2015 Iran nuclear deal with world powers and the next administration's viewpoint on the issue.

Qatar Sends Medical Aid to COVID-Hit Iran

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Qatar sent a shipment with 9 tons of urgent medical aid to Iran, as the country continues to deal with the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

The aid, sent by Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) arrived onboard Qatar Airways planes on Wednesday, in coordination with the Qatari embassy in Tehran. The shipment included various health supplies and personal protective equipment to help Iran's medical sector manage an alarming increase in daily cases in recent months.

The assistance has been implemented in phases and additional medical aid shipments will be sent to Iran.

Throughout the pandemic, Qatar has expanded its Covid-19 relief efforts to Iran in order to support the country's struggling health sector. Tons of aid have already been sent to the virus-stricken country.

The aid is part of Qatar's continued efforts to combat the spread of coronavirus around the world and help countries overcome the crisis. Most recently, Qatar Charity and Jordan signed an agreement to provide the Hashemite kingdom with a QAR 10 million grant to support its vaccination efforts.

Tatarstan Calls for Enhanced Agricultural Cooperation With Iran

MOSCOW (IRNA) - Tatarstan's Minister of Agriculture and Food Marat Zyabbarov, in a meeting with Iranian ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali on Thursday, called for promotion of relations with Tehran.

Noting that 1,000 companies are active in the area of agricultural and livestock productions in the Republic of Tatarstan, Zyabbarov said that the Republic had \$288 million worth of products last year.

He said that the Republic of Tatarstan is Russia's number one producer of agricultural and livestock products.

The Republic is also active in the area of making Halal products, making some 300 tons of such products last year, the minister said. He also called for the joint production of agricultural and livestock products by Iran and Tatarstan.

Referring to strong political relations between Iran and



Russia, the Iranian ambassador to Moscow welcomed the proposal made by the Tatar minister.

Jalali, however, regretted that the cultural and economic relations between Iran and Russia are lagging behind the defense and technical relations.

He expressed hope that a working group will be set up to pave the way for agricultural cooperation between Iran and Tatarstan Republic.

Despite the restrictions caused by the global spread of COVID-19 and the pressure of US sanctions on Iran, trade between Iran and Russia grew by 44% last year, the ambassador said, adding that Iran's exports to Russia witnessed a 105% growth in the same period.

He called for establishment of a trade center for the Iranians in Kazan where they can supply livestock and agricultural products, a demand that received welcome of the Tatar minister.



Engineer Hossein Kohzad CEO of Shadegan Steel Industry Company:

The Need to Remove Obstacles To The Movement and Development of the Industry

The first phase of this complex has entered the circuit with an annual production of 800,000 tons of steel ingots. A total of eight thousand and eight hundred billion rials of credit has been spent for its launch. Shadegan Steel Complex is one of the eight comprehensive steel study projects in the country in order to develop employment in the deprived area of Shadegan. This area is 35 km southeast of the city, which was surveyed in 2003. Following the conversation with the CEO of Shadegan Steel, Mr. Kohzad, the audience thinks Shadegan Steel Industry Company was launched in 2006 in the form of seven steel projects. In 2007, the executive operations of the company's iron recovery unit began. In 2014, Khuzestan Steel Company, in order to enhance its market in the steel chain, bought 65% of Shadegan Steel shares and became the main shareholder of this company. Khuzestan Steel, after attending Shadegan Steel, tried to set up a recovery unit for the company. Fortunately, this important goal was achieved in the second half of 2017. The annual production design capacity of the iron reduction unit (sponge iron production unit) of Shadegan Steel is 800 thousand tons. The technology for producing sponge iron in Shadegan Steel is PERED technology. This technology is an adaptation of Midrex technology, except that it fixes some Midrex problems. PERED technology was developed by MME and used in four of the seven steel designs (Shadegan, Neyriz, Miyaneh and Baft). In this technology, due to changes in the movement mechanism of cluster breakers, the operator's hand is more open to control the condition of the furnace in abnormal conditions (including cases where materials and yogas are channeled in the furnace). On the other hand, using China hat instead of Christmas tree in the cooling area of the furnace, has caused the flow of materials in the cooling zone of the furnace to be more uniform and also better distribution of cooling gas. Also, the use of a boiler in the feeder feed gas path has caused the operator to have more maneuver in adjusting the amount of feed gas steam. In the steelmaking department of Shadegan Steel Industry Company, it is predicted that one million tons of steel ingots will be produced by continuous casting. Steel ingots are delivered to rolling companies. These companies use this product to produce rebars and other long steel products. The Shadegan steel project has now achieved 64% physical progress. The biggest lag of the project is in the casting part. Due to the harsh sanctions, contracts with foreign companies were closed several times, but unfortunately they were terminated. Now, after intensive negotiations with Danieli Company, we have succeeded in signing a casting contract. Based on the manufacturing times provided by Danieli Company, we have planned that steelmaking will reach production in 2023. Also, during the mentioned negotiations, the purchase of smelting workshop equipment for the second phase of steelmaking from Danieli Company was finalized and a contract was signed. Thus, in the first phase, the production capacity of Shadegan Steel Industry Company will reach one million tons and in the second phase, it will reach two million tons of steel ingots. Shadegan Steel Industry Company has special advantages in terms of geographical location due to its proximity to the private wharf of Khuzestan Steel Company in Imam Khomeini Port and easy transportation. The conditions of Iran's steel industry, despite the years of sanctions that have passed, are not bad. It is true that sanctions have made it difficult to transfer goods and money. Due to these oppressive and difficult conditions, the steel industry, in addition to maintaining its production capacity, has been able to carry out some of its development projects by relying on domestic capacity. The lifting of sanctions does not have an extraordinary effect on the production of our factory. Our industry survives almost independently of sanctions. The company produced 671,000 tons of sponge iron last year. Also, the production of 216 thousand tons in the first three months of this year indicates the crossing of the production limit of 800 thousand tons of sponge iron in 2021. One of the strategic strategies in Khuzestan Steel Holding has been the localization of parts, equipment and technology. An example of this is the localization of the Catalyst Reformers of the Rehabilitation Unit, which in 2006 at a time when sanctions were no longer difficult and most companies worked with us easily, Khuzestan Steel in a research project in collaboration with Sarv Oil and Gas Company, which is one of the knowledge-based companies in the country, localized catalysts, and fortunately, this plan was implemented in 2012, and now the country's steel is no longer needed to import catalysts, and if action is taken that day There was no Khuzestan steel, the country's sponge iron production units were in a major crisis. Shadegan Steel Industry Company, like Khuzestan Steel, has localized its required parts from the beginning. The first steps taken in this regard include the manufacture of high tech components and centrifugal compressors of the reduction unit process. These compressors are



