

Health Ministry Announced on Sunday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 126,303 With 177 More Iranians Killed by the Deadly Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

TEDPIX, the Main Index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Lost 35,349 Points to 1.34m on Sunday; as Reported, over 6.031b Securities Worth 38.126 Trillion Rials (About \$907.76m) Were Traded at the TSE

VOL. XXVII, No. 7349 TEHRAN Price 40,000 Rials

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MONDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2021 - ABAN 10, 1400

2 DOMESTIC

Islamic Republic Not to Tie Iranians' Fate To Other States



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Nuclear Disarmament Possible Only If There Is Political Will

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - On the occasion of the International Disarmament Week, Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations Majid Takht Ravanchi said that global nuclear disarmament would be done if there was political will to do so.

Iran's biennial draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations agreed to at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the NPT" was approved on Thursday October 28 in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly.

The draft resolution would be introduced to the General Assembly next month to be put on a final vote. Takht Ravanchi said on the potential timing and mechanisms provisioned in the draft resolution that it was a subject that should be decided on in Review Conferences of the NPT and among nuclear states themselves.

When the NPT was implemented in 1970, he said, the nuclear weapons states party to the treaty committed to eliminate their nuclear weapons, but they have refused to accept any timing on political grounds.

He noted that the quality and conditions for possible use of nuclear weapons have changed in contrast to the commitments of nuclear weapons states, although the number of such weapons has decreased.

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Israel, U.S. Likely Behind Cyberattack on Gas Stations



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The head of Iran's Passive Defense Organization considers the United States and the Israeli regime to have been behind the cyberattack that caused a temporary outage at gas stations in large cities across the Islamic Republic.

"From our point of view, this attack has definitely been carried out by the Americans and the Zionists," Brigadier General Gholam-Reza Jalali said in a televised interview.

The attack targeted "the middleware" in the fuel delivery systems, he said, describing the type of attack as very complicated and difficult to fend off.

"If the attack had taken place in the hardware layer, there would have been a need for infiltration," meaning either the company that has manufactured the software would have been responsible or a disrupting piece of equipment would have to be installed to make the attack possible, the official noted.

The brief outage was caused on Tuesday. Local news agencies reported at the time that long queues that had been formed in front of gas stations in large Iranian cities had cleared up after Oil Ministry authorities dispatched teams to the forecourts to enable offline fuel delivery.

Three hours following the attack, 30 percent of the gas stations resumed their offline services, while 12 hours after the attack, 60 percent returned to the normal status, Jalali said.

"Continued operation of the [country's] infrastructures is the Passive Defense Organization's redline because it affects the people's lives," he noted, adding, "Serious infrastructural cyber warfare has started. We should take it seriously and rectify our areas of weakness."

He expounded on the missions of the Passive Defense Organization, saying one of the last measures adopted by the organization is to study the recent cyberattack on the country's gas stations as well as moves to ensure the security of the nation's cyber-infrastructure.

The top general said the hacking attack on the pumps took place at the middleware level, "which is a very complicated attack and difficult to counter."

"The cyberattack on billboards was also connected to the attack on the fuel distribution system," he noted.

He said elements inside the country may have been involved in the cyberattacks, adding security authorities are probing the issue.

Last year, as many as 1,400 drills were held to reinforce the country's cyber defense prowess, he noted, adding that so far this year 66 such maneuvers have gone underway.

3 DOMESTIC

Tehran, Dushanbe Set Roadmap for Economic Cooperation



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ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian



Lebanon, the New Scapegoat For Saudis' Failure

In less than one week after the birthday anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and holding the Islamic Unity Week in Tehran and worldwide, a new conspiracy was shaped and as usual Saudi Arabia with its controversial human rights record has been behind this conspiracy and has created rift among Muslims and against Lebanon and this country's Hizbollah group.

A couple of days ago first Saudi Arabia ordered the Lebanese ambassador to the country to leave over the "offensive" remarks made by Lebanese Information Minister George Kordahi regarding the Saudi-led coalition against Yemen.

Kordahi said in an interview with an online show affiliated with Qatar's Al Jazeera network that the Yemen war was "futile" and said it was time to end the war. He also defended Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement, saying the Houthis were "defending themselves... against an external aggression," adding that "homes, villages, funerals and weddings were being bombed" by the coalition.

The interview was recorded on August 5 before Kordahi was appointed as minister, but it was aired on Monday and Saudis took advantage of it.

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement on Friday that it had given Lebanon's ambassador 48 hours to leave Riyadh and had recalled its ambassador to Lebanon for consultations as well. Now it is said that other Arab states like Bahrain, Kuwait and the UAE have joined Saudi Arabia and have expelled or called for departure of Lebanon's ambassadors. They also summoned their ambassadors to Lebanon to show consolidation with Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia and some of its regional allies, backed by the U.S. and other Western powers, have been waging a devastating war on Yemen since March 2015 to reinstall Yemen's former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, a staunch ally of Riyadh, and eliminate the popular Ansarullah movement. The kingdom has also imposed a ban on all imports from Lebanon, the ministry said.

With such a move, Saudi Arabia actually has targeted both Lebanon and Yemen to put pressure on Hizbullah and Ansarullah groups. Saudis seem to be playing on the West's court to increase pressure on Lebanon government which is struggling with the current economic and social crisis in the country.

Iran's dispatching of tankers of fuel to Lebanon seems to have enraged the West, and as usual Saudi Arabia as the lackey of the West in the region has been used as a pawn against Lebanon and for creating rift among Muslims and Kordahi's remarks is nothing but a pretext to fan the flame of tension between Shiites and Sunnis.

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U.S., E3 Urge Iran to Return To Negotiation Table

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The United States and its top European allies have continued to act in bad faith against Iran, endangering the prospects of diplomatic attempts to salvage the U.S.-abandoned Iran nuclear agreement, even after Tehran announced its readiness to resume negotiations in Vienna.

In a joint statement on Saturday, the leaders of the United States, Germany, France, and Britain said they shared a "grave and growing concern that, while Iran halted negotiations on a return to the JCPOA (nuclear deal) since June, it has accelerated the pace of provocative nuclear steps, such as the production of highly enriched uranium and enriched uranium metal."

The statement marks the second major wrong-headed step after Tehran's renewed determination to resume the talks aimed at removing the U.S. sanctions, which could set the stage for revival of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Action (JCPOA), with the first being the announcement of fresh sanctions on the Islamic Republic a day earlier, which, according to Iran, proved that the U.S. "is not trustworthy at all."

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International Conference on Steelmaking & Continuous Casting

2nd ISCC(2022)

- Steel making metallurgy and processes(EAF)
- Optimization of raw materials and ferroalloys
- Secondary metallurgy and processes
- Refractories and their applications
- New developments and advanced technologies in steel continuous casting machines
- Casting and solidification of continuous casting products
- Fluid flow and solidification
- New developments in simulation and modelling
- Microstructure, and properties of continuous casting products
- Surface defects
- Mold fluxes and lubrication
- Plant enhancement technologies
- Energy management
- Artificial intelligence, big data and industry 4.0 solution
- Sustainability and environmental challenges
- Circular economy solutions

22 & 23. Feb. 2022
Hormozgan Steel Company
Bandar Abbas, Iran

For more information
visit the following site
<https://iscc.hosco.ir>
Email : iscc@hosco.ir
Mailing address:
6th floor, Hormoz Science and
Technology Park, Bandar Abbas, Iran

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Heads of 3 Branches of Iran Gov't Convene for a Meeting

TEHRAN (MNA) – The heads of the three branches of the Iranian government held a meeting on Saturday afternoon, hosted and chaired by President Ayatollah Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi.

The heads of the executive, judicial and legislative branches of the Iranian government President Ebrahim Raeisi, Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Eje'i and Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, respectively discussed and consulted on the most important issues of the country, including economic issues in a meeting hosted by the president.

According to the report by the Iranian Presidency, the three top officials had the economy on their agenda in today's meeting.

Islamic Republic Not to Tie Iranians' Fate To Other States

TEHRAN (IRNA) – Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian has underlined that the diplomatic apparatus of the Islamic Republic will not tie the fate of the country and the Iranian people to the 2015 nuclear deal or any foreign state, because common interests are considered as criteria of interactions.

On Sunday, Iran Newspaper interviewed Amirabdollahian on the nuclear talks following his return to Tehran from his regional trips to Russia, Lebanon, and Syria.

The Iranian top diplomat stated that Tehran has drawn a sublime mechanism to pursue implementation of the regional cooperation motto, adding that the Islamic Republic will stand against the United States' Iranophobic propaganda campaign.

According to the foreign minister, the lifting of anti-Iran sanctions will bring about positive impacts, so the speculations that the new Iranian negotiating team would follow up a way that would lead to a standstill have nothing to do with realities on the ground.

He went on to say that the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi outlined some keywords for its foreign policy, including a balanced foreign policy as well as an active, intelligent and dynamic diplomacy.

The Islamic Republic attaches importance to relations with neighboring states and countries in Asia, he said, adding that Tehran will pursue a dynamic diplomacy, when it comes to Europe, stressing that Latin America and Africa will not be forgotten.

The Foreign Ministry prioritizes cultural interactions with other nations, Amirabdollahian noted.

