

Health Ministry Announced on Saturday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 127,173 With 120 More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

An Iranian Legislator Has Called on Diplomatic Apparatus of the Islamic Republic to Pursue Legal Action Against the Attempt for Stealing Iranian Oil Shipment by the United States at International Level

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Army to Stage Massive War Game In Southern Waters

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The Iranian Army's forces are going to launch a large-scale military exercise in the Sea of Oman, north of the Indian Ocean and parts of the Red Sea, using a combination of new equipment.

In comments at a press conference on Saturday, Deputy Chief of the Iranian Army for Coordination Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said preparations for the joint drill, codenamed Zolfaqar-1400, have already been made and the main stage of the exercise will kick off on Sunday, November 7.

The war game involves forces from the Army Ground Force, Navy, Air Force, and Air Defense, the general added, noting that the drill zone covers an area of over one million square kilometers southeast of Iran, stretching from the eastern parts of the Strait of Hormuz to the northern parts of the Indian Ocean, down to the 10-degrees latitude, and parts of the Red Sea.

He also noted that a broad range of homegrown equipment and ammunition, including advanced reconnaissance and combat drones with various ranges, will be utilized in the war game.

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Pakistan Seeks Free Trade With Iran



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The adviser to the Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment of Pakistan Abdul Razak Dawood says his country seeks free trade, adding that this meeting will be the beginning for resolving problems in the trade between the two states.

Speaking in the 9th Iran-Pakistan Joint Trade Committee (JTC) in Tehran yesterday, Dawood said that Pakistan wants progress in trade ties with Iran in different trade sectors like transportation, barter trade, reducing tariffs and creating border markets on course to free trade.

He noted that in the past years the two countries have reached agreements but unfortunately they have not been materialized. He reiterated that the effective steps for developing trade between Iran and Pakistan is being taken from today, adding that there are huge capacities in Iran and Pakistan and the two countries can complete each other in trade exchanges but for developing countries they need more efforts.

Expressing his regret on not succeeding in ink and developing the Iran-Pakistan trade agreement in 2016, Dawood said: "We wanted to increase trade volume between the two countries to \$ 5 billion, which unfortunately did not happen in 2016, but we highly hope this meeting will lead us to what we intend to reach in trade and interactions."

Dawood highlighted the necessity to shore up the ties between the two countries beyond the trade of goods and develop cultural and economic relations.

"We want progress in all areas, including the free transport of goods and trucks and cleanliness between the two countries, including in border markets," Davood said.

Meanwhile Iranian Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade Reza Fatemi Amin has stated that Islamabad and Tehran are determined to expand annual trade exchanges to five billion dollars by 2023.

Speaking at the 9th meeting of Iran-Pakistan Joint Trade Committee, Fatemi Amin noted that Pakistani and Iranian officials have already held talks on different economic cooperation and the committee is tasked with pave the ground for enhancing trade ties between the two countries.

He further referred to determination for expansion of bilateral economic relations, stipulating that Iran is ready to remove obstacles in the way of developing trade exchanges with Pakistan in a bid to enhance economic ties with the neighboring country.

Emphasizing the need for accurate programming in a way that provides Pakistani partners with the opportunity to invest in Iran, the minister said that trade hurdles will be lifted within three months to pave the way for expansion of free trade.

The 9th meeting of Iran-Pakistan Joint Trade Committee pursues issues such as signing preferential contracts and free trade agreements between the two countries as well as organizing exhibitions. The meeting was attended by senior Iranian and Pakistani authorities as well as business and banking officials.

He went on to say that Tehran and Islamabad have planned for cooperating in the areas of home appliances and dairy.

The cooperation could enhance while the two have also relations in trade and investment, Fatemi-Amin told reporters on Saturday at the end of ninth meeting of Iran-Pakistan joint trade committee.

Iran and Pakistan are two important countries in the region, said the minister adding that the two have not used properly their economic capacities yet.