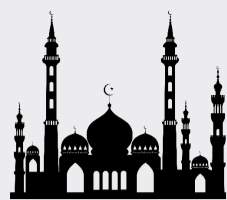
made by Siemens, which unfortunately are very difficult to manufacture due to sanctions. At present, the main parts of this equipment have been made and installed. Fortunately, these parts have not been a problem so far. At present, in Shadegan Steel, localization of parts is one of our main priorities. We hope to make all the parts we need in the country in the not too distant future. Naturally, the geographical location is very decisive for the steel industry, where the weights of raw materials and products are very high. At Shadegan Steel Industry Company, we procure raw materials from the northeast of the country, which is very expensive. Instead, we supply our sponge iron product to Khuzestan Steel, which is in our neighborhood. If Imidro balances the raw materials in a way that makes more sense, all steelmakers will definitely benefit. According to the partnership agreement between Khuzestan Steel Company and Imidro Organization, Imidro was responsible for supplying Shadegan pellets. Unfortunately, he has not been able to fulfill this commitment so far. Of course, the conditions for supplying raw materials for Shadegan Steel Industry Company were good due to the connection to the parent company (Khuzestan Steel) and we have never been without pellets. We need to have other resources to supply pellets. We have already started consulting with various suppliers. We hope to reach an agreement with them soon. The pellets of Shadegan unit and part of Khuzestan steel iron ore are supplied by Sanabad industrial and mining company in South Khorasan. Due to the cost of transportation, the cost price of our product has actually increased. One of the problems of the steel industry is that miners have entered the field of steelmaking. They have faced problems in supplying raw materials to large steelmaking units, including the Khuzestan Steel Holding. We are negotiating to supply raw materials from other mines in the country. This process will be facilitated with the cooperation of Imidro. Certainly in the face of sanctions, we expect upstream institutions to facilitate production, not to create problems and add to production difficulties. Exactly in the first year of the recent sanctions, Shadegan Steel started operating. So far, despite all the hardships that these sanctions have imposed on the country's economy, we have been able to bring the capacity of Shadegan Steel closer to its nominal capacity. We hope to exceed the nominal capacity in 2025. In such circumstances, if the supply of raw materials is facilitated, this industrial unit, like the parent company of Khuzestan Steel, which has the highest rank in the production of steel ingots in the country, can find a special place in the country's steel production. Another advantage of steel units of Khuzestan Steel Company is the specialized location of these units. The steel industry is an industry that has relatively high water consumption. On the other hand, the country is in a drought situation. The presence of fresh water as well as the proximity to open waters has made the industrial units of this company in ideal conditions compared to other steel production units. Unfortunately, steel units in the central desert of Iran, such as Zarand, Sirjan and Baft Steel, have been designed and implemented in some areas. The people of the region also have difficulty in obtaining water for agriculture. Of course, the efforts of these units to use the latest technologies in the world with the aim of using water as little as possible cannot be ignored. Steel plant planning is a long-term plan that should be defined according to the climatic conditions of the regions. When Shadegan Steelworks is launched and we reach the production of ingots, due to the proximity of this unit to the sea and the availability of exports, it will be one of the best

weekly projects, in which case, the company's profitability will change. This advantage is another indicator that can be more due to facilitating the supply of raw materials for Khuzestan steel industrial units, because development plans are also in progress. Prior to the approval of the Shadegan Steel project site, there was a lot of discussion due to its proximity to Shadegan Wetland, and this issue has been raised again for some time. Recently, some provincial officials, such as the director general of the Khuzestan Environment, have stated that it would not be possible at all if the plant's land was extended along the current land to the west. Khuzestan governor's deputy for civil engineering also announced that the development of Shadegan steel project from the west has an environmental red line, but we should know that due to the location of the existing Shadegan steel units, development is possible only from the west. Of course, in the Shadegan project in 2007, environmental permits were obtained for 600 hectares. The project has been implemented in the form of the same permits, but unfortunately, only about 250 hectares of the land from which the permit was obtained were transferred to the Shadegan Steel project. Shadegan steel production capacity is about one million tons. We know that a factory with a capacity of one million tons is not acceptable in the world. Scales range from two million to ballast. Therefore, in order to economize the scale of production, we need to develop this company to reach a production of more than two million tons. In this regard, provincial and national institutions, organizations and organs should be our helpers in this important matter. Another plan of Shadegan Steel Unit is to offer shares in the stock exchange. Unfortunately, this has not happened yet. After launching the steelmaking unit, the stock offering program of this industrial unit in the stock exchange is one of the development plans. The amount of liquidity in circulation can help to develop and improve the quality of Shadegan steel industrial units. If the share supply mechanisms are done correctly and the market continues to operate outside of dictatorial interference, it will certainly be an advantage for all stakeholders and even the people. The presence of steel units with the correct location has significant social effects on the regions. For example, since the launch of this industrial unit in Shadegan city, the face of the city has changed and become more active. This steel unit has also taken important steps in terms of its social responsibilities as much as possible. For example, during the outbreak of coronary heart disease, we have donated 1 billion and 100 million tomans to Shadegan hospital equipment. We have also taken steps to help villages and build bridges. On the other hand, in order to create employment, we have negotiated with the administration of industrial estates. We are currently planning to hold five tenders to manufacture the required parts, subject to the establishment of a workshop in Shadegan. In addition, this year we intend to take measures in cooperation with the technical and professional center to train people in the fields of welding, plumbing, electrical engineering, etc. If the Shadegan steel sector is launched, more than 500 jobs will be created directly. The process of deprivation from this area is accelerating. Finally, I would like to thank Khuzestan Steel Company,



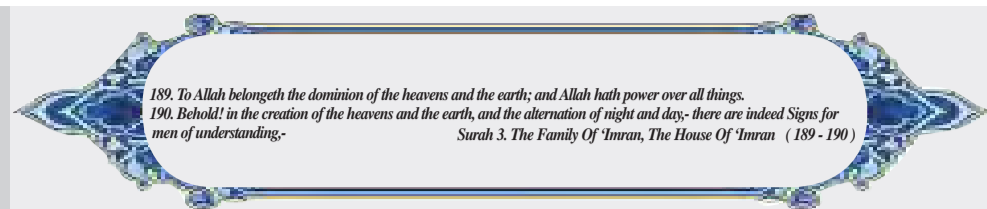
which has always had good technical and financial support from Shadegan Steel Company. I would also like to express my gratitude to all the officials of Shadegan city, the representative of the people of Shadegan, the provincial officials, the National Steel Company and the Imidro organization who have always been our supporters and supporters.





PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:10
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:29
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:36
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:12



189. To Allah belongeth the dominion of the heavens and the earth; and Allah hath power over all things.
190. Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are indeed Signs for men of understanding.
Surah 3. The Family Of 'Imran, The House Of 'Imran (189 - 190)

President Inaugurates Several Roads, Urban Development Plans

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Inauguration ceremony of domestic projects of Ministry of Roads and Urban Development is held in the presence of Iran's outgoing President Hassan Rouhani.

In the last weeks of tenure by the government of prudence and hope, President Rouhani took part in the 86th inaugural ceremony of production jump projects via video conference on Thursday.

The president inaugurated railroads and freeways in Yazd, Fars, Zanjan, Qazvin, Isfahan, Alborz and Mazandaran provinces worth of 2.6 million dollars.

The first project among the Thursday's ceremony is the test driving through Alborz tunnel, which is the longest tunnel in the Middle East. The 9 kilometer-long tunnel is located in the second section of Tehran-Shomal freeway.

The Yazd-Eghlid railway is another project, which crosses through Abarkooh and creates a railroad link to Yasuj, capital of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province. The Yazd-Eghlid railway covers 270 kilometers and helps better and fast transport of industrial, agricultural and mineral products. The administration of President Rouhani has attempted to complete railroad transit in northeast to southwest as well as southeast to southwest of Iran.