Cooperation with international organizations is very important to Iran, he said, adding that regional and international organizations can help Iran pursue its own interests.



As to balance, he mentioned that the 13th administration in Tehran is keen on maintaining balance in its relations with the East and the West, emphasizing that the Islamic Republic will not tie all of its foreign policy issues to China and Russia, while it will prioritize Asia-oriented foreign policy.

The Islamic Republic is committed to its slogan of "No East, No West" to maintain independence, when it comes to dealing with foreign powers, he noted.

The top diplomat also said that returning to the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), needs serious determination among American authorities; President Joe Biden can issue an executive order to return to the point that his predecessor Donald Trump withdrew from the international agreement.

The problem here is that Biden pretends that he is against his predecessor's foreign policies, because when it comes to Iran the U.S. president pursues the same policies that Trump had, the Iranian foreign minister argued.

Iran plans to come back to the negotiating table, but the Iranian officials are weighing the ways they can restart talks on the revival of the nuclear accord, he said.

Amirabdollahian further noted that Iran's economic development should not be tied to nuclear negotiations and the JCPOA, so the country requires other channels to nullify negative impacts of the U.S.'s sanctions.

Iran, Saudi Arabia Reached Preliminary Agreements in Talks

TEHRAN (MNA) – Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Saeed Khatibzadeh said that preliminary agreements in negotiations between Iran and Saudi Arabia have been reached and the two sides are waiting for the finalization of talks.

Four rounds of talks have taken place between Iran and Saudi Arabia, but contacts between the two countries have never been disconnected, said Khatibzadeh said.

Stating that the two sides had initial agreements during the four rounds of talks, he added that preliminary agreements in negotiations between Iran and Saudi Arabia have been reached and the two countries are waiting for the finalization of talks.

Regarding the reopening of the embassies of the two countries, Khatibzadeh said that still, it will take some time for the two countries to resume their activities in Tehran and Riyadh, however, it is possible to start the process of reopening the embassies soon.

Speaking in an interview with Reuters on Saturday night on the sideline of the G20 Rome Summit said, Saudi Arabian Foreign Faisal bin Farhan said that bilateral talks between Riyadh and Tehran have not progressed tangibly.

"We've had four rounds of talks so far. The talks are cordial but remain in an exploratory vein. We continue to hope that they will produce tangible progress ... but so far, we have not made sufficient progress to be optimistic," Prince Faisal said.

Asked if there will be another round of talks, the minister said nothing had been scheduled, "but we are open to continue".

Swedish FM Urged to Heed UN Rights Experts' Report

TEHRAN (PressTV) - A senior Iranian official has reacted to the remarks made by Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde about the situation of human rights in Iran, drawing her attention to a report of UN experts on "over-compliance" with U.S. sanctions harming Iranians' right to health, after a Swedish bandage maker decided to halt shipments to Iran.

"I draw the attention of Sweden FM on October 19 statements of several UN Human Rights Experts titled 'Sweden Over-compliance with US sanctions harms Iranians' right to health'," Kazem Gharibabadi, the secretary-general of Iran's Human Rights Office, said in a tweet on Saturday.

Gharibabadi also included parts of the UN statement in his tweet.

In her tweet on Friday, the Swedish foreign minister claimed that the situation of human rights in Iran is very serious, saying she and the Swiss government has continuously brought up the issue in talks with Iranian representatives.

The experts raised the alarm, in the wake of a decision by a Swedish company to halt shipments to Iranian patients suffering from a severe and life-threatening rare skin condition – epidermolysis bullosa (EB) – which causes extremely painful wounds. The firm's produced bandage reportedly offers the most effective treatment to alleviate pain and prevent life-threatening infections.

They emphasized that the Swedish company's decision, along with the actions of the country's government, violates their international responsibility to ensure the entire range of human rights.

Enhanced Trade with Neighbors a Main Goal

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said expansion of economic relations with other countries, especially the neighbors, constitutes a major objective in Tehran's foreign policy agenda.

In a meeting with the secretary of affairs of Iran's special free trade zones on Sunday, Amirabdollahian said one of the main goals in the administration's foreign policy agenda is to boost economic and trade relations with foreign countries, particularly with the neighbors.

He said the Foreign Ministry has submitted a plan to

the Parliament about employing the diplomatic capacities to promote economic cooperation with other countries and has begun to strengthen the economic divisions in the ministry and the Iranian diplomatic missions abroad.

A number of countries are willing to make investment in Iran's free economic and trade zones, Amirabdollahian noted, highlighting the great capacities available among Iranian expatriates.

He also expressed the Foreign Ministry's readiness to step up cooperation and attract foreign investment in the free trade zones.

Iran to Hold Exhibition in Syria

TEHRAN (MNA) - Syrian Capital Damascus is going to host the second exclusive exhibition of Iranian goods during November 29-December 3, IRIB reported.

The exhibition features companies active in a variety of fields including hospital and medical equipment, medicine and treatment, construction industry, architecture, agriculture, livestock and poultry, oil, gas and petrochemicals, police and security equipment, as well as food, water, and electricity.

The steel industry, informatics, doors and windows, elevators, shop equipment and chain stores, motorcycles, automotive industry, textile industry, home appliances, and banking and insurance are also among the areas represented in the mentioned exhibition.

Over the past few years and since the end of the war in Syria, Tehran and Damascus have been taking major steps for expansion of mutual trade ties, and Syria has become one of the major focal points regarding the Iranian government's plans for boosting non-oil exports to the region.

The two countries have been pursuing the implementation of a free trade agreement signed between the two sides back in 2010 after years of postponement.

According to Farzad Piltan, the director-general of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO)'s Office of Arabian and African Countries, the implementation of this agreement with Syria, which the Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Reza Fatemi Amin is scheduled to pursue during a recent visit to Syria, means that the two countries' traders will be exempt from current export and import restrictions and bans in their exchanges.

University Students Protest Saudi Aggression in Yemen

TEHRAN (IRNA) - A group of students from Tehran University and a group of Lebanese youth staged a protest gathering in front of Lebanon's Embassy in Tehran on Sunday condemning Saudi aggression in Yemen.

Through their placards, the protestors called for bringing a halt to the Saudi aggression against the Yemeni people and the brutal massacre in Yemen.

They also expressed support for remarks made by the Lebanese information minister who has called for an end to Saudi-led aggression and war against Yemen.

One of the protestors told IRNA that Saudi Arabia has mounted an unequal war against Yemen, the war that has led to the killing of the oppressed Yemeni people and children in that country.

Some protestors have brought photos from Secretary-General of Lebanon's Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah and carried flags of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Yemen, and Lebanon.

Remarks made by George Kordahi, the Lebanese information minister, have had reactions in Lebanon and around the world.

The Lebanese minister has said he would not apologize for his remarks; and would tell the truth.

After the event, Saudi Arabia expelled the Lebanese ambassador from Riyadh.



FM Appoints New Deputy For Legal Affairs

TEHRAN (MNA) – Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has appointed Reza Janafi as the new Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs.



The Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian issued a decree on Sunday to appoint Reza Janafi as the new Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs.

It is noteworthy that Reza Najafi was the acting deputy foreign minister for legal and international affairs before.

Najafi, who is a veteran and was held captive by the Iraqi Saddam regime in the 1980s, has previously served as the head of Iranian diplomatic mission to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

MP Calls for Enhanced Relations With Tashkent

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Chairman of Iran-Uzbekistan Parliamentary Friendship Group Gholamreza Nouri Ghezlejh stressed the need for expansion of relations between Iran and Uzbekistan in all areas.

Nouri Ghezlejh is on a visit to Uzbekistan to supervise the country's presidential election.

He made the remarks during a meeting on Saturday with Chairman of Uzbekistan's Legislative Chamber Nouredine Jan Ismailov.

He expressed hope that the country's upcoming election will be held successfully.

The Iranian Member of Parliament called for the promotion of parliamentary cooperation between Tehran and Tashkent in various economic and transit areas and on the Afghan issue as well.

The Uzbek side, for his part, urged the need for further consultations between officials from both countries.

During the meeting, Nouri Ghezlejh conveyed an invitation message of Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf to his Uzbek counterpart.

Some 13m Tons of Crude Steel Produced in H1

TEHRAN (MNA)- Over 12.888 million tons of crude steel was produced in Iran during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), the data released by Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry indicate.

After the withdrawal of the United States from Iran's nuclear deal, the Islamic Republic has faced sanctions in various industries, including steel sector.

The United States has sanctioned entities and individuals associated with Iran's steel industry.

In early January, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) added twelve Iranian producers of steel and other metal products to the list of sanctions.

However, at that time, the U.S. experts said that the Islamic Republic of Iran had resisted the so-called U.S. maximum pressure policy for the past three years, and the Trump administration had failed to achieve any of its goals in the face of sanctions against Iran.

Also, those active in Iran's steel sector believed that sanctions against Iran which were in place for 40 years had nothing to do with the Iranian industry.

IAEA Under Influence of U.S., Zionists

TEHRAN (IP) - Head of Iran's Parliament Energy Commission said that the Zionist regime and America influence the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other international bodies.

Fereydon Abbasi, Iranian nuclear scientist and former head of Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said: "The results of the inspections by the IAEA's inspectors are accessible for Western experts."