The minister went on to say that trade obstacles to free trade between Tehran and Islamabad will be removed by the next three months.

As he stressed, the Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, during the past few months, has underlined the importance of expansion of trade ties with all, with neighbors in particular.

Economies of Iran and Pakistan are interrelated, Fatemi-Amin noted.

Reportedly, the ninth meeting of Iran-Pakistan joint trade committee focused on reviewing the latest developments in bilateral economic cooperation.

Iran has about 959 joint border crossings with Pakistan in southeast of the country.

Iran to Participate In India-Hosted Summit On Afghanistan

TEHRAN (MNA) -Iran has confirmed its participation in the Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan which will be hosted by New Delhi on November 10, an Indian source reported.

India will host the Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan in New Delhi on November 10. According to sources, the NSA-level meeting will be chaired by Ajit Doval.

Two earlier meetings in this format have been held in Iran in September 2018 and December 2019. The third meeting in India could not be held earlier due to the Covid-19 pandemic, The Times of India reported.

According to sources, there has been an overwhelming response to India's invitation. Several countries including Russia and Iran have confirmed participation in the meeting, in which, not just Afghanistan's immediate land neighbors are invited but also Central Asian countries are invited.

Invitations have been extended to China and Pakistan too, and formal responses are awaited. However, Pakistan has indicated through the media that it will not attend.

Travel to Be Allowed Only For Vaccinated People

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - According to an official at Iran's ministry of roads and urban development, with the implementation of the "smart quarantine" plan since the beginning of December, only those who have vaccinated or tested negative for coronavirus can travel.

Reza Nafisi, head of the center for safety regulations at the ministry of roads and urban development, said that the plan includes domestic and foreign trips and that travelers should have a negative "PCR" test with 96 and 72-hour deadlines and dates announced.

Nafisi went on to say, without mentioning a precise date, that in the "not too distant future", only vaccinated people would be allowed to travel.

After the coronavirus pandemic in Iran, the national coronavirus headquarters implemented a plan to ban vehicle traffic in several stages. In addition to the "nocturnal traffic ban" plan, for months private cars were not allowed to enter non-native provinces and cities, and the offending vehicles were fined 1 million tomans if they entered red cities and 500,000 tomans if they traveled to orange cities.

The "smart quarantine" plan comes into force in the next two weeks as the ministry of health has announced a gradual increase in red and orange cities in the past few weeks.

On Saturday, the number of red counties rose from 29 to 33, and 95 counties are currently in orange, according to the ministry.

Foreign Investments In Iran Slumps

TEHRAN - a new report from the first half of 1400 by the ministry of industry shows that foreign investments in the country fell to \$485 million during the first five months of this year, down nearly 45 percent from the same period last year.

In the same round in 2017 and before sanctions, the figure was \$1.830 million.

The share of the industry sector from the country's GDP according to Central Bank statistics is above 31 percent and the dramatic fall in attracting foreign investments in this sector can have devastating effects on the country's economy.

Iran attracted \$1.3 billion in foreign direct investment last year, equivalent to a quarter of the period before sanctions in 2017, according to figures from the United Nations Trade and Development Organization (UNCTAD).

Foreign direct investment in Iran exceeded \$5 billion in 2017, which fell by less than half in 2018 to \$1.5 billion in 2019.

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Hezbollah's Stockpile of Over 100,000 Missiles Threatens Israel

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - A new report has revealed that the Lebanese Hezbollah resistance movement is in possession of more than 100,000 rockets, emphasizing that the projectiles can target anywhere across the Israeli-occupied territories and that the Tel Aviv regime has a long way to go before the situation changes.

Israel is gearing up for a multi-sided military confrontation in the wake of recent developments in the Middle East region, victories of resistance groups in Syria, Palestine and Yemen, and Hezbollah's growing regional influence and role. This is while the regime is suffering from serious security circles and military shortcomings in order to manage the status quo, the Hebrew-language daily newspaper Israel Hayom reported.