It is expected that the railway transports four million tons of commodities and one million passengers in the first year after it becomes operational.

President Rouhani also inaugurated the railway track laying of Khash-Zahedan railway on Thursday, which is a part of Chabahar-Zahedan railway. Another project is the inauguration of Bostanabad-Khavar railway in Tabriz, East Azarbaijan province.

Addressing the ceremony, Rouhani honored the opening of hundreds of kilometers of railway communication projects in one day.



He said: "Today, despite the difficult conditions caused by the economic war and the pandemic, we witnessed the opening of crucial projects in the field of railways and freeways in different provinces of the country, which is glorious." He stated that the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development made great efforts and measures in railway development and highways and communication roads during his administration, which is commendable.

He also underlined that in the Ghadir Khumm event, the issue of governance was put forward; so, the event is considered as the beginning of continuity of the Islamic government of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He added, "I simulate the day of Ghadir to the migration of Prophet of Islam from Mecca to Medina."

The Prophet invited people to the holy religion of Islam in Mecca, but He initiated the Islamic government in Medina; so, the migration is being translated into the start of the Islamic government, Rouhani noted.

The president called Ghadir Khumm event as the second big movement, saying that the issue of governance is being raised in Ghadir event once more, and that the migration to Medina formed the start of the Islamic government and Ghadir was the beginning of the continuity of the Islamic government.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) raised Imam Ali's hand and said: 'Of whomsoever I am a master, Ali is his master,' Rouhani noted, adding that the Prophet told the audience in the Ghadir Khumm event that who are credible to rule in Islamic world.

Iran Exports to Iraq Up 54% in Q1

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran exported goods worth 2.34 billion dollars to Iraq in the first three months of Iranian calendar year (March 21 to June 21), which shows a 54 percent increase comparing to the same period last year, an Iranian official said.

Head of Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce, Jahanbakhsh Sanjabi addressing a meeting in Kermanshah, said that the figures indicate that 95 percent of bilateral trade was exports from Iran to Iraq, which amounted to over 7.4 billion dollars in last Iranian year (March 21, 2020 to March 21, 2021).

Sanjabi noted that Iran imported commodities worth 131 million dollars in the same period.

According to the official, petrochemical products and oil materials with 2.7 billion dollars had the largest share of the Iranian exports to Iraq.

Industrial products with 1.75 billion dollars, agricultural and food industries with 1.74 billion dollars, and mineral materials with 1.2 billion dollars were exported to the neighboring country in the last Iranian year, he noted.



Iran plans to increase the volume of export to 20 billion dollars in the current and next Iranian calendar year, he said, adding that given the 40-64 billion dollars potential in Iraq's market, Tehran hopes to attain the big share of export in the near future.

He further urged the Iranian authorities to pave the ground for exporting technical commodities and IT services to Iraq.

Referring to the fact that 47 percent of Iran's export to Iraq is carried out through Kermanshah province, he said that the chamber of commerce is ready to negotiate with the Iraqi side to develop export of products being manufactured in Kermanshah and hold professional exhibitions.

He also welcomed setting up a joint industrial town in Ghasr-e Shirin city in Kermanshah province.

Kermanshah province located in western Iran, has two border points and five border markets in the joint borderline with Iraq. Around three billion dollars of goods are being exported from border points of Kermanshah per annum.

Oil Export Costs From Jask Terminal Decrease by \$ 300,000

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The Head of Jask Oil and Gas Terminal said that the distance from Jask Oil and Gas Terminal to Kharg Island in the Persian Gulf is 510 nautical miles, and added that with regard to the fuel costs and the tanker's rental fee of Oil tanker with 2 million barrels for a 5-day distance, use of Jask Oil and Gas Terminal, on the total, will reduce costs by at least \$ 300,000.

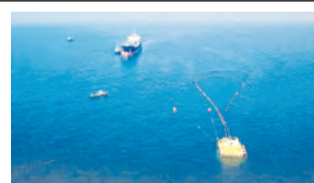
Reza Dehkordi said that the cost reduction, of course, is higher in case the tanker is owned only for once in Iran, because in that case, the tanker's rent will go up to \$ 70,000 per day, but the tanker's rental is lower in cases where it is leased to a few consignments, and it will also reach about \$50,000 per day. According to Dehkordi, in addition, Jask Oil and Gas Terminal can play a major role in the future, both in the banking industry and supplies for ships and repairs of ships and different service types.

"For oil exports, we are looking to attract our customers and create a showcase that all countries choose Iran as the first and most desirable country to buy oil," he added, noting that Iran in the Gulf of Oman and its exporting terminal could make it close to international markets. Head of Jask Oil and Gas Terminal continued: "To achieve this goal, we have to take big steps to reduce the costs of our customers that we have done a lot by building the terminal on ships' fuel consumption."

President Hassan Rouhani on Thursday (July 22) inaugurated the national crude oil transfer project from Goreh to Jask in the Persian Gulf via video conference. The crude oil transfer line from Goreh to Jask, for the first time in Iranian history, enables the export of oil without the need to cross the Strait of Hormuz.

In its first phase, the project has a capacity of 300,000 barrels of oil per day.

A total of 53,000 billion tomans has been invested in the construction of this pipeline, and with its official operation, sustainable employment will be created for 10,000 people. In Jask Oil and Gas Terminal strategic terminal, crude oil storage reservoirs in 20 million barrels capacity, to be developed up to 100 million barrels, Jetties and SPMs for exporting 2 million barrels crude oil per day, procurement harbor for offshore support of oil region, power generation and distribution systems for the region, and organizational residential towns including residential, administrative, health, sanitary, recreation and disciplinary buildings installations will be designed.



Tehran, Dublin Have Good Potential for Developing Economic Relations

DUBLIN (AP) - The head of the Iran-Ireland Parliamentary Friendship Group said there was good potential to develop and strengthen economic relations between the two countries.

Referring to the long-standing and friendly relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ireland, in a virtual meeting with Cathal Crowe, the Head of the Iran-Ireland Parliamentary Friendship Group in Irish Parliament, Egbal Shakeri said: "Friendship between the two countries has a long history which is a strong support to strengthen relations in various political, economic and cultural fields."

Emphasizing the role of parliaments and parliamentary friendship groups in strengthening friendly relations and accelerating cooperation between the two countries, Shakeri added: "Holding virtual parliamentary meetings to resolve existing issues and remove possible obstacles to strengthen political and economic relations is vital."

There are good capacities to develop and strengthen economic relations between Iran and Ireland, he added.

Iran's Import of Grains and Legumes From Turkey Up

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The export of grains and legumes from Turkey to Iran increased by 2.4 times from January through May 2021 compared to the same period of last year and amounted to \$78.3 million, the Turkish Ministry of Trade announced.

The export of grains and legumes from Turkey to Iran increased by 12 times in May 2021 compared to May 2020, reaching up to \$12 million.

Turkey increased the export of cereals and legumes by 16.9 percent from January through May 2021 compared to the same period of last year up to \$3.4 billion.

Turkey exported grains and legumes worth \$617.5 million in May 2021, which is 23.9 percent more than in May 2020.