Head of Iran's Parliament Energy Commission added: "IAEA inspectors utilize data and information from countries, including Iran, because many of the IAEA's experts and staff are US and Israeli nationals or have been bribed by them."

Stressing that the IAEA is not credible for a country like Iran, the Abbasi added, "Iran is under lots of pressure and various sanctions, so IAEA must provide strict protections for Iran's data."



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:47
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:27
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:02
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:27

62. And (Joseph) told his servants to put their stock-in-trade (with which they had bartered) into their saddle-bags, so they should know it only when they returned to their people, in order that they might come back.
Surah 12, Joseph (62)

Tehran, Dushanbe Set Roadmap for Economic Cooperation

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The Head of American and European Office of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) Mohammadreza Karimzadeh said that Iran and Tajikistan held a meeting to prepare the roadmap for their economic cooperation in order to increase the bilateral trade in line with the agreements of their presidents which was made during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit in Tajikistan.

Karimzadeh said that in the meeting, the framework of the documents on the roadmap for cooperation between Iran and Tajikistan in the fields of investment, transportation, industrial and mining, trade, banking and customs affairs were discussed.

He added some other issues like the importance of employing the mechanism of barter trade with Tajikistan, banking cooperation and the latest developments in the field of investment were discussed.

Karimzadeh also said that the two sides also signed the deal for exchange of technical and economic cooperation as well as electronic information for the customs affairs and both sides emphasized implementation of these documents in the roadmap.

He went on to say that in the meeting both sides called for more cooperation and involvements from the private sector companies in those fields. They also discussed



the problems of Iranian companies especially in the field of the technical and engineering services especially in the mining industries and mother technologies.

Karimzadeh noted that Iran's exports to Tajikistan in the first half of the year has increased by 140% and has reached \$17m.

During the SCO Summit in September, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi expressed hope that the 500-million-dollar trading target between Iran and Tajikistan would unlock a new era of bilateral relations.

Speaking in the meeting of the high-level delegations of Iran and Tajikistan in Dushanbe, Raisi hailed the favorable, successful holding of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit on Friday and the hospitality of the Tajik President Emomali Rahmon and government.

He welcomed the Tajik President's proposal to elevate trading and transfer of Iran's private sector engineering and technical achievements to Tajikistan, proposing formation of a working group to review previous agreements between Iran and Tajikistan, and to find out why some of them have not been implemented or were slow in action.

Elsewhere in the meeting, President Rahmon described Raisi's trip to Tajikistan a historical visit and expressed regret that trading between Iran and Tajikistan has decreased to 57 million dollars a year, despite 160 cooperation documents signed in the past.

He expressed hope, however, that the two countries can achieve the 500-million-dollar target with increasing contacts and meetings of officials.

Kazakhstan Embassy to Hold a Webinar On Dialogue Among Religions

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Embassy of Kazakhstan in Tehran on Tuesday will hold an online roundtable on “Dialogue among Religions on Course of Peace and Coordination.”



The Embassy of Kazakhstan in a statement announced holding of this event virtually at 09:30 a.m. of Tuesday November 2.

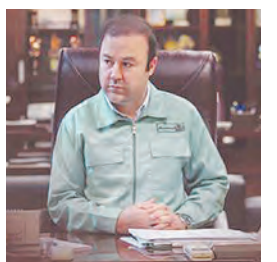
Heads and experts of Nazarbayev Center for Development of Interfaith and International Dialogue of Kazakhstan as well as experts of Center for Dialogue of Religions and Civilization of Islamic Culture and Communication Organization of Iran and some other scholars and professors of Iran and Kazakhstan are to attend this event wherein they will deliver speeches and exchange views.

It is predicted in this roundtable the important role of dialogue among religions for establishing peace and coordination in today's world to be discusses.

HOSCO to Hold 2nd Int'l Conference On Steelmaking and Continuous Casting

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Hormozgan Steel Company (HOSCO) is to hold the Second International Conference on Steelmaking and Continuous Casting (ISCC 2022) in Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan Province, on February 22-23, 2022 with the presence of experts, owners of industries and related academic.



The CEO of Hormozgan Steel Company Mr. Ataollah Maroufkhani in an interview said that the company is to hold the second conference on the steelmaking and continuous casting which is aimed at restoring effective relation between the industry and university and also to share industrial experiences in the field of steelmaking and continuous casting.

He then pointed to the name of the current year and said he believes in the current year which has been named “Year of Production, Support and Removing Obstacles,” sharing industrial experiences and using the ideas of the elites and academics in the production will itself lead to removal of the obstacles and support of production.

Maroufkhani added that sharing useful experiences and expertise of leading production units in the current critical condition of the country is a must and HOSCO has never spared any help in this regard. He added after the early experiences from the first conference, the company intends to share its industrial experiences with the research centers and universities for new designs and innovation in the industry to be used in the field of steelmaking in the second conference.

He urged all industrial experts and university researchers and elites in the country to send their projects and ideas to the secretariat of the conference to be shared in the conference.

He said steelmaking and continuous casting play a key role in the steel production chain and it is one of the important and costly parts in the steel industry and the company is seeking ways to minimize the cost and improve the quality.

Gov't Supports Private Investment in Start-Ups

TEHRAN (IP) - The Vice President for Science and Technology said the government is fully ready to support infrastructure and private investment in start-ups.

Speaking on the sidelines of three Creative and Innovation Houses' inauguration ceremonies, Sorena Sattari added that the government does the best of its ability to feel safe to invest in starts up. The government can specifically support Creative and Innovative Houses and the private sectors by facilitating bank loans.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Sattari said that there are currently about 1400 creative companies operating in the country, adding: “Launching Creative Houses and Innovation is a step to expand the activities of these companies and boost their productions.” Sattari also said that Creative House ideas could also be used to reconstruct and refurbish old textures.

India Calls for Extensive Ties With Iran



BANDAR ABBAS (IRNA) - Indian Ambassador in Tehran Gaddam Dharmendra termed Iran as a reliable country for India, saying that India and Iran can be strategic partners in the region and that New Delhi wants to continue trade ties with Tehran as much as possible.

On his visit to Shahid Rajaee Port in Hormozgan Province, southern Iran, on Sunday, Dharmendra, termed the port's role in the region's maritime trade as irreplaceable and influential, adding that he was confident that Shahidi Rajaee Port, with its strategic location, can strengthen international transit between the north-south corridor.

Referring to the development of maritime trade between Iran and India, he said that in order to develop maritime cooperation, India has long been active in the field of public goods and general cargo in Chabahar Port and mainly, ships carrying bulk wheat and sugar dock in this port.

The Indian ambassador to Iran also referred to political and trade situation of Iran and India and the proximity of the sea route between Bandar Abbas, Chabahar, and Mumbai.

Shahid Rajaee Port, based on exclusive concessions such as unique geographic position at the nearest point to the Strait of Hormuz and the entrance to the Persian Gulf, as well as the short distance from the main intercontinental route of the ships, being located at the intersection of the North-South Transit corridor is considered as the most important gateway to the import and export of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iran to Expand Economic Cooperation With Kyrgyzstan

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Deputy governor of Khorasan Razavi for economic affairs said here on Saturday that this province has planned comprehensively for expansion of ties with Kyrgyzstan, which will soon lead to establishment of direct economic ties between this province and that country.

Morteza Ashrafi who was speaking at the meeting of Khorasan Razavi Foreign Relations Committee at the Governorate Office added that Khorasan Razavi share in Iran's economic exchanges with Kyrgyzstan is now 70%, but the financial value of those transactions is low, that will reach a satisfactory level after elimination of difficulties and obstacles and proper planning.

“In order to expand economic cooperation with Kyrgyzstan, Khorasan Razavi has proposed cooperation in health tourism, launching direct flights to Bishkek, exchange of economic delegations, the activation of Iranian Trade Center in Bishkek, and sponsoring regular Investment Opportunities Conferences in two countries.

The deputy governor of Khorasan Razavi said that Islamic Republic of Iran Goods and Technical Services Exhibition will be opened in Bishkek in a short while, in line with those initiatives.

“Kyrgyzstan is the 6th destination for Khorasan Razavi direct exports and during the first six months of the current Iranian year the province has exported over 22 million dollars to that country, which shows 250% increase year on year,” reiterated Ashrafi.

Allameh Tabatabaie University Offers First Uzbek Language Course

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The caretaker of Allameh Tabatabaie University (ATU) said that ATU's first Uzbek language course was offered.

Abdullah Motamedi who was speaking at the opening ceremony of the Uzbek language course in Iran, which is cosponsored by the Faculty of Turkish Language of the ATU, the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Tashkent and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Cultural Institute, reiterated: Iran and Uzbekistan are two major countries in this cultural domain, each with rich and precious cultural heritage.

“The cultural bonds between the two countries are as old as their long histories and their shared religions and



languages have always played special roles in their further expansion of their relations,” he added.

The ATU caretaker said that although the recent decades' political developments apparently highlighted the two countries' border lines for a period of time, but today those shared commonalities have once again paved the path for renewing the ancient ties of friendship between the Iranians and the Uzbeks.

Motamedi said that in the year 2020 although the COVID-19 pandemic decreased the level of cooperation between the two countries' universities, the ATU and the Oriental Studies University of Tashkent signed their scientific MOU.