The report described Israel's 33-day war on Lebanon back in the summer of 2006 as a wake-up call for the regime, stating that occupied territories are now within striking distance of more than 100,000 missiles from Lebanon, in addition to tens of thousands more from Gaza-based Palestinian resistance fighters.

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India's Tea Export to Iran Down by 35%

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - Tea exports from India are likely to be down by around 8-10 per cent during January-December 2021 as compared to same period last year. The drop in exports would be primarily due to high prices of Indian CTC (crushed, tear and curl) tea and the higher freight rates.

Data available on the website of Tea Board of India suggests that during the period from January-August 2021, the country's tea exports declined by around 12 per cent at 118.84 million kg (mkg), as compared with 134.47 mkg same period last year.

However, in value terms exports were up by nearly four per cent at ₹3,243.37 crore during January-August 2021 as compared with ₹3,104.04 crore same period last year. Unit price was up by 18 per cent at ₹272.92 a kg, as against ₹230.84 a kg last year.

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2.5m Iranian Students Return to Schools

TEHRAN (IP) - 2.5 m Iranian students will go to high schools after a 20-month stop due to the coronavirus pandemic.

According to a decision made by the Iranian Ministry of Education, high-school students will participate in their classes three days a week, with all health protocols observed in the schools.

The rest of the week also will be devoted to virtual education.

President Calls for Observing Health Protocols

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Emphasizing the need for serious measures to prevent coronavirus and to avoid any form of normalization, President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi said, "All agencies and institutions across the country must continue to be prepared to fight against coronavirus".

Speaking on Saturday at the meeting of the National Task Force Against Coronavirus, Ayatollah Dr Raisi referred to the removal of some COVID-related restrictions in the country, and said, "The main priority is protecting the health of students, workers and all people, and the reopening procedures must be replaced with smart methods".

Criticizing the weakening of health practices in land and air transportation, Raisi said, "Observance of health guidelines should not be weakened by the decline in statistics and indicators of coronavirus".

Emphasizing on updating the COVID-19 prevention procedures, the President said, "The Ministry of Health should cooperate with other agencies to update these procedures".

Emphasizing the need to support Iranian vaccines, the President said, "Our country's scientists and specialists made a valuable effort in the production of domestic vaccines, which should be supported legally and financially".



Raisi continued by appreciating the efforts and sacrifices of the health and medical staff, and emphasized, "The payment of the demands of the medical staff across the country should be done with high priority".

In another part of his speech, the President considered it important to encourage and persuade people to be vaccinated, and said, "It is necessary to explain the impact of vaccination on the society to see an increase in vaccination and reach statistics of over 80% in this area".

Iran, Oman Call for Developing Bilateral Trade Ties



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Islamic Republic of Iran and Sultanate of Oman emphasize the need to enhance and broaden bilateral ties in the fields of trade and economy.

Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry Redha Juma Al-Saleh met and held talks with Iranian Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman Ali Najafi in Muscat on Friday.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged their views on the development of trade and economic relations between the two countries of Iran and Oman.

Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry Redha Juma Al-Saleh departed for Iran on Friday to take part in the International Health Congress of Islamic Countries.

Tehran, Caracas Ready to Expand Tourism Ties



TEHRAN (IRNA) - The Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism of the Islamic Republic of Iran discussed expansion of tourism ties with Venezuelan tourism minister.

Venezuela's Minister of Tourism and Foreign Trade Alí Padrón met with Iranian deputy minister Ali Asghar Shalabafian on Saturday.

In the meeting, Shalabafian gave a report on Iran's measures in the field of tourism during the coronavirus pandemic and its plans for the post-pandemic period.

The official said that Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism has put the cooperation plan with Venezuela on the agenda.

Highlighting the potential for Iran and Venezuela to leverage opportunities ahead, including tourism exhibitions, Shalabafian said that Iran was ready to hold introduction tours for tourism agents in the form of safe travel.