Turkey's export of grains and legumes reached \$7.8 billion over the past 12 months (May 2020 - May 2021).

Iranian Company Indigenizes Aquatic Feed Production Line

SHAHR-E-KORD (IP) - Indigenizing the aquatic feed production line, an Iranian knowledge-based company placed the Islamic Republic of Iran among the five countries with the technology.

The company is located in Shar-e-Kord, Chaharmahal, and Bakhtiari province, southwestern Iran.

More than 50 specialized devices in the aquatic feed production line have been localized in the company; the technology was previously only available to the United States, Sweden, Germany, and China.

Indigenizing the aquatic feed production line in Iran can produce 10 tons per hour.

In addition to meeting the domestic needs, it enables the country to have exported to Kuwait, Iraq, Armenia, and Pakistan.

The company is also active in the machinery field and parts manufacturing.

It is considered one of the most modern industrial factories for designing, manufacturing, installing, and launching the machinery for producing livestock, poultry, and aquatic feed production lines.

Iran's Non-Crude Exports Surged By 81% in 8 Years to 2021

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran saw its exports of non-crude goods surge by 81% in the eight years to March 2021 despite restrictions facing the country because of US sanctions and the spread of the coronavirus pandemic that hit the global trade in the past two years.

A report by the official IRNA news agency said that non-oil exports from Iran had reached a total of \$345.717 billion during the two four-year terms of President Hassan Rouhani beginning in fiscal year 2013-2014.

Citing figures by Iran's customs office IRICA, the report said that Iran's exports had topped \$190.816 billion in the eight years under a previous administration that began in 2005.

On imports, it said that Iran had taken delivery of \$368.729 billion worth of goods and products in the eight years to March 2021, down \$51.729 billion against the previous similar period.

The surge in exports comes as Iran has been forced to rely on non-oil shipments to compensate for significantly lower crude sales, especially since 2018 when a former government in the United States pulled out of an international agreement on Iran's nuclear program and imposed sanctions on the country.

Rouhani is to hand over power to Iran's president elect Ebrahim Raisi early next month. The incumbent administration announced earlier in July that it would be up to Raisi's government to decide on the ongoing talks between Iran and major global powers to revive the nuclear deal.

ECO Park in Tehran - Symbol Of Common Cultural Traditions Of Member States



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Iran explained the importance of creating parks such as ECO Park in Tehran in the member countries of the Economic Cooperation Organization or ECO.

"We believe that such parks are a symbol of prosperity and bright future," Ahmet Gurbanov appointed Turkmen ambassador to Iran told Trend.

"The creation of such spaces indicates the spiritual support of the common cultural traditions of the ECO member states. This amusement park is a symbol of lasting friendship between ECO members," he noted.

He continued that in 2009, Nowruz was inscribed on the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity as a festivity of rich diversity promoting peace and solidarity across regions and generations.

He added that Nowruz is celebrated by all member countries of the ECO.

Referring to the memorandum signed between the Abbas Abad renovation company and the ECO, Gurbanov said that the MoU would allow the ECO member states to hold their sport and recreational events in ECO Park of Tehran.

The revitalization ceremony of ECO Park held in Tehran on June 9, attended by ambassadors of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member countries.

Abbas Abad Renovation Company and ECO Cultural Institute signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance the level of cooperation and improve the cultural participation of ECO members.

ECO Park with an area of 27,000 square meters in the northern part of Norouz Park in the cultural and tourism region of Abbas Abad, is considered as one of the common cultural characteristics between the member countries of this organization.



Shanon
(adviser)

Parsian

Velenjak Apt (\$1500)
130sq.m, 2bdrs
S/pool, S, J
gym, pkg
yard, F.F

Elahieh Villa (\$4000)
1500sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
green yard
Nicely Furn

((\$1800))
Pasdaran
200sq.m, 3bdrs
Ladge balcony
marble fl
storages
pkg, F.F

Aghdasieh (\$2200)
220sq.m, 3bdrs, S/pol
S, J, balcony, pkg, F.F

((\$10000))
Velenjak bldg
5storey, 20bdrs
S/pool, S, J
green yard
pkg lots
New

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Haiti PM Plans Elections As Quickly as Possible

PORT-AU-PRINCE (Dispatches) - Haiti's new Prime Minister Ariel Henry said the government plans to create conditions for the Caribbean nation to hold elections as swiftly as possible following the assassination of President Jovenel Moise earlier this month.

Already struggling with political paralysis, economic malaise and gang-fueled violence, Haiti was pushed deeper into turmoil by the killing of Moise, which the government blamed on a group of mostly Colombian mercenaries. Western powers have encouraged Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas, to elect a new leadership as early as possible to give democratic legitimacy to the government. Presidential and parliamentary elections had been due to take place in September.



Qatar's Emir Approves Electoral Law for First Legislative Polls

DUBAI (Reuters) - Qatar's emir approved laws on Thursday for the Persian Gulf Arab state's first legislative election in October, which will see Qataris elect two-thirds of the advisory Shura Council, his office said.

The election, plans for which were first approved in a 2003 constitutional referendum, comes ahead of the capital Doha hosting the World Cup soccer tournament next year.

Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani will continue to appoint 15 members of the 45-seat Shura Council, which according to one of the new laws will have legislative authority and approve general state policies and the budget.



Nigerian Court Acquits Shia Leader el-Zakzaky of All Charges



LAGOS (Dispatches) - A Nigerian court has acquitted the leader of a banned Shia group Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) of all eight criminal charges against him, defense and prosecution lawyers said.

Ibrahim el-Zakzaky had been in detention since 2015 when he was arrested after a clash in which the army killed an estimated 350 people at an IMN compound and a nearby mosque and burial ground in northern Kaduna state.

El-Zakzaky and his wife, who was also arrested in 2015, had been facing a range of charges filed by the state government in 2018, including aiding and abetting homicide, unlawful assembly and disruption of public peace.

"None of the 15 prosecution witnesses proved they committed the offence," lawyer Sadau Garba told the AFP news agency after Wednesday's hearing, adding that the couple had been acquitted and "regained their freedom today".

Lead prosecutor Dari Bayero confirmed that the pair had been freed but said the state was planning to appeal.

"The court ruled that none of the witnesses we presented in court gave convincing proof that the duo were guilty," Bayero said. "This doesn't mean they can't be re-arraigned ... we are certainly going to file charges against the duo at appeal."

Justice Gideon Kurada ruled there were no charges to answer and acquitted the pair.

Shias are a small minority in Nigeria, where about half the population is Muslim and overwhelmingly Sunni.

IMN spokesperson Ibrahim Musa said the ruling was "a victory for perseverance in the face of extreme persecution".

El-Zakzaky's supporters at the court said they feared police would arrest him again following his release.

The police and Nigeria's attorney general have not commented on the court ruling.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International urged the Nigerian authorities to "immediately comply" with the court order.

In December 2015, troops launched a ferocious clampdown on the IMN when its members blocked the convoy of the army chief of staff during a religious procession.

Human rights groups said at the time that some 350 IMN members were killed during two days of clashes and later buried in mass graves.

The army initially denied the events and said a soldier was killed by armed Shia fighters.

El-Zakzaky's continued detention has led to street protests in the nation's capital Abuja, sparking violent clashes with security forces that have killed dozens of lives.