Iran Can Be region's Agricultural Hub

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's agriculture minister said that with regards to the neighboring countries' capacities and potentials and in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iran can boost its agricultural products exports to regional countries and become the region's hub in this respect.

Speaking in a meeting with Agricultural Ministry's deputies, Javad Sadatinezhad said that the Ministry should make a list of the country's import and export packages, as well as the its needs in agricultural technology to be presented to the Foreign Ministry's economic deputy office to be referred to Iranian embassies.

Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Affairs Mehdi Safari, who was present the meeting, said that the Foreign Ministry stressed the country's agricultural cooperation with neighboring countries and asked the Ministry of Agriculture to declare Iran's agricultural potentials and import demands to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He said that it was necessary to come up with methods for decreasing exit of currency from the country through transferring the required agricultural technologies with the help of the Foreign Ministry, emphasizing that the two ministries need to keep in constant touch.

Kuwait Expels Lebanese Envoy

KUWAIT CITY (Dispatches) - Kuwait gave Lebanon's ambassador 48 hours to leave the emirate on Saturday, a day after Saudi Arabia made a similar move over a minister's comments about its war in Yemen.

The diplomatic row, which has also seen Bahrain expel Lebanon's envoy, has dealt another blow to Lebanon, already in the midst of crippling political and economic crises.

"Kuwait... asks Lebanese envoy to leave country in 48 hours," Kuwait's foreign ministry said on Saturday in a brief statement carried by state news agency KUNA.

The statement added that Kuwait's top diplomat to Beirut was also being recalled.



Ethiopia's Strategic Town Captured by Rebel Forces

ADDIS ABABA (Dispatches) - Tigrayan forces said they captured the strategic town of Dessie in Amhara region that borders Tigray, according to a rebel spokesman and residents.

An Ethiopia government spokesperson, however, denied Tigrayan fighters seized Dessie, saying the town was still under government control. Residents told AFP news agency that government troops retreated on Saturday following heavy fighting and power outages in parts of the town.

"At around 2am [23:00 GMT] Friday, Ethiopian soldiers began retreating from the area," Amir, a Dessie resident who declined to give his second name, said.



G20 Leaders Approve Multinationals Tax But Wrangle Over Climate



LONDON (Dispatches) - Leaders of the G20 world's major economies approved a global minimum tax on the largest companies on Saturday, but were still haggling over the pressing issue of climate change.

In the first major announcement of the two-day G20 summit in Rome, the bloc endorsed a "historic" agreement that would see multinationals subject to a minimum 15 percent tax, said US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, who attended the talks.

The deal would "end the damaging race to the bottom on corporate taxation", she said in a statement.

The reform plan, already backed by almost 140 countries, seeks to end the practice of big corporates such as Apple and Google parent Alphabet of sheltering profits in low-tax countries.

But no consensus had yet emerged on a collective commitment on climate change, on the eve of the crucial COP26 conference starting in Glasgow.

Hosts Italy are pushing the G20 to collectively endorse the UN goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, one of the aspirations of the landmark 2015 Paris climate accords.

"From the pandemic, to climate change, to fair and equitable taxation, going it alone is simply not an option," Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi told leaders ahead of the closed-door talks.

G20 members, many at different stages of economic development, remain at odds over the other major goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

"We have a moment now when we can try and take some of the nebulous commitments in Paris, solidify them into hard, fast, commitments to cut emissions, to cut cars and coal and so on," said British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who will host the Glasgow talks.

The Rome meeting was the opportunity for a flurry of bilateral meetings between G20 leaders, notably U.S. President Joe Biden, who is hoping to reassert U.S. leadership following the tumultuous Trump years.

Ahead of the day's talks, European Council president Charles Michel said that agreement on more stringent climate goals would be "difficult to accept" for countries dependent on coal -- a veiled reference to China.

The stakes are high, as the G20 -- which includes China, the US, India, the EU and Russia -- accounts for 80 percent of global GDP and nearly 80 percent of greenhouse gas emissions.

As the leaders huddled in Rome's fascist-era southern neighborhood of EUR, thousands of climate protesters, many of them young, gathered in the city center to demand tougher action.

"We're asking G20 leaders to stop playing games among themselves and finally listen to the people and act for the climate, as science has been asking for years," Fridays for Future activist Simone Ficcichia told AFP.

State Dept, Pentagon Concealing Afghanistan Data

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - A U.S. government watchdog accused the State Department and Pentagon of suppressing information that lawmakers and the public need to understand the collapse of Afghanistan's former government and military and the chaotic U.S. troop pullout.

"The full picture of what happened in August - and all the warning signs that could have predicted the outcome - will only be revealed if the information that the departments of Defense and State have already restricted from public release is made available," said John Sopko, the special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction (SIGAR).

A State Department spokesperson said the department had requested "some reports be temporarily removed to redact identifying information from public records and protect the identities of Afghans and Afghan partner organizations" due to security concerns about the evacuation effort.

"The identifying information are the only details intended to be shielded," the spokesperson said, adding that SIGAR has the authority to restore the reports. The Pentagon did not immediately respond to a request for comment.



Putin Lashes Out at G20 Over Vaccines

ROME (Dispatches) - Russia complained Saturday about lack of international recognition for its Sputnik V Covid-19 vaccine at a G20 summit, where leaders agreed to step up global inoculation efforts.

"Despite the decisions of the G20, not all countries in need can have access to anti-Covid vaccines," Russian President Vladimir Putin said in video message comments to counterparts that were retransmitted on Russian state television.

"This happens mainly because of dishonest competition, protectionism and because some states, especially those of the G20, are not ready for mutual recognition of vaccines and vaccination certificates," Putin added.

In an apparent reference to the failure of Russia's Sputnik V to win foreign regulatory approval, Putin urged G20 health ministers to discuss the mutual recognition of vaccines and vaccination certificates "as soon as possible".

Earlier this month, South Africa refused to approve the Russian jab despite the country's dire need for vaccines, claiming it could increase the risk of HIV infection among men.

Sputnik V also lacks regulatory approval in the EU and the U.S.

Chinese President Xi Jinping -- who, like Putin did not travel to Rome for the summit and participated by video link -- made a similar call for the mutual recognition of vaccines, according to Chinese state media.

Putin and Xi were said to have avoided travelling to Italy due to tightening coronavirus restrictions in their home countries.

In Russia, where new cases are spiking despite the availability of the Sputnik V jab, Putin ordered a week-long paid holiday starting Saturday in a bid to contain the spread of the virus.

Russian authorities said Saturday that daily infection numbers had risen to 40,251, a record since the start of the pandemic, with only 32.5 percent of the population fully vaccinated.

3 Killed During Protests Against Sudan Coup

KHARTOUM (Dispatches) - Military forces shot dead three people during nationwide protests in Sudan on Saturday, a doctors committee said, as hundreds of thousands of people demanded the restoration of a civilian-led government after a military coup.

In Khartoum, security forces used tear gas and gunfire to try to disperse a huge crowd after protesters had been setting up a stage and discussing the possibility of a sit-in, said a Reuters witness.

The Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors said two protesters were shot dead by troops in the capital Khartoum's twin city of Omdurman during demonstrations. It said 38 people were injured, including some by gunfire.

An eyewitness in Omdurman said they heard gunshots and saw people being carried away bleeding from the direction of the parliament building.

A representative of Sudan's military was not immediately available to comment on the reports of deaths in one of the country's largest demonstrations.

Protesters carried Sudanese flags and chanted "Military rule can't be praised" and "This country is ours, and our government is civilian" as they marched in neighborhoods across Khartoum.

People also took to the streets in cities in central, eastern, northern and western Sudan. Crowds swelled to the hundreds of thousands in Khartoum, said a Reuters witness.

"The people have delivered their message, that retreat is impossible and power belongs to the people," said protester Haitham Mohamed.

The demonstrations marked the biggest challenge to General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan since he ousted Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok's cabinet on Monday.

"This has been a miscalculation from the start and misunderstanding of the level of commitment, bravery, and concern the street has about the future of Sudan," said Jonas Horner of the International Crisis Group.

The United States and the World Bank have frozen assistance to Sudan, where an economic crisis has seen shortages of food and medicine and where nearly a third of the population are in need of urgent humanitarian support.

Civilian-appointed cabinet ministers supported the protests in a statement, and said the military "will not find free Sudanese or true democratic revolutionary forces to be their partners in power."

In central Khartoum there was a heavy military deployment of armed troops that included the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.

Security forces had blocked roads leading to the defense ministry complex and the airport.

At least 13 protesters have been killed in clashes with security forces this week, raising fears of a full-blown crackdown.



Lebanon President Looks To Heal Saudi Rift

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Lebanon's president said on Saturday he wants the best relations with Saudi Arabia, looking to heal a rift with the kingdom after it expelled Beirut's envoy and banned Lebanese imports in a diplomatic spat that risks adding to Lebanon's economic crisis.

In a tweet Michel Aoun said Lebanon is keen on strengthening links via bilateral deals, after mounting tensions following critical comments by a Lebanese minister about the Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen.

The row has spurred calls by some top politicians for the resignation of Information Minister George Kordahi, while others opposed such a move, which could undermine the government as a whole.

Following a near three-hour ministerial crisis meeting on Saturday, Education Minister Abbas Halabi said the government could not afford to resign over the diplomatic dispute.