Both officials acknowledged that their approach was to expand tourism ties and strengthen interactions to control the pandemic impact on tourism industry.

IRGC Arrests Ringleaders of Anti-Revolutionary Group

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) forces have in a surprise operation arrested the main ringleaders of a group acting against the security of the Iranian people and society.

In a statement released on Saturday, the IRGC's Imam Hassan Mojtaba base in Alborz Province said that its forces had taken into custody the ringleaders of the so-called White Uprising Movement, who had extensively planned to disrupt public security and order, carry out acts of sabotage, and create riots in the province and the country.

They distributed night letters in the streets, deceived some naive people and hired thugs to implement their schemes, it further said.

"From the beginning, all their actions and movements were monitored thanks to the vigilance of intelligence and security forces, and in a timely and revolutionary action, they were arrested and sent to prison during a complex operation by the unknown soldiers of Imam Hassan Mojtaba base," the statement read.

"All elements affiliated to the White Uprising have been identified by the province's intelligence community, and the movements of dissident groups are being closely monitored," it added, stressing that the security of the people is the red line of the IRGC forces and that they will spare no efforts to maintain calm.

In a separate development on Friday, an Iranian border guard was killed in clashes with terrorists near the city of Sardasht in West Azarbaijan Province.

The 20-year victim was identified as Private Reza Hedayati from the city of Bandar Anzali in northern Iran.

He was shot during the clashes with terrorists and succumbed to his wounds at a medical center.

Iranian forces regularly clash with foreign-sponsored terrorists attempting to infiltrate the borders and carry out acts of sabotage across the Islamic Republic.

Lifting Sanctions on Iran in Interest of Int'l Community

TEHRAN (MNA) - South African Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran said that lifting of sanctions imposed on Iran will be in the interest of the international community.

Vika Mazwi Khumalo, South Africa's Ambassador to Iran said that lifting of sanctions imposed against Iran will be in the interest of the international community.

It is in the interest of the international community to lift sanctions imposed on Iran because it will bring great economic benefits for other countries, the ambassador added.

Turning to the political-economic relations between Iran and South Africa, Khumalo stated that unilateral U.S. sanctions have made the level of trade and economic relations between the two countries of Iran and South Africa 'unsatisfactory' and consequently, this issue has caused South Africa's trade with major Iranian companies to face serious problems.

South African corporations are not cooperating with



Iran's economy for fear of the US sanctions, he criticized.

Trade ties between the two countries have always been at a good level, and now South Africa is optimistic about the future of the bilateral trade, he said.

In addition, the officials of the two countries are talking to each other on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting, and the officials can exchange views on the sidelines of any other program and occasion, he pointed out.

Moreover, the meeting of the deputy ministers will be held in the future, which shows the quality and high level of diplomatic relations between the two countries, and if a problem or challenge arises, both countries will discuss it with each other and find a solution, the diplomat added.

In the end, the South African envoy to Iran reiterated that lifting of economic sanctions imposed against Iran will bring many economic benefits to countries in the world.

U.S. Must Lift Sanctions and Pay Damages Before Talks

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - A Majlis member has said that the United States must discharge its nuclear deal commitments before it returns to multilateral talks.

Fereydoun Abbasi, a former head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization was quoted by Tasnim news agency close to the Revolutionary Guard as saying that the current government's approach is different from the former president Hassan Rouhani's administration.

"We should not look at America as the sheriff in town. If they want to negotiate with Iran, they should be just one country alongside other members of JCPOA," Abbasi maintained. If the U.S. intends to rejoin the 2015 nuclear agreement, it should also pay damages to Iran for having imposed sanctions, Abbasi added.

Iran suspended nuclear negotiations with World Powers in June when President Ebrahim Raisi won the presidential vote. As Tehran has delayed its return to the talks, it has continued enriching uranium and has boosted its stockpile.