The Nigerian government officially outlawed the group in 2019.

That same year, 100 arrested members were released in two batches after a court acquitted them.

In February last year, another court released 87 other IMN members for lack of evidence.

Armenia Wants Russian Army Outposts on Azerbaijan Border

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan proposed on Thursday that Russian border outposts be stationed along the length of Armenia's border with Azerbaijan after a rise in tensions between Yerevan and Baku.

Armenia and Azerbaijan accused each other earlier on Thursday of flouting a Russian-backed ceasefire that both sides had accepted the previous day to halt deadly clashes over their joint border, which Yerevan wants demarcated.

"Given the current situation, I think it makes sense to consider the question of stationing outposts of Russian border guards along the entire length of the Armenian-Azeri border," Pashinyan said during a government meeting.

He said Yerevan was preparing to discuss the proposal with Moscow and that the move would allow work to be carried out on the demarcation and delimitation of the border without the risk of military clashes.

The Kremlin said it was in close contact with both Armenia and Azerbaijan, but declined comment on Pashinyan's proposal.

Tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan, two former Soviet republics, are watched closely abroad for any threat to Azeri gas and oil pipelines and the risk of regional powers Turkey and Russia being dragged into any conflict.

Malaysian PM Urged to Quit After Rare Royal Rebuke

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) - Malaysia's embattled leader was accused of treason and urged to quit Thursday after the king denounced his crisis-hit government for misleading parliament, a rare public rebuke from the revered monarch.

Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin leads a scandal-plagued coalition that seized power last year without an election, but his government is on the verge of collapse after allies withdrew support.

Parliament convened this week after a months-long suspension under a virus state of emergency, which critics said was a bid by Muhyiddin to cling on to power.

On Monday, the law minister announced the emergency would end on August 1 and that several regulations enacted under it were being cancelled.

But rival MPs were furious, claiming Muhyiddin was just seeking to dodge a debate -- and it was not clear the monarch had agreed to revoke the emergency laws, as is required under the constitution.

On Thursday the royal palace confirmed the king, Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, had not given his consent, and said that he expressed his "great disappointment".

The announcement about cancelling the regulations was "inaccurate and confused the members of parliament", said a statement from the palace.

It "did not just fail to respect the principles of the sovereignty of the law... but it undermined the functions and powers of his majesty as head of state," it said.

It is unusual for Malaysia's constitutional monarch, who is widely revered in the Muslim-majority country, to speak out so forcefully against the government.

After the royal statement was released, the legislature erupted in uproar with calls of "treason" and "resign" from the opposition benches.

Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim urged Muhyiddin to quit as his government had "gone against the constitution, insulted the institution of the constitutional monarchy and confused parliament".

There was no immediate reaction from the premier, and it was not clear whether the rebuke would have any impact.



Wealthy Nations Far From Targets on COVID Vaccine Donations

GENEVA (Dispatches) - An expert independent panel monitoring the world's response to the COVID-19 pandemic says wealthy nations have not done enough to transfer COVID-19 vaccines to developing nations where they are desperately needed as the Delta variant drives a new wave of disease around the world.

In May, the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response (IPPPR), called for the reallocation of one billion doses of the coronavirus vaccine from high-income countries with adequate coverage to low and middle-income nations by September, with another billion by the middle of 2022.

"The world is far from meeting those targets," Helen Clark, the co-chair of the IPPPR told the United Nations General Assembly in a briefing on Wednesday. "Some commitments have been made but much more needs to be done, and it can be done urgently."

The pandemic has worsened since the IPPPR released its report and the Delta variant is heightening a surge in coronavirus across the Asia Pacific and other parts of the world where only a small proportion of the population has been vaccinated. Some countries health systems are being pushed to the brink of collapse and death rates are rising.

Clark and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the other co-chair, said there was an urgent need to overhaul the way vaccines and treatments were developed, noting that

in its May report the panel had described the current system as "not fit for purpose".

"Vaccine inequity is a key factor in the wave of death we're seeing across Africa, Asia and Latin America," Clark said, stressing that the panel backed the temporary waiver of patents under the World Trade Organizations or WTO's TRIPS agreement to ensure more vaccines could be made quickly. The US has also backed that move.

"It's astonishing and self-defeating that pharmaceutical manufacturers continue not to share the technology or know-how which could help quickly scale manufacturing. We believe there is a need to shift away from a market-based model to one based on global public goods."

The IPPPR's May report was scathing about the world's response to the pandemic saying a "toxic cocktail" of dithering and poor coordination meant the warning signs had gone unheeded and that politicians had failed to learn from the past.

Sirleaf, who led Liberia during the Ebola crisis of 2014 to 2016, told the meeting that the general assembly had a "decisive role" to play in backing the institutional reforms necessary to ensure the world responds more effectively to global health crises.

"This must be the last pandemic to cause devastation on the scale we are witnessing today," Sirleaf said.



Castillo Pledges to Heal Colonial Wounds

LIMA (Reuters) - Pedro Castillo said Peru's colonial wounds still ran deep and he would seek to heal them, while promising economic stability in his inaugural speech as president.

Speaking on the day that also marked the country's 200th anniversary since declaring independence from Spain, Castillo said the colonial-era divisions that separated classes and races in Peru remained.

"The defeat of the Inca Empire gave rise to the colonial era, it was then... that the castes and differences that persist to this day were established," said Castillo, the son of impoverished farmers whose journey to the presidency was driven by support from the rural poor. "It is the first time that this country will be governed by a peasant," said Castillo.

Sporting his trademark wide-brimmed hat, he also tried to strike a conciliatory tone for investors, pledging to respect private property and establish clear rules for miners, a critical sector of the economy.

Castillo, 51, was elected in a bitterly divisive election that underscored the inequities between urban and rural Peruvians. In the end, Castillo, an elementary school teacher backed by a Marxist party, won by a razor-thin margin against conservative U.S.-educated Keiko Fujimori.

"The three centuries in which this territory belonged to the Spanish crown, they exploited the minerals that sustained the development of Europe, to a large extent with the labor of many of our grandparents," he said in the broadcast speech.

In a symbolic gesture, Castillo has said he will not live in Lima's government palace known as the 'House of Pizarro,' named after the Spanish conquistador who defeated the Inca Empire five centuries ago.

Castillo's election has spooked investors and scared wealthier Peruvians, fearful that his party will upend the economy with plans for a new constitution. He has also said he wants to hike taxes on mining to fund health and education reforms in the world's second-largest copper producer.

He reassured them on Wednesday there was "not the remotest" plan to nationalize industry but said he would seek "a new pact" with private investors.



Iran Receives 10th Russian Sputnik-V Vaccine Cargo

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran has taken delivery of the tenth batch of the Russian COVID-19 vaccine "Sputnik-V" amid its nationwide combat against the epidemic. The tenth shipment of the Russian-made Sputnik vaccine to fight the Covid-19 pandemic arrived at Tehran's International Imam Khomeini Airport on Thursday. The tenth consignment of the Russian coronavirus vaccine is comprising 100,000 doses of "Sputnik-V" vaccines made in Russia.