"The country cannot be left without a government," due to other pressing matters, and would continue to work to resolve the rift, Halabi said.

Saudi Arabia expelled Lebanon's envoy and banned all Lebanese imports on Friday, and Bahrain and Kuwait followed suit, giving the top Lebanese diplomats 48 hours to exit. The United Arab Emirates later said it would withdraw all its diplomats and banned its citizens from travelling to Lebanon.

Kordahi's resignation would have knock-on effects that could threaten Prime Minister Najib Mikati's coalition government, tasked with addressing a financial crisis dubbed by the World Bank as one of the worst in modern history.

Kordahi left without making a statement after a visit to the country's top Christian cleric, Maronite Patriarch Bechara Boutros Al-Rai on Saturday.

Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib said Mikati's contacts with officials from a number of states showed opposition to the resignation of the government, formed only last month after a 13-month stalemate.

"They told Mikati, 'if you are thinking about resignation, take that out of your head,'" he said.



Shanon
(adviser)

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J, balcony
fireplace
Fully Furn

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

Parsian

Aghdasieh Apt (\$2200)
220sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, F.F

Apt (\$2700)
Zaferanieh
220sq.m, 3bdrs
S/pool, Sauna
Jacuzzi, pkg
L.balcony
F.F

Jordan Apt (\$1600)
180sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, F.F

bldg (\$8000)
Farmanieh
4storey, 15bdrs
S/pool, Sauna
Jacuzzi, pkgs
green yard
Semi Furn

Sa`adat abad
150sq.m, 2bdrs
S/p, F.F (\$1500)

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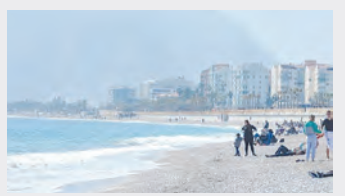
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Turkey's Tourism Revenue Leaps 182% in July-September

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey's tourism income surged by 181.8% year-on-year in the third quarter of 2021, following a significant fall last year due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) announced.

The country earned \$11.4 billion this July-September, up from \$4 billion in the same period last year when the COVID-19 crisis led to a collapse in international travel. There were travel restrictions worldwide, borders were shut and thus an overall drop in consumer demand.

The figure was \$14 billion in the same period in 2019, before the onset of the coronavirus.



Malaysia Plans Record Budget To Bolster Economic Recovery

KUALA LUMPUR - (Dispatches) - Malaysia's government on Friday proposed a record budget for 2022 to bolster an economic recovery following the coronavirus pandemic, with various industrial incentives and cash handouts for the poor and a one-time tax for high-income companies.

Finance Minister Zafrul Aziz introduced in Parliament the budget proposal of 332.1 billion ringgit (\$80.2 billion), up from 320.6 billion ringgit (\$77.4 billion) in the current year.

He said a virus lockdown in the third quarter has set back an economic recovery. With 95% of adults and more than 60% of teenagers fully vaccinated, he said the budget is designed to "strengthen economic recovery, build resilience and drive reforms."

The budget is the first under the administration of Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob, who took office in August after two changes of government since 2018 elections.

Ismail was the deputy prime minister under Muhyiddin Yassin, who resigned after less than 18 months in office following infighting in his coalition. Ismail's appointment brought Muhyiddin's alliance back to power.

It also returned the premiership to Ismail's United Malays National Organization, which had led Malaysia since independence from Britain in 1957 but was ousted in the 2018 elections amid a multibillion-dollar financial scandal.

Zafrul said Malaysia's economy is expected to grow 5.5%-6.5% in 2022, up from 3%-4% projected this year after a contraction of 5.6% last year. Despite the increased spending, he said the government's budget deficit is expected to narrow to 6% from 6.5% this year.

With many livelihoods hit by the pandemic, he said the government will dish out 8.2 billion ringgit (\$2 billion) in cash handouts that will benefit 9.6 million poor households and individuals. Nearly 5 billion ringgit has also been allocated to create 600,000 new jobs, he said. The budget also includes about 31 billion ringgit (\$7.5 billion) for subsidies, assistance and other incentives to ease the public's burden, he said.

To boost state coffers, Zafrul said the government will impose a one-time special tax for high-income companies generating more than 100 million ringgit (\$24.1 million) in profits. The first 100 million ringgit in taxable earnings will be taxed at 24% while the rest will be taxed at 33%, he said.

Opposition lawmakers asked how the government will raise enough money for the expanded budget and said it didn't focus enough on helping businesses out of the crisis. "They will borrow, borrow and borrow. With this budget, the national debt will cross 1 trillion ringgit (\$241.4 billion) in 2022. The debt servicing costs for these debts will be 43 billion ringgit (\$10.4 billion) in 2022," bigger than the 32 billion ringgit (\$7.7 billion) allocated for health, opposition lawmaker Wong Chen tweeted.

The budget is seen in part as an effort by Ismail and his UMNO party to win back public support, especially that of rural ethnic Malays, and show that it can lead the country again. General elections are not due until 2023, but many expect polls could be called next year.

Brazil Economy Seen Worst G20 Performer Next Year

RIO DE JANEIRO (Dispatches) - Brazil's economy is unraveling quickly and is set to become the worst performer among the world's top 20 next year, with some risks of recession on the horizon in the election-bound country, a Reuters poll showed.

Latin America's largest economy is going through a messy recovery from the coronavirus pandemic's impact, despite a pickup in gross domestic product growth to an expected 5.1% rate in 2021, the highest in a decade.

Inflation has shot up to more than 10%, the fastest since a political crisis five years ago, while unemployment remains close to record high levels.

New deficit-boosting plans have shaken domestic markets, and the most aggressive rate-hiking cycle in the world that has already taken Brazil's base rate 5.75 percentage points higher this year is chilling economic activity.

Under such a negative dynamic, "the country is at risk of suffering a recession in 2022 ... the risks are definitely skewed to the downside," Olga Yangol, CA-CIB head of EM research and strategy, Americas, said.

Brazilian growth will slow to 1.6% in 2022 from 5.1% in 2021, the weakest among the Group of 20 leading economies, according to analysis of the latest quarterly Reuters global economic poll.

The expected rate is even below 2.3% for neighbor Argentina, a country gripped by economic crisis, according to the median estimate of 36 forecasts in the Oct. 18-25 survey.

Economists blame President Jair Bolsonaro's loss of budget discipline before the Oct. 2022 general election. Opposed to this view that he is spending too much, ex-President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva - who has a solid lead in vote polls - wants a



Maldives Economy Rebounds as Tourists Return

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - The Maldives is seeing a strong economic recovery after being one of the first countries to reopen its borders to tourists, an international ratings agency said Friday as it upgraded the country's credit score.

The country reopened its borders last July and was able to keep foreign holidaymakers flocking to its white-sanded beaches away from the local population of 340,000.

The Maldives has 1,192 tiny coral islets scattered some 800 kilometers (500 miles) across the equator and dedicated tourist resorts are separated from inhabited islands.

Tourists arriving at its international airport are ferried by boat or seaplane to secluded resort islands.

Fitch Ratings, upgrading the country's credit rating to B-, said tourism had rebounded to around 70 percent of pre-pandemic levels so far this year. "We assume a gradual further normalization of tourist arrivals to over 80 percent of pre-pandemic levels in 2022 and to around 100 percent in 2023," Fitch said.

The Maldives attracted a record 1.7 million foreign tourists in 2019, a 15 percent increase from the previous year, according to the government, with China the biggest source of visitors.

Its economy is expected to expand by almost a third this year and 10 percent in 2022 after a 33.5 percent contraction last year, one of the sharpest drops globally, Fitch said.

"The development of a new terminal at the main international airport, in particular, should allow for a significant increase in the number of tourists over the coming years, while new resorts are also being built," the rating agency said.

Pakistan Economy to Grow by Around 5% in FY2022

KARACHI (Dispatches) - The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) is optimistic about the prospects for the country's economic growth, expecting the economy to grow around 5 percent this fiscal year.

"The economy grew about 4 percent in the last fiscal year and we expect it to grow close to 5 percent in the current fiscal year, that is a welcome challenge for us," SBP Governor Dr Reza Baqir said at the Pakistan Banking Awards 2021.

He said the SBP is working with the government, banks, and other stakeholders to ensure that it is a sustainable phase of growth. The SBP in partnership with the government is taking measures to support economic growth without compromising the sustainability of the external sector, he added. He said that the government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) would soon announce the agreement to resume the \$6 billion loan program.

"The Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance has said clearly that we are very soon about to announce the agreement with the IMF for the next review," Baqir said. "The determination expressed by the Government of Pakistan that we see the journey ahead in partnership with the IMF... it is also the fact that we have confidence in the direction on our policies," he said.

Recently, Saudi Arabia has announced a support package for Pakistan such as \$3 billion deposits with the SBP and to provide a \$1.2 billion deferred oil payment facility after Prime Minister Imran Khan visited the kingdom. "These (support from friendly countries) are the measures that over and above the IMF engagement are going to further support our external development," he said.

The market-based exchange rate system has helped to ensure that the country's external position remains sustainable. Since its inception, the flexible exchange rate has played its role as a shock absorber, Baqir explained. He said the country's economy has performed much better than predicted by the IMF last year. The country's GDP growth, current account deficit, foreign exchange reserves, and external debt all were in a much better position, compared with the IMF projections, he said.