This week a new date was set to resume the talks on November 29. Abbasi said that Iran should use both "soft and hard power" in this round of talks. "Soft power is people's support and hard power is our nuclear and deterrent military progress," the lawmaker emphasized.

U.S. Not Given Up Its Excessive Demands

TEHRAN (MNA) - Reacting to the U.S. attempt to steal Iranian oil, a member of Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission said that the United States has not given up its excessive demands.

Abolfazl Amouei in reaction to the decisive action of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy with American warship following the confiscation of a tanker carrying Iran's export oil, said, "The authoritative action of IRGC Navy Force in protecting the national interests and oil resources of the country is appreciable and shows high defense capabilities and potentials of Iran in protecting its national interests and security."

Americans and enemies of the Establishment must know that Iran's response to the protection of its national interests and security is certain, and they must not assume that their actions will lead to a change in the behavior or strategic calculations of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Amouei emphasized.

While supporting the country's defense capability to protect national interests, lawmakers at the Parliament emphasize that this issue must be pursued in international arenas, he underlined.

It is also necessary that the unprofessional behavior of Americans must be addressed in legal and international forums so that the whole world knows that Americans are committing primitive and medieval acts of piracy contrary to their human rights record.

Water Storage Behind Tehran Dams Falls 40%

TEHRAN (MNA) - Water storage in the dams of the Tehran Province has declined more than 40 percent in the current water year (started in September 2021) compared to the previous year, an official with the Water Organization of Tehran said.

According to Mohammad Shahriari, currently, 412 million cubic meters (mcm) of water is stored behind the five dams supplying water to the capital, 179 mcm less than the previous year's same period in which 691 mcm of water was stored behind the province's dams, IRIB reported.

Referring to the 70-percent increase in rainfall in Tehran province, Shahriari said: "Since the beginning of the current water year, 24.7 mm of rainfall has occurred in Tehran, while the figure was 14.3 mm in the last rainy year."

The official noted that Tehran's average rainfall in the mentioned period is five percent less than the average figure for the long term.

He stated that the inflow to the Tehran Province's dams has decreased by 37 percent since the beginning of this water year compared to the same period last year, adding: "The rainfall in Tehran during this period has added three to four million cubic meters of water to the dam reserves, while the deficit of Tehran dams is 279 million cubic meters."

Shahriari had previously said Iran's capital is suffering its worst drought in half a century.

"Groundwater and surface water are at a critical state and there has not been a similar drought for the past 50 years," he was quoted as saying by ISNA in early November.

According to the World Meteorological Organization's multiannual forecast, in the next five years, Iran's average rainfall will decline by 75 percent, and the temperature rises by 50-75 percent compared to the long-term average.

Austria Hails JCPOA Talks Resumption in Vienna

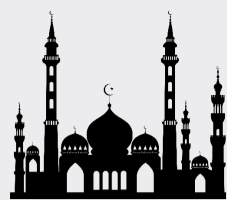
TEHRAN (IRNA) - Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Linhart has expressed his happiness over resumption of Iran nuclear talks which is slated to be held on November 29 in Vienna.

"Austria highly welcomes that JCPOA talks will resume on 29 November in Vienna," Linhart told IRNA.

"I am very happy that Austria will continue to host the talks and that Vienna will once again serve as a dialogue hub on this very important issue," he added.

"As an active host, we will continue to do our utmost to support a successful outcome of the talks," he noted.

"We strongly hope for a return to the full and effective implementation of the agreement by all sides," Linhart reiterated. Earlier, Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Baqeri Kani said that Iran's nuclear negotiations with four world powers to end sanctions will begin on November 29.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:48
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:22
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:07
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:33

66. (Jacob) said: "Never will I send him with you until ye swear a solemn oath to me, in Allah's name, that ye will be sure to bring him back to me unless ye are yourselves hemmed in (and made powerless). And when they had sworn their solemn oath, he said: "Over all that we say, be Allah the witness and guardian." Surah 12. Joseph (66)

7 Countries Account for 90% of Iran Foreign Trade

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Head of Joint Iran-China Chamber of Commerce says Iran's economy today is at the "most dangerous historical point of inflation in the last four decades" and there is a possibility of a "hyperinflation" and a sharp rise in price of commodities.