So far, one million doses of "Sputnik-V" vaccines have been delivered from Russia to Iran. Iran and Russia signed a contract in February 2020, for buying 2 million doses of Sputnik V vaccines, and late last month too, another contract for buying 60 million doses for vaccinating 30 million Iranians was finalized and signed that is scheduled to be sent to Iran from June to December 2021.



UNESCO Adds Turkey's 8,000-Year-Old Mound to Its World Heritage List

ANKARA (Dispatches) - A rich, 30-meter-high archaeological mound in southeastern Turkey dating back some 8,000 years has been added to the UNESCO World Heritage List, the Turkish Foreign Ministry has said.

The decision to add the Arslantepe Mound was taken during the Extended 44th UNESCO World Heritage Committee online session in Fuzhou, China, said a ministry statement.

Arslantepe, "Lion Hill" in English, has been on the UNESCO's World Heritage Tentative List since 2014, the statement reiterated, calling it one of Turkey's earliest religious and civil sites. With the mound, the number of Turkish sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List has reached 19.

The archaeological site of Arslantepe is located on the Malatya plain, 5 kilometers from the city center and 15 km from the Euphrates River, UNESCO's website said.

"It is a 4-hectare and 30-meter high archaeological mound dominating the plain and formed by the superimposition of settlements for millennia from at least the 6th millennium BCE to the late Roman period," UNESCO said.

The long history of the site, located at the crossroads of the main civilizations of the Near East, reveals crucial events and processes of change in connection with the contemporary developments in Mesopotamia, Anatolia and the South Caucasus.

More than 50 years of archaeological excavations by Rome's Sapienza University have brought to light rich material remains of the many civilizations that called the site home from their formation to their collapse, it added.

"This research has enlightened the millenarian history of the Upper Euphrates region and makes Arslantepe an exceptional testimony to crucial stages in the human history: the birth of hierarchical societies, that of the first centralized political and economic systems, the origin of bureaucracy and its first working system, the rise of a systematic control on human labor, in other words, the origin of power and the State," UNESCO said.

"The site also testifies to the fact that these crucial changes in human history took place for the first time over a large area including, besides Mesopotamia, the Euphrates region in Eastern Anatolia," it added.



Tourism and Culture Minister Mehmet Nuri Ersoy praised the decision. "We have had an important opportunity to promote Arslantepe Mound and Malatya more intensely, not only to Turkey but to the world," he said. Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu called Ersoy to congratulate. "In the upcoming period, we will continue our efforts to promote the cultural treasures of Anatolia and all our riches," he said during the phone call. "We are extremely happy that Arslantepe has found the place and value it very much deserves. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to this process," he added.

Pfizer Raises 2021 Outlook on Surging Covid-19 Vaccine Sales

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Pfizer lifted its annual revenue and profit projections Wednesday as it forecast the delivery of 500 million more Covid-19 vaccine doses compared with earlier expectations.

The two-shot inoculation accounted for more than 40 percent of Pfizer's sales in the second quarter, lifting revenues sharply compared with the year-ago period.

Pfizer Chief Executive Albert Bourla said more than a billion doses of the vaccine have been delivered, saying "the speed and efficiency of our efforts with BioNTech to help vaccinate the world against Covid-19 have been unprecedented."

The U.S. drugmaker, which has partnered with Germany's BioNTech on the vaccine, now estimates delivering 2.1 billion doses, generating \$33.5 billion in sales.

The company's May forecast was for \$26 billion in sales on 1.6 billion doses for the year. Pfizer said the pre-tax profit margin on the Covid-19 vaccine sales was in the "high-20s" in terms of percent, the same as the earlier forecast.

Quadrilateral Working Group on Chabahar Port to Meet This Year

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - A meeting of the India-Uzbekistan-Iran-Afghanistan quadrilateral working group on the joint use of Chabahar port is expected to be held later this year as part of New Delhi's efforts to ramp up regional connectivity initiatives.

India formed a special company in 2018 to operate one of the terminals of Iran's Chabahar port to improve connectivity to both Afghanistan and the Central Asian states. However, the operations of the port and efforts to acquire heavy equipment for the development of the facility have been impeded by American sanctions on Iran, even though the US has given a waiver for Chabahar.

"India has proposed to include the port in the framework of the International North-South Transport Corridor and has welcomed the formation of the India-Uzbekistan-Iran-Afghanistan quadrilateral working group on the joint use of Chabahar port. The meeting is likely to take place in the later half of this year," India's external affairs ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi told a weekly news briefing.

Since December 2018, when India began operations at Shahid Beheshti terminal at Chabahar port, the facility has handled 134 vessels, 14,258 TEUs of containers and more than 2.08 million tonnes of bulk and general cargo.

The cargo included humanitarian supplies such as wheat sent by India to Afghanistan during the Covid-19 pandemic.

India's External affairs minister S Jaishankar had highlighted the practical steps taken by India since 2016 to operationalise Chabahar port at a meeting on regional connectivity hosted in Tashkent by the Uzbekistan government on July 16.

In his speech at the event, Jaishankar said Chabahar port provides secure, viable and unhindered access to the sea for Central Asian countries. "Its efficacy is now clearly proven," he added.

U.S. Refused to...

FROM PAGE 1

Since May, Iran has been attending talks in the Austrian capital with the remaining signatories of the agreement, except the United States, in order to explore the prospect of the deal's potential revival following severe sabotage by Washington.

Gharibabadi went on to offer some details about the controversial provision and the reasons why it was completely unnecessary.

The West alleges that the so-called provision "guarantees the JCPOA's nuclear non-proliferation" goals and also mandates certain "trust-building measures" among the Persian Gulf region's countries, the Iranian envoy said.

This is while there is no need for either, the envoy said. The nuclear deal has its own timetables that ensure implementation of its purposes, he said, adding the other demand runs strictly counter to the talks' agenda too.

Therefore, the Iranian side roundly rejected the proposal since this insistence "showed that they still consider the nuclear agreement to be a bridge enabling their interference in irrelevant issues such as Iran's missile work and its regional affairs," noted the diplomat.

"The purpose they seek through this is to start addressing these [irrelevant] issues [on various occasions] and consider them to be indivisible parts of the nuclear deal, and [therefore] lay the groundwork for their interference in these areas," Gharibabadi wrote.

Thus, wherever, the Western side stopped short of its goals, it would be able to start blaming Iran and begin trying to put it under more pressure, he cautioned.

The official echoed the Leader's remarks during the Wednesday meeting that such insistence on the part of the Americans had come while they, themselves, had "refused to retrace even one step towards reversing their adversarial stance concerning Iran."

Among many other things, the diplomat said, they conditioned the lifting of some of the sanctions and the removal of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) from their so-called blacklist on Iran's resigning itself to the provision.

Two Rockets Fired...

FROM PAGE 1

The resistance groups demand the withdrawal of all American forces, especially the air force, over their destabilizing activities as part of a law adopted by the parliament in January 2020 in the aftermath of the U.S. military's assassination of two key commanders of the fight against Daesh, Iran's Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the deputy head of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU).

In the name of God

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT



ESCO
Esfahan Steel Company

Brief Notice of International Tender No. 39476

Esfahan Steel Co. intends to purchase 10 set's Refractory Materials for the Converter through international tender No.39476.