"To back in June 2019 when the IMF started program with Pakistan it projected our growth would be 3 percent in FY2021 instead the economy of Pakistan grew nearly 4 percent in the fiscal year that closed in June 2021, he said. "For the current account deficit, the IMF projected we have a deficit of 1.7 percent of GDP, but we had a deficit of 0.6 percent. For workers' remittances, the IMF projected a number of around \$23 billion, but we closed the year with \$29 billion in remittances."

Mexican Economy Falters in 3Q

MEXICO CITY (Dispatches)

- Mexico's economy contracted for the first time in five quarters, pulled down by a decline in services during a third wave of Covid-19 infections that led to restrictions on some public activities.

Gross domestic product, a broad measure of output in goods and services, was down 0.2% in the third quarter from the second in seasonally adjusted terms, its first drop since the second quarter of 2020, the National Statistics Institute said Friday.

Services activity fell 0.6%, while industrial output and agricultural production both grew 0.7% from the second quarter.

Services were hit by the increase in Covid-19 infections during the quarter that prompted capacity restrictions at public places such as stores and restaurants in many parts of the country. A change in labor laws prohibiting the outsourcing of staff and many services contributed to the fall in services as outsourcing companies lost revenue.

"There is still some lingering doubt whether there will be some payback or upward adjustment in the following quarters," said Alberto Ramos, chief Latin America economist at Goldman Sachs. "There is an economic reason why those services were outsourced, so there is a cost to the economy."

The third-quarter decline adds risk to growth expectations of 6% or more this year, following the economy's 8.3% contraction in 2020.

Bank of Mexico deputy governor Jonathan Heath said earlier this week that weakness in the quarter had a lot to do with the increase in Covid-19 infections, but there should be some compensation in the fourth quarter as the wave has abated.

"It's still feasible to grow at that 6% this year, but obviously it's going to be a bit more difficult," he said. In the January-September period, GDP was up 6.1% from the first nine months of 2020 in unadjusted terms, with industrial production up 8.7% and services 5.4% higher.

"I think we're going to see small downward revisions in consensus estimates for the year," said Alonso Cervera, chief Latin America economist at Credit Suisse who expects forecasts to come down to around 5.8%, with a further slowdown in 2022.

"I really continue to struggle to think of engines of growth for Mexico. The U.S. is going to slow down next year, we will probably have more volatility in financial markets, a tighter monetary policy stance in Mexico. So I think we're going to go back to normal in Mexico, and normal is a rate of growth between 2% and 2.5%," he said.

Among economists' concerns is the lack of private investment, which was already in decline before the pandemic.

Iraq to Invest \$3b a Year to Switch From Liquids to Gas-Powered Generation



BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Iraq, OPEC's second-largest producer, plans to invest \$3 billion annually to replace the burning of liquids at its power plants with natural gas, the country's deputy minister said.

"We're also drawing policies to stop burning accompanying gas [flared gas] that will stop for good by 2025," said Ali Allawi, who is also the country's finance minister. He was speaking at the Middle East Green Initiative Forum taking place in Riyadh and being streamed virtually.

"We are working on providing a budget of \$3bn every year to replace all of the liquid oil that is used in electricity generation plants in order to work with natural gas," he said.

Iraq plans to eliminate gas flaring by 2022. The World Bank estimates about 16 billion cubic meters of gas from Iraqi fields were flared in 2015, costing the economy billions in lost revenue.

Baghdad is also working on reducing its methane emissions before the Cop26 meeting on climate change in Glasgow, which starts on Sunday. Curbing methane emissions has become a top priority for policymakers looking to mitigate climate change as it is far more potent than carbon dioxide, which is more commonly cited as the biggest contributor to global warming.

Iraq's economy is overwhelmingly dependent on oil revenue, which meets up to 90 per cent of government expenditure. The country is most at risk from the global transition to net zero by the middle of the century, which will effectively end longer-term investments in hydrocarbons.

Mr Allawi along with the executive director of the International Energy Agency previously called on the international community to support Iraq in its transition to cleaner forms of energy in an op-ed published in The Guardian.

The country has begun investing in solar energy and looks to tap up to 10 gigawatts of energy from the sun by 2025. In June, Abu Dhabi's Masdar signed an agreement with Iraq's National Investment Commission to develop photovoltaic projects with a minimum capacity of two gigawatts.

Iran's "The Fourth Wall" Awarded in DOK Leipzig

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The animated film "The Fourth Wall" won the Mephisto 97.6 Award for the best-animated film in DOK Leipzig.

Directed by Mahboobeh Kalee, "The Fourth Wall" was nominated for the award in the category of the international competition of the film festival.

The animation has also won the best film award in the 2021 Fantoche International Animation Film Festival in Switzerland and the best first film production award in the 2021 Animafest Zagreb festival.



Eurozone Growth, Inflation Soar

LONDON (Dispatches) - The eurozone economy continued to boom over the summer as activity rebounded after coronavirus lockdowns but inflation is also blowing past expectations, leaving the European Central Bank (ECB) with a growing policy headache.

Growth has soared as consumers return to stores and venues but many businesses have been unable to keep up with demand, putting further pressure on prices already being driven higher by the rising cost of commodities.

The economy of the 19 countries sharing the euro expanded by a quicker-than-forecast 2.2% in the third quarter, its fastest pace in a year and putting it on course to reach its pre-crisis size before the end of the year.

This strong performance came even while Germany, the bloc's biggest economy, struggled as a chip shortage held back production in its vast car manufacturing sector.

But France, Italy, Belgium and Austria, some of them economic laggards historically, outperformed to lift the bloc. The quick growth along with soaring oil prices, helped push inflation to 4.1% this month, more than twice the ECB's target and equaling the all-time-high for the data series launched in 1997.

While inflation was mostly driven by higher energy prices and tax hikes, growing price pressures from supply bottlenecks were also visible in rising prices for services and industrial goods – a worry for the ECB, which is slowly accepting that price growth may be more durable than once thought.

But growth and inflation may be nearing turning points.

The economy is hitting speed bumps as supply shortages, a scarcity of labor and the resurgence of coronavirus infections thwarts output. And inflation is likely to slow as peak-pandemic lows and the impact of tax hikes are knocked out of the figures.

"Growth will be much slower in the final quarter as supply chain disruption, slowing global demand and some labor shortages hamper production," Andrew Kenningham at Capital Economics said.

Economists see no drama ahead. A key ECB survey released on Friday showed expected growth of 4.5% in 2022, suggesting that rapid expansion will continue, but at a more moderate pace. Inflation is also likely to ease, although there is growing uncertainty over how fast and how far.

Indicators suggest the decline will be slower than the central bank once thought, raising the risk that high prices, even if temporary, could become entrenched in wages and corporate pricing structures.

ECB President Christine Lagarde acknowledged on Thursday that supply disruptions would persist, but said inflation will fade back below the 2% target over the medium term, so that no policy response is required for now.



Markets increasingly doubt her. They are now pricing in a 10 basis point rate hike by July 2022 and another by next October.

A week ago, markets were pricing in just one hike within 12 months and the change in expectations came even as Lagarde tried to push back those bets.

"Headline inflation will likely recede from its current rate of 4.1% to close to 1.5% again in late 2022 as special factors fade," Berenberg economist Holger Schmieding said.

"We thus look for the ECB to start raising rates in late 2023 rather than in 2022 already."

Other central banks around the world are already tightening policy or plan to do so soon by removing extraordinary stimulus put in place to combat the pandemic.

Adding to inflation concerns, an ECB survey of companies released on Friday showed over 30% of respondents expected supply constraints and higher input costs to last for another year or longer. A slightly lower percentage predicted difficulties would last another six to 12 months.

Firms also reported "a scarcity of applicants" for jobs as people changed profession, country or lifestyle, which was likely to result in wage increases.

Energy Costs Push Spanish Inflation to 29-Year High



MADRID (Dispatches) - Spain's inflation surged to a 29-year high in October as national consumer prices rose 5.5% year-on-year, flash data from the National Statistics Institute (INE) showed, threatening the economic recovery.

Inflation sped up from 4.0% in September and is running at its fastest pace since September 1992, when the peseta weakened against the deutschmark and the rate reached 5.8%.

Driving the surge was an increase in energy costs and, to a lesser extent, in prices for package holidays and vehicle fuels and lubricants.

Soaring electricity prices play such a prominent role that the gap with core inflation, which excludes energy and food, is the highest since records began in 1986.

Inflation has risen across the euro zone in recent months, but to a lesser extent. The region's harmonized annual rate was 3.4% in September.

Spanish core inflation, at 1.4% in October, is the indicator that most concerns experts and central banks in anticipating possible changes in monetary policy.

While the government argues price rises are transitory, economists fear they could trigger second-round effects on wages and erode corporate competitiveness.

Falling unemployment, driven by a sharp increase in hospitality hiring over the summer, is likely to exacerbate price pressure.

Industrial prices reached their highest level since 1977 after jumping 23.6% year-on-year in September, according to INE data published this week.

And, potentially compounding the effect, Spain is set to raise pensions in line with inflation and increase the minimum wage and public salaries in 2022.

Responding to elevated energy prices, the Funcas thinktank on Wednesday trimmed its 2021 economic growth forecast to 5.1% from 6.3%.