Majid Reza Hariri speaking to ILNA said that Iran's economy is at the "most dangerous historical point of inflation in the last four decades" and there is a possibility of a "hyperinflation" and a sharp rise price of commodities.

He said, "We go through 50 or 60 percent inflation stages, inflation control will become difficult and that any decision is made in the country, we must first assess the consequences in order to increase or decrease the inflation rate."

The Statistical Center published a new report on inflation in early November, saying that the increase in the price of foods and beverages in the country during the 12 months ending in October this year was 61.4 percent compared to the same period last year (annual inflation), which is a new record in the inflation of food items.

Hariri then pointed to the prerequisites for economic growth of the country in the current condition and impacts of political talks, and said major part of the current national economy that, according to all experts, is not in good conditions, is the impact of diplomatic and political relation. He added that the country's political war with the U.S. has extended to the economic scene and definitely any action and reaction will be effective in the future economic condition of the country.

He said Iran's economy is addicted to oil sales and it is not able suddenly to cut this



dependence, and two announced policies by the officials should move ahead shoulder by shoulder. He said one of the policies is efforts to remove sanctions which are followed by the political talks and all bodies should try to resolve the problems through talks. He added that the second policy is to try to minimize the impacts of sanctions on the country's trade despite sanctions and it can be materialized through bilateral trade especially with the neighboring countries and convincing them for bilateral and preferential agreements.

Hariri noted that we should consider this point that 90 percent of Iran's foreign trade is with only 7 countries and therefore it should try to have a diversified market and several partners.

He added that inflation and sanctions are two essential issues in the current condition of the national economy and the country should work to nullify them with any method possible.

He noted that the government should take advantage of experiences and views of economic experts to overcome this problem and warned that if the inflation is not controlled now, its curb will be difficult in the future.

In recent months, several warnings have been issued about the rise of hyperinflation in the country. Later in July, Massoud Khansari, Head of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, tweeted that as the current trend continues, "in the coming months the government will face inflation that has never been experienced in the country."

Chadormalu Co., ThyssenKrupp Resume Talks

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The CEO of Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company (CMIC) says the company has resumed its talks with ThyssenKrupp AG of Germany for exploiting the mines especially the Dey 19 Anomaly.



Naser Taghizadeh said that the company in the past had signed a MoU with this German group for exploiting the mines especially the Dey 19 Anomaly which was canceled due to some reasons but talks have been resumed.

He added that the company seeks convincing this German group to implement the latest methods of mining in the world in the company's mines.

He went on to say that almost 80 percent of required equipment for exploiting the mines can be manufactured in the country but the company is determined to use for the first time the services of the foreign reputable company in the mining engineering.

Taghizadeh pointed to import of 8 deep drilling machines some eight years ago and stipulated that the result of exploration in the areas belong to the company with these machines has been very satisfactory.

KSC Sets a New Record for Daily Production of Ingots

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Khuzestan Steel Company (KSC) once again thwarted enemies' efforts to cripple its production through sanctions as the company set a new record for daily ingot production due to the tireless efforts of its personnel.



The CEO of the company Mr. Amin Ebrahimi announced this achievement and said in recent years and despite intensification of cruel sanctions, the company has improved its production despite all hardships to materialize the slogan of the year and it has now increased its record of daily ingot production to 13,589 tons.

He also said observing the November 4 (Aban 13) is the sign of the decline of the world arrogance and added that on November 3, IRGC Navy forces announced another proud achievement that they thwarted the U.S. piracy and showed their power in the region and in the world.

Ebrahimi went on to say that KSC personnel in the scene of production followed the path of the military forces to thwart plots of enemies and making sanctions ineffective. He hailed the autumn as a blessing season for steel production and said last month the company could improve the record for monthly production of slab which is considered a strategic product and produced 179,212 tons which was a new record after three years.