Prospective bidders specialized and experienced in the said area may visit Esfahan Steel Co.'s Website at www.esfahansteel.ir (Tender & Bids, Suppliers Comprehensive System) to get the tender documents no later than 31.July.2021.

Date of opening envelopes "A" & "B": 01.August.2021

For further information, prospective bidders may contact us via the following

phone No.: +98-31-52572017

Public Relation of Esfahan Steel Co.

JCPOA Apparently...

FROM PAGE 1

Blinken's remarks came while it was the U.S. which violated the deal and pulled out of it and the other Western signatories followed the path of their ally the U.S. While the Islamic Republic of Iran should set condition for the U.S. for its rejoin to the JCPOA, it is the U.S. which rudely seeks its excessive demands.

As the Supreme Leader has reiterated the Western countries have even been trying to advance a provision that could pave the way for their meddling in the Islamic Republic's affairs.

The nuclear deal has its own timetables that ensure implementation of its purposes and the other demand runs strictly counter to the talks' agenda too.

Therefore, the Iranian side roundly rejected the proposal since this insistence "showed that they still consider the nuclear agreement to be a bridge enabling their interference in irrelevant issues such as Iran's missile work and its regional affairs."

Gharibabadi echoed the Leader's remarks during the Wednesday meeting that such insistence on the part of the Americans had come while they, themselves, had "refused to retrace even one step towards reversing their adversarial stance concerning Iran."

Tehran would resolutely stand by its assertion that neither the talks nor the nuclear deal are allowed to feature any irrelevant subject matters such as Iran's defensive missile program or its regional influence.

Now the American paper The Wall Street Journal in a report has claimed that the United States is planning a sanctions campaign against Iran's defensive drones and guided missiles program, six months after the administration of Joe Biden, who had promised to rejoin the Iran nuclear deal and remove anti-Iran sanctions, assumed office. So the U.S. is to show its true arrogance nature but this time under Biden through increasing pressure on Iran.

The past experience shows that Iran should not trust on the West and it should take a very cautious and wise action against the West's move and one cannot expect a bright future for the JCPOA because the U.S. excessive demands and its hostile attitude against the Islamic Republic of Iran is the major hurdle in front of any fair deal.

As the Leader repeatedly reiterated domestic programs should in no way be tied to Western states under any circumstances due to the proven failure of such an approach because the U.S. and its allies will not leave their hostile stance against Iran and will not move even one step forward during the talks and for this reason Iran should not retreat any inch from its rights otherwise it will make the West much rude ask for more irrelevant and excessive demands.

Tehran Slams...

FROM PAGE 1

Ershadi made it clear that such "unwavering support" for Israel by the U.S. is against the inherent rights of the oppressed Palestinians, including their right to life, dignity, liberation, self-defense, self-determination, and to establish their own independent State.

"The Security Council must put an immediate end to this unjustifiable and unacceptable trend and to compel the Israeli regime to cease, immediately and completely, all its crimes against Palestinians; remove the unlawful and inhumane blockade of the Gaza Strip; end the occupation of all Palestinian territories, the occupied Syrian Golan and parts of Lebanon; and also, to hold that regime accountable for committing the gravest international crimes for over several decades," the Iranian envoy added.

She said the Islamic Republic of Iran condemns the Israeli regime in the strongest terms and reiterates its support for the just cause of the Palestinian people and the full realization of all their inalienable rights, particularly their right to self-determination and to establish an independent Palestinian state, with al-Quds as its capital. Elsewhere in her remarks, Ershadi said the Israeli regime's representative once again played victim in his statement on Wednesday and accused others in the region and the world in order to distract attention from its brutal crimes.

"Instead of proposing to address the challenges of others, the Israeli regime must stop murder and bloodshed and cease expanding its terrorist activities to the entire region," she said, rejecting Israel's accusations regarding Iran's peaceful nuclear program as "completely absurd, irrelevant and baseless." The accusations, she said, are aimed at covering up the dangers posed by the Israeli regime's nuclear weapons to the region and beyond.

"To remove this threat, the international community must compel that regime to renounce the possession of nuclear weapons, join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and put all its nuclear activities and facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Other accusations of the Israeli regime's representative were mere fabrication and disinformation too," she added.

U.S. Plans Sanctions...

FROM PAGE 1

The Islamic Republic has maintained that it will not reverse its nuclear steps taken beyond the agreement's limits until the U.S. removes all of the sanctions it imposed on Tehran after the landmark deal, officially called the JCPOA, went into force in early 2016.

The Journal reported last week that the Biden administration was considering new sanctions on Iran's oil sales to China if the ongoing talks in Vienna over the JCPOA's revival fail.



Malen Joins Dortmund After Sancho Departure

BERLIN (Dispatches) - PSV Eindhoven's Netherlands attacker Donyell Malen has joined Borussia Dortmund until 2026 as Jadon Sancho's replacement, the German club announced on Tuesday.

According to Kicker magazine, Dortmund have paid 30 million euros (\$35.5 million) for the 22-year-old who made two assists in four matches for his country during Euro 2020.

"Borussia Dortmund are a top European club that are always fighting at the top of the Bundesliga and have high

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Chelsea Sign Goalkeeper Bettinelli

LONDON (Dispatches) - Chelsea have signed goalkeeper Marcus Bettinelli on a free transfer, the Premier League club announced.

The 29-year-old left nearby west London side Fulham at the end of last season after making more than 100 appearances in over a decade with the Cottagers.

Bettinelli has now agreed a two-year deal at Stamford Bridge where he will compete for the goalkeeping position with Edouard Mendy and Kepa Arrizabalaga.

8 IRAN NEWS

SPORTS

SATURDAY JULY 31, 2021

Djokovic Advances; Medvedev Knocked Out of Olympic Games

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Novak Djokovic eased into the Tokyo Olympics men's tennis semi-finals on Thursday with a straight-sets thrashing of Japanese hope Kei Nishikori.

The world number one, chasing a calendar Golden Grand Slam, ended home interest in the tennis with a ruthless 6-2, 6-0 victory in only 70 minutes.

Djokovic has never won the Olympic singles title, with a bronze medal in 2008 his best result at the Games, but will face either Alexander Zverev or Jeremy Chardy in the last four.

The 34-year-old Serb, who has already captured the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon titles this season, was never in trouble against Nishikori, who made 16 unforced errors.

The former world number four did save two match points in the final game, but Djokovic made no mistake on the next opportunity.

The quarter-final was played in cooler conditions than earlier in the tournament after Djokovic lobbied organizers to change the schedule, moving the day's start time from 11:00 am local time (0200 GMT) to 3:00 pm.

Djokovic has never won the Olympic singles title, with a bronze medal in 2008 his best result at the Games, but will face either Alexander Zverev or Jeremy Chardy in the last four.

"I'm very happy, my best performance in the tournament," said the top seed.

"Matches are not getting easier, but my level of tennis is getting better and better.

"I've done that many, many times in my career. I know that I'm (the) kind of player that the further the tournament goes, the better I'm feeling on the court."

The former world number four did save



two match points in the final game, but Djokovic made no mistake on the next opportunity.

Meanwhile world number two Daniil Medvedev was knocked out of the men's Olympic tennis competition on Thursday by Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta in the quarter-finals.