INE data also showed Spain's EU-harmonized consumer price index rose by 5.5% in October on an annual basis, the highest reading since the series began in 1997. Analysts polled by Reuters had expected a 4.8% price increase.

Spain's central bank expects relatively high inflation rates to continue over the coming months although the underlying causes are transitory, Governor Pablo Hernandez de Cos said on Monday.

Apple, Amazon Suffer Heavy Blows From Supply, Chip Troubles

PARIS (AFP) - Amazon and Apple announced billions of dollars in quarterly profits Thursday, but supply chain bottlenecks and the global chip shortage dented the tech giants' gains, which have been riding a pandemic-stoked boom.

Apple said sales of its signature iPhone and iPad were held back due to supply constraints, while Amazon struggled to get products and enough workers to meet demand.

Both firms soared in the pandemic era as people relied on their products and services, but now the ripple effects that have emerged, such as lack of computer chips and spiking labor costs, are casting a shadow.

Amazon Thursday reported that its profit in the recently ended quarter slipped to \$3.2 billion, as the pandemic, hiring and product shortages drove up costs. The e-commerce colossus said its sales climbed to \$110.8 billion, but its profit was about half of its net income from the same quarter last year.

"We've always said that when confronted with the choice between optimizing for short-term profits versus what's best for customers over the long term, we will choose the latter," said Amazon CEO Andy Jassy in a message explaining the company has had to spend more to do its work. Apple Thursday reported its profit in the recently ended quarter leaped on massive revenue that still fell short of analysts' expectations. The iPhone maker said its net income of \$20.5 billion came on revenue of \$83.4 billion, a record high for its quarter ending in September.

The semiconductor drought – caused by a mix of factors, including a surge in demand due to the COVID-19 pandemic and United States-China trade tensions – has affected industries across the globe, from tech giants to carmakers.

Calling the issues facing companies a "supply chain black cloud," Wedbush analyst Dan Ives said it was affecting "every tech, auto and consumer stalwart," including Amazon.

"It's not a demand issue but a supply issue that continues to be the elephant in the room for Apple and every other tech/consumer player heading into holiday season," Ives wrote in a note to investors.

Apple CEO Tim Cook told an earnings call that one part of the supply problem was the chip shortage, while there were also COVID-19-related manufacturing disruptions in Southeast Asia.

"It's effecting pretty much all of our products," he said.

Cook estimated supply shortages cost the company about \$6 billion in sales during the quarter.

The company's Chief Financial Officer Luca Maestri warned sales will be hurt even more during the current quarter that covers the pivotal holiday shopping season.

The results came after Microsoft, Google parent Alphabet and Facebook posted tremendous profits this week, although Twitter reported a large loss due to a shareholder lawsuit settlement.

Big Tech faces heightened scrutiny from antitrust regulators, especially Apple, which has appealed a major U.S. court ruling that would force the iPhone maker to loosen the stranglehold of its online app marketplace. But the pandemic, which roared back to center stage in the U.S. with the delta variant surge, has bolstered the demand for online services.

In Amazon's case, a growing number of consumers have turned to its platform to get everything from tofu to toilet paper, and its cloud computing division also grew to help businesses and consumers stay connected.

Earlier in the week, Alphabet announced quarterly revenue of \$65.1 billion that eclipsed the same period last year by some 41% as the firm's online ad engine and cloud services helped yield its \$18.9 billion profit.

U.S., EU Agree to Deal on Trump-Era Steel, Aluminum Tariffs

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States and European Union are expected to announce a deal to resolve a long-running trade dispute over U.S. steel and aluminum tariffs this weekend, easing a major transatlantic trade irritant, five people familiar with the agreement said.

Two of the sources said the agreement, details of which were still being finalized, would allow EU countries to export duty free some 3.3 million tons of steel annually to the United States under a tariff-rate quota system.

"An agreement on steel has been reached and will be announced soon," said one source familiar with the matter, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Higher steel import volumes would be subject to tariffs, but additional duty-free status would be granted to certain steel products that had previously won exclusions from the U.S. tariffs during the past year, the sources said.

Including the product-specific exclusions, the total

volume from EU steelmakers allowed in duty free would be around 4.3 million tons next year, one of the sources said. Europe exported 5 million tons of steel to the United States before the tariffs were added in 2018 by former President Donald Trump.

Lebanon...

FROM PAGE 1

The Arab League said it is concerned about a rapid deterioration of Lebanese-Persian Gulf relations after critical comments made by Lebanese Information Minister Kordahi regarding the Saudi-led war against Yemen.

In a statement on Saturday quoting Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit, it appealed to Persian Gulf countries "to reflect on the measures proposed to be taken ... in order to avoid further negative effects on the collapsing Lebanese economy".

"Aboul Gheit expressed his deep concern and regret over the rapid deterioration in Lebanese-(Persian) Gulf relations ...," the league statement said, adding that it was confident Lebanese President Michel Aoun and Prime Minister Najib Mikati would act quickly to ease the crisis.

The comments came hours after Saudi Arabia banned all imports from Lebanon and gave the Lebanese ambassador 48 hours to leave the country. Saudi Arabia also banned its citizens from travelling to Lebanon.

What Kordahi said on August 5 is nothing new for taking such a reaction because other officials in other Arab states have made such remarks in the past but Saudis have not shown such a strong reaction. While Israel is trying to have warmer ties with the Persian Gulf states, such a reaction by those states against Lebanon and actually against Hizbollah group which is a serious threat to Israelis seems logical and predictable.

Of course whenever Iran in recent years has tried to start talks and resolves its nuclear issue, some incidents have happened in the region to overshadow and maybe this is a plot to overshadow the JCPOA talks, and to create a condition for increasing pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran by increasing pressure on its allies in the region.

Saudi Arabia is feeling the imminent defeat in Yemen war and it is trying to find ways to step out of this quagmire as a victor, and recent naïve action to expel Lebanese minister is just for diverting the attention of the world public to other issues than their defeat in Yemen.

But Arab states are better to stop playing with the card of Saudi Arabia because there is no chance for them to win and any rift in Muslim nations will please the West and will pave the way for West's increasing dominance in the region.

Lebanon and Hizbollah group will not bow to such pressures and they are also able to handle this issue and another negative point will be registered in the book of records of Riyadh and its lackeys.

U.S., E3...

FROM PAGE 1

Iran and six world powers, including the U.S., the European trio, Russia, and China, inked the JCPOA in July 2015. The agreement removed international sanctions on Iran in exchange for certain limits on Iran's nuclear activities.

The deal, however, was unilaterally abandoned by the US in 2018 despite Iran's full compliance with its nuclear undertakings, as repeatedly certified by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The US then unleashed a "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran which practically deprived the country of all of the deal's economic benefits.

Iran fully honored its nuclear obligations for an entire year, after which it decided to ramp up its nuclear work as a legal "remedial measure" against the U.S. violation of the deal and the abject failure on the part of the other signatories, the E3 in particular, to safeguard its benefits.

After their meeting in Rome on Saturday, U.S. President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Iran needed to change course in order to "quickly reach and implement an understanding on return to full compliance" with the JCPOA.

Back in April, Iran and the remaining parties to the landmark nuclear deal began negotiations to restore the deal. The talks were paused in late June, after Iran's presidential election, but Iran announced on Wednesday that the talk will resume in November.

Since the beginning of the Vienna talks, Iran has frequently criticized the Biden administration for retaining the Trump administration's so-called maximum pressure policy even though publicly denouncing it as a complete failure which was responsible for the progress of Iran's nuclear program beyond the JCPOA limits.

Nuclear...

FROM PAGE 1

Asked about security assurances provisioned in Iran's draft resolution, the diplomat said that there were generally two types of assurances.

Positive security assurance refers to a condition that a nuclear weapons state would help a non-nuclear country when attacked by another nuclear weapons state, Takht Ravanchi explained. He went on to add that negative security assurance, on the other hand, refers to the condition that a nuclear weapons state wouldn't attack a non-nuclear country by nuclear weapons.

Iranian envoy in the UN said that the assurance mentioned in Iran's draft resolution was meant to be negative security assurance, requiring nuclear weapons state to give assurance that they wouldn't use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states. Iran's draft resolution was approved by 108 yes votes, Takht Ravanchi said, adding that he expected it to be approved even more strongly in the General Assembly.

Tyson Urges Fury To Fight on

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - Former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson has urged Tyson Fury not to hang up his gloves amid rumors that he might walk away from the sport following his electrifying win against Deontay Wilder earlier this month.

Fury sent Wilder to the canvas with a violent knockout punch in the 11th round to end the slugfest in Las Vegas and remain the undefeated WBC and lineal heavyweight champion.

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Zverev Ends Alcaraz Run in Vienna

VIENNA (Dispatches) - Alexander Zverev dispatched Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz in straight sets to secure his seat in the final of the ATP tournament in Vienna.

The world number four ended Alcaraz's Austrian adventure 6-3, 6-3 ahead of the second semi-final between Jannik Sinner and Frances Tiafoe. The 18-year-old Alcaraz stole the show this week on his way to a first ever ATP 500 semi-final appearance.

He had held his nerve in the final set tiebreak in Friday's quarter-finals to beat Matteo Berrettini 6-1 6-7 (2/7), 7-6 (7/5).