He went on to say that on October 28, the company broke the record of daily slab ingot production after five years and improved it to 7,338 tons. He noted that today simultaneous with the anniversary of Den of Espionage takeover, the company could set a new record for daily steel ingot production after 2 years.

Iran Ready to Dispatch Specialized Workforce to Finland



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran has expressed readiness to send some skillful workforce to Finland based on legal frameworks in order to stop illegal migrations, an Iranian official says.

According to mcls.gov.ir, Director General of the Ministry of Welfare and Social Security for international affairs Hamed Forouzan held talks with Finnish ambassador to Tehran and counsellor for foreign affairs of Finland's Foreign Ministry.

Forouzan described long-term relations between Finland and Iran as a good opportunity to expand cooperation in different trade and economic fields.

He also expressed hope that Finnish ambassador to Tehran can play key role in paving the ground for dispatching Iranian specialized workforce to Finland.

There are over 170 employment agencies in Iran active in dispatching laborer to foreign countries, the Iranian official said, adding that one of the agencies gives services in Helsinki.

Based on statistics, around 7,000 Iranians are working in research and scientific fields in Finland, he noted.

Forouzan also mentioned that the Iranian workforce is young and specialized, which can be a good opportunity for the European country.

He is hopeful that establishing offices to provide Iranian workforce with employment services can pave the way for speeding up the procedures for absorbing Iranian laborers in Finland.

Kari Kahiluoto, Finnish Ambassador to Tehran, pointed to current legal obstacles in the way of dispatching Iranian workforce to Finland, noting that his country prioritizes this aim.

The ambassador said that corrupt groups have complicated the situation; so, the Finnish government imposed some restrictions on sending workforce to the European country, but the parliament follows up a plan to allocate more budgets for absorbing foreign laborers.

Possible Withdrawal of Afghan Investors From Iran

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Hussein Salimi, Chairman of the Joint Chamber of Commerce of Iran and Afghanistan, said Afghan investors who are present in Iran have tended to go to turkey because of better conditions.

Noting that investors in turkey can get their children's residency, passport and right to education, he said that in Iran "this process is long" and that Iran, with a \$250,000 investment, only offers a five-year residency.

The Iranian government approved in July 2019 that Foreigners who invest \$250,000 in Iran could get a five-year residency, but this October, Babak Dinparast, Iran's Deputy Interior Minister, acknowledged that "not a single demand" has been received so far.

Referring to the current situation in Afghanistan, the chairman of the Joint Chamber of Commerce of Iran and Afghanistan said that in addition to the visa and residency discussions, the current policies of the Iranian government should be changed in order to give afghan investors the necessary incentives.

He did not give an exact figure on the amount of afghan investment in Iran, but said that 17 projects were reviewed this October and that their value varies from "\$300,000 to \$20 million."

Kenya Intend Long-Run Investment in Chabahar

CHABAHAR (IP) - The Speaker of Kenya's Muranga County Assembly says the country is trying to establish a sustainable long-run trade in Iran's Chabahar free trade zone, southeast of the country.

For the time being the Kenyan traders aimed to invest in tea and coffee, and later on other products, Leonard Nduati Kariuki said on Friday in a meeting with the economic managers and activists of Chabahar Free Zone.

Kariuki mentioned the shore-up of trade ties between Muranga and Chabahar Port city as the aim of the Kenyan delegation trip to Iran, noting: "The

dream of boosting trade relations is being realized, therefore, a delegation of businessmen joined us to review trade and investment issues in the region and talk to Chabahar traders."

"We came to Chabahar because we know that the Chabahar Free Zone has a strategic position in West Asia," he said.

Mohammad Hodaei, Deputy Head of Chabahar Free Zone Organization for Economy and Investment said for his part that in Chabahar Free Zone, the capabilities of the traders would be assessed and then facilities would be provided.