Russian Medvedev, who was hoping to meet top seed Djokovic in the final, paid for an error-strewn display with a 6-2, 7-6 (7/5) loss.

Sixth seed Carreno Busta will take on Medvedev's compatriot Karen Khachanov for a place in the final, after his 7-6 (7/4), 4-6, 6-3 win over Frenchman Ugo Humbert.

Medvedev made 26 unforced errors and hit only 12 winners.

Carreno Busta, who famously knocked Djokovic out of last year's US Open when the Serb was defaulted, is playing in his first Olympics and looking to become only the second Spanish singles gold medallist after Rafael Nadal, in 2008.

Meanwhile Switzerland's Belinda Bencic came through a marathon match against Kazakh player Elena Rybakina on Thursday to reach the women's tennis final at the Olympics and keep her bid for double gold alive.

The 24-year-old saved five set points in a 73-minute opening set before winning 7-6 (7/2), 4-6, 6-3 after almost two-and-three-quarter hours in the searing Tokyo heat.

Bencic will face either Elina Svitolina or Marketa Vondrousova in the singles final.

The ninth seed is bidding to become the fifth player to reach finals in both singles and doubles at a summer Games since tennis was reintroduced to the Olympics in 1988.

Celtic Crash

Out of Champions League In Denmark

LONDON (Dispatches) - Celtic failed in their latest Champions League campaign Wednesday, going down 2-1 after extra-time and 3-2 on aggregate at Denmark's Midtjylland in the second qualifying round with defiant coach Ange Postecoglou insisting: "I take responsibility."

Celtic, the first British club ever to be crowned European champions in 1967, getting in a year ahead of Manchester United, had only themselves to blame as they squandered the lead to drop into the far less lucrative Europa League, where they will now take on Czech side Jablonec.

"Catastrophic means the end -- it's far from the end," newly-arrived Postecoglou said.

"It's been suggested that the club is falling apart. That's not the case. I can't ask more of the players. I take responsibility, I don't blame people."

Callum McGregor fired in a scorcher to give them hope, volleying home following a corner to put Celtic ahead three minutes after half-time.

James Forrest should then have all but killed the tie, only to fluff a gilt-edged chance for the visitors just after coming on.

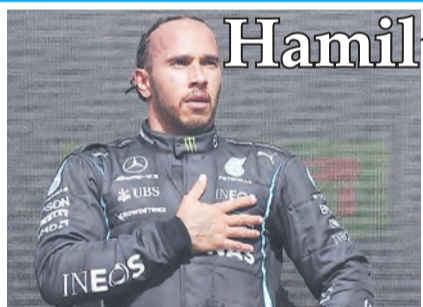
The Glaswegians lived to regret that as Midtjylland drew level just after the hour as Awer Mabil, with 17 Australia caps to his credit, headed beyond keeper Scott Bain.

Celtic promptly fell behind on the night and on aggregate four minutes into the first period of extra-time, Raphael Onyedika firing home from close range amid confusion in the Celtic defence after a freekick routine.

The Danes now go on to face experienced Dutch outfit PSV Eindhoven, who won 2-1 away at Turkey's Galatasaray for a 7-2 aggregate success, in the third qualifying round.

Celtic must now recover in time for this weekend's start of the Scottish Premiership season. They face Hearts on Saturday.

In other games, Sparta Prague came from 2-1 down in the away leg to oust Rapid Vienna with a 2-0 home return and 1991 European champions Red Star Belgrade thrashed the Kazakhs of Kairat 5-0 to advance 6-2. Elsewhere, Greek side Olympiakos won 1-0 at Neftchi Baku of Azerbaijan to complete a 2-0 victory.



Hamilton and Mercedes Roll Out Diversity Drive

LONDON (Dispatches) - Seven-time world champion Formula 1 driver Lewis Hamilton and his team Mercedes said on Tuesday they had launched a diversity drive called 'Accelerate 25'.

The aim is to have 25 per cent of new starters in their team to come from under-represented groups until the end of 2025.

Hamilton has been a vocal activist for the 'Black Lives Matter' movement and is behind the eponymous Hamilton commission that did the background study to

establish the aims of Accelerate 25.

"Mercedes have long supported my ambition to improve diversity and inclusion within the motorsport industry," said Hamilton.

"Diverse workforces are not only more successful but are also the morally correct approach for any industry," Hamilton said.

"For 15 years, I have remained one of the few Black employees within Formula 1, and I am proud that my work with Mercedes is going to change that for the better."

The 36-year-old driver launched the Hamilton commission with the Royal Academy of Engineering last June with the aim of making motorsport "as diverse as the complex and multicultural world we live in".

Murray Casts Doubt on Olympic Future

LONDON (Dispatches) - Andy Murray said he was unsure if he would play at another Olympics after his bid for a third gold medal ended with a quarter-final defeat in the men's doubles.

Murray, a two-time Olympic singles champion, and partner Joe Salisbury lost 4-6, 7-6 (7/2), 10-7 to Croatia's Marin Cilic and Ivan Dodig.

The British pair led Cilic and Dodig by a set and a break but suffered a late collapse as the Croatians prevailed in a deciding tie-break.

"I don't know. I don't know if I'll get the opportunity to play again," said Murray, asked if he would appear at a fifth Olympics in Paris in 2024.

"I love every minute of playing the Olympics. I wish that today would have gone differently. I had another chance with Joe to win a medal. We were so close and that is just disappointing.

"There was some stuff I wish I could have done at the end of the match to try and help out more. But yeah, very disappointing."

Murray pulled out of the singles in Tokyo due to a muscle strain. The three-time Grand Slam winner won gold in the event at London 2012 and Rio 2016.

"I don't regret that decision," he said.

"I think we put ourselves in a really good position to win and do well here. This is the one -- it hurts a lot losing that one because you get through it and you get two matches for a medal. We were just so close."

Murray was bidding for a fourth Olympic medal, having also won silver in mixed doubles alongside Laura Robson in 2012.

"I hate losing. I wanted to try and win a medal with Joe," he said.



Osaka Says Home Olympic Defeat "Painful"

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka conceded the pressure of trying to win an Olympic gold at home was a "bit much" after a 6-1, 6-4 defeat to Marketa Vondrousova ended her title dreams on Tuesday.

Osaka, who lit the Olympic cauldron and was one of the faces of the Games, struggled in an error-strewn display that blew the draw wide open after the earlier exits of world number one Ashleigh Barty and third seed Aryna Sabalenka.

"How disappointed am I? I mean, I'm disappointed in every loss, but I feel like this one sucks more than the others," said the four-time Grand Slam winner.

Asked what went wrong, she replied: "Everything -- if you watch the match then you would probably see. I feel like there's a lot of things that I counted on that I couldn't rely on today."

The third-round defeat follows a turbulent few months for Osaka, who abandoned her French Open campaign in May after refusing to attend press conferences, citing the need to preserve her mental health.

Osaka also skipped Wimbledon, saying she had been battling depression and anxiety, before returning in Tokyo for her first Olympics, including her starring role at the opening ceremony.

But ultimately the sky-high expectations placed on the world's highest-paid female athlete proved tough to handle.

"I definitely feel like there was a lot of pressure for this. I think it is maybe because I haven't played in the Olympics before and for the first year (it) was a bit much," said Osaka.