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SPORTS

MONDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2021

Chelsea Win, Liverpool Held, Man City Beaten

LONDON (Dispatches) - Chelsea extended their lead at the top of the Premier League to three points as Reece James scored twice in a 3-0 win at Newcastle as Liverpool and Manchester City stumbled at home in the title race on Saturday.

Liverpool blew at 2-0 lead at Anfield as Brighton battled back to earn a deserved 2-2 draw.

City are now five points off the top after Pep Guardiola's 10 men were beaten 2-0 by Crystal Palace at the Etihad.

Newcastle are hoping to follow in the footsteps of Chelsea and City's success following huge investment from foreign owners.

However, the Saudi-owned Magpies have a battle just to remain in the top flight as they remain rooted in the bottom three without a league win this season.

Chelsea were without the injured Romelu Lukaku, Timo Werner and Mason Mount, but the European champions still had far too much class at St James' Park.

James produced two stunning finishes from right wing-back before Jorginho's penalty rounded off the scoring.

Liverpool stretched their unbeaten run to 24 games in all competitions, but will feel two points slipped away after another flying start.

Mohamed Salah's scoring streak came to an end at 10 games, but the Egyptian set up the opener as his pass was swept into the far corner by Jordan Henderson.

Sadio Mane doubled the home side's advantage with a back post header before the Senegalese had another goal ruled out for handball after he caught Brighton goalkeeper Robert Sanchez in possession.

The Seagulls grabbed a lifeline before half-time when Enock Mwepu's cross flew over the stranded Alisson Becker.

And Brighton snatched a point after the break when Leandro Trossard rounded off a brilliant team move 25 minutes from time.

City's first home defeat of the season rounded off a perfect day for the Chelsea in the title race.

Wilfried Zaha punished slack defending from Ruben Dias and Aymeric Laporte to fire into the far corner after six minutes.



Laporte was then sent-off for pulling down Zaha as the last man in first-half stoppage time. Gabriel Jesus thought he had equalised midway through the second-half only for the goal to be ruled out for offside against Phil Foden.

The 10-men were then caught out two minutes from time when Connor Gallagher smashed high past Ederson.

Arsenal are up to fifth after a fast start and some inspired goalkeeping from Aaron Ramsdale earned the Gunners a 2-0 win at Leicester.

Gabriel and Emile Smith Rowe struck inside the opening 18 minutes for the visitors at the King Power.

But they relied on Ramsdale thereafter as the England international made a miraculous save from James Maddison among a string of impressive stops.

"When I saw the ball leaving Maddison's foot, I said, 'Goal'. So I don't know how it happened," said Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta.

"It was incredible - and the moment and the timing of it as well was crucial."

Burnley registered their first win of the season in style with a 3-1 victory over Brentford to move out of the bottom three.

Chris Wood, Matt Lowton and Maxwel Cornet all struck in the first 36 minutes as Burnley led a Premier League game 3-0 at half-time for the first time.

Southampton opened up a four-point cushion over the relegation zone thanks to Che Adams' strike to win 1-0 at Watford.

Raducanu Sent Packing By Kostyuk



CLUJ-NAPOCA (Dispatches) - Ukrainian sixth seed Marta Kostyuk swept aside U.S. Open champion Emma Raducanu for an emphatic 6-2 6-1 win to march into the last four of the Transylvania Open yesterday.

Raducanu, who won her first two matches on the WTA tour to reach the quarter-finals, made 41 unforced errors as Kostyuk dictated play from the back of the court and easily overpowered the 18-year-old Briton.

Raducanu lost her opening service game and never recovered from the early setback, squandering her only break-point opportunity in the sixth game of the first set.

The second set started much like the first, with Raducanu again surrendering serve and the 19-year-old Kostyuk taking full advantage of her opponent's erratic groundstrokes.

Raducanu showed glimpses of a fightback towards the end as she saved three match points on her own serve but eventually sent a backhand wide to fall to a crushing defeat in just under an hour.

Kostyuk will take on local favourite and former world number one Simona Halep. The other semi-final will be contested between Sweden's Rebecca Peterson and Estonian Anett Kontaveit.

Harden Propels Nets Past Pacers

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - James Harden totaled a season-high 29 points and added eight assists and eight rebounds as the Brooklyn Nets overcame a sluggish start to record a 105-98 victory over the Indiana Pacers on Friday night in New York.

Harden produced his most effective game this season two nights after admitting that he was still working his way back from a hamstring injury sustained in June during the playoffs.

Kevin Durant added 22 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists for the Nets, who shot 44.7 percent from the floor but missed 20 of 26 3-point tries.

The Nets' LaMarcus Aldridge contributed 21 points to become the 48th player in NBA history and seventh active player to reach the 20,000-point mark. Indiana reserve Torrey Craig scored a career-high 28 points, and rookie Chris Duarte added 19.

Lakers 113, Cavaliers 101

Carmelo Anthony came off the bench to shoot 6-for-8 from behind the 3-point arc and finish with 24 points, and he ignited a decisive fourth-quarter scoring run that powered host Los Angeles past Cleveland.

The Lakers' LeBron James, back after missing two games with an ankle injury, led all scorers with 26 points despite shooting 1-of-10 from 3-point range. He also dished a team-high eight assists.

Rookie Evan Mobley led the Cavaliers with a career-high 23 points. Darius Garland and Ricky Rubio added 18 points apiece, and Garland dished a game-high 11 assists.

Nuggets 106, Mavericks 75

Nikola Jokic scored seven of his 11 points in a 21-3, third-quarter flurry as host Denver held Dallas to its lowest point total since March 2017.

Jokic added 16 rebounds and eight assists, and Will Barton led five Nuggets in double figures with 17 points. Denver ended a two-game skid while snapping the Mavericks' three-game winning streak.

Luka Doncic had a team-high 16 points for Dallas, which was limited to its fewest points since a 116-74 loss at Philadelphia five seasons ago.



Al Sadd Refutes Talk of Barcelona Swoop for Xavi

DOHA (Dispatches) - Qatari club Al Sadd responded to speculation that Xavi Hernandez could very soon be appointed as the new coach of Barcelona, insisting that the Spaniard remains "fully focused" on his current club.

"In response to what's circulating recently, the #AlSadd management reaffirms that Xavi has a two-year contract with the club and is fully focused on the team's upcoming matches, to maintain our lead at the top of the league and to defend the title," tweeted the Doha-based outfit.

The 41-year-old is due to take charge of his team's game in the Qatar Stars League on Saturday.

Kohli Blasts Spineless, Pathetic India Critics

DUBAI (Dispatches) - India captain Virat Kohli launched a blistering attack on his team's critics on Saturday, blasting them as "spineless" and "pathetic".

Kohli was furious over the social media reaction to his team's 10-wicket loss to arch-rivals Pakistan in the opening game of the T20 World Cup.

"There's a good reason why we are playing on the field and not a bunch of spineless people on social media that have no courage to actually speak to any individual in person," said Kohli.

"It has become a social pandemic in today's world, which is so unfortunate and so sad to see because this is literally the lowest level of human potential that one can operate at. And that's how I look at these people."

Kohli was particularly angry over the abuse aimed at India's only Muslim player, fast bowler Mohammed Shami who played in the defeat.

"Attacking someone over their religion is the most pathetic thing that a human being can do," said Kohli.

"They have no understanding of how much effort we put on the field. They have no understanding of the fact that someone like Mohammed Shami has won India matches in the last few years."

"Honestly I don't even want to waste one minute of my life to give any attention to those people and neither does Shami and neither does anyone else on the team."

In an indication of the passion and controversy generated by the rivalry, India police arrested three Muslim students and a teacher for celebrating Pakistan's crushing victory.

The arrests came after police launched an investigation into several hundred students who burst into celebrations in Kashmir following last Sunday's match which was watched by millions across South Asia.



Murray Is a Draw For Even the French in Paris

PARIS (Dispatches) - Paris Masters director Guy Forget has defended his decision to give Andy Murray a wildcard at the tournament starting on Monday, saying the world number 156 is a draw "for even the French".

"Wildcards are always delicate. We had eight, we gave seven to French players. Murray should have had one at the French Open, but he turned it down as he thought his form wasn't good enough," Forget told a press conference on Saturday.

"He's come on a lot since then, he's a past winner in Paris, a former world number one, Olympic champion, winner of grand slams and the Davis Cup."

The 34-year-old Scot has tumbled down the world rankings after a series of career-threatening hip injuries.

But he arrives in Paris after some heartening performances, including defeat of Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz at Indian Wells and a win over fifth-seed Hubert Hurkacz in Vienna last week.

"He played great when beating Hurkacz. So it's not unnatural to give him an invitation."

"Lots of people want to come and watch Murray. He's a wonderful example of courage after his hip surgery."

"Even the French are going to turn up to see him, not just the English."

Novak Djokovic makes his first appearance on court in Paris since defeat in the US Open final in September.

The world number one is also competing in the doubles as he seeks match practice ahead of the end-of-season Finals in Turin and Davis Cup.

"It's rare to see a number one in a Masters 1000 doubles, but he's lacking match time as he hasn't played since the US Open," said Forget.

Djokovic, a five-time winner at Bercy, teams up with his fellow Serb Filip Krajinovic in the doubles.