South Pars Ready to Produce 700 mcm of Gas in Winter

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Managing director of Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC) says the South Pars gas field is ready to produce 700 million cubic meters (mcm) of gas during the winter of the current Iranian calendar year (starts on December 22).

Speaking during his weekly inspection of the underway projects in South Pars, Mohammad Meshkinfam said all the necessary measures have been taken for the preparation of the complex for sustained supply of gas during the winter.

Mentioning the completion of the annual overhaul program at all of the field's platforms, Mohammad Meshkinfam said the field is ready to produce 700 million cubic meters (mcm) of gas during the winter of the current Iranian calendar year (starts on December 22).

"Pre-scheduled plans are being seriously pursued in both development and production sectors, and we are fully prepared to produce 700 million cubic meters per day of gas from 37 South Pars offshore platforms," Meshkinfam said on the sidelines of a visit to the field's development projects.

He further mentioned the completion of the first train of the South Pars Phase 14 Refinery as the top priority of his company at the moment, saying: "at the beginning

of the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 21) there were short interruptions in the implementation of the company's development projects, but with the double effort made by employers and contractors good work has been done and we are compensating for the delays."

According to the official, the first train of the Phase 14 Refinery is expected to go operational by the end of the ninth Iranian calendar month of Azar (December 21).

The overhaul of South Pars gas platforms is carried out in the first half of the year due to the reduction in natural gas demand across the country; the overhaul planning is made in a way that there will be no interruptions due to breakdowns and other technical problems during the cold period of the year.

On completing the first block of the Be'that combined cycle power plant of South Pars, Meshkinfam said the project is progressing and all executive activities of the first block of the power station have been completed and other activities of the block are underway. He noted that the first block will be completed in one month and it is expected the first block with capacity of producing 160 megawatt electricity to come stream.



UN Rights Body Agrees to Monitor Sudan Violations

GENEVA (Dispatches) - The United Nations human rights council on Friday adopted a British-led resolution on Sudan condemning the military coup and appointing an expert to monitor alleged rights violations in its aftermath.

The resolution agreed at an emergency session in Geneva means that an expert will be appointed to monitor the situation on the ground and prepare a written report by mid-2022. Several members including China and Russia stood apart from the consensus but stopped short of calling a vote. "This afternoon, we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the brave people of Sudan who have demonstrated in their millions on the streets of their country in defence of democracy, and of their fundamental rights," Britain's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva Simon Manley told the Council.



Gunmen Kill Up to 15 Soldiers in Niger

NIAMEY (Dispatches) - Gunmen killed up to 15 soldiers in an attack on a military outpost in a remote part of southwest Niger where Islamist militants operate, officials and security sources said.

The attackers raided the post in the village of Anzourou near the border with Mali on Thursday evening, officials said. "Faced with the strength of the terrorists, the soldiers withdrew to another military position," Amadou Harouna Maiga, a member of the Union Committee for Peace and Security in Tillabéry, told Reuters. "Between 10 and 15 soldiers fell and five others went missing," he said. The committee, named after the surrounding region, is an organisation that monitors local conflicts.



Protests Against Iraq Election Results Turn Violent



BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Supporters of political parties that suffered losses in last month's polls clash with security forces outside Baghdad's Green Zone.

Protests against the results of Iraq's recent parliamentary election have turned violent in Baghdad, with demonstrators denouncing "fraud" clashing with security forces outside the capital's high-security Green Zone.

Supporters of pro-Iranian groups, which suffered large losses in the polls, threw stones at security forces, who fired tear gas and shot in the air to disperse the crowd on Friday. Gunfire could be occasionally heard on the protest site, with two protesters reported dead and dozens wounded on both sides. There was no official confirmation of the casualties.

The results of the October 10 parliamentary vote showed that a bloc led by influential Muslim Shia leader Moqtada al-Sadr won 73 seats, maintaining its position as the largest group in Iraq's 329-strong parliament.

The Conquest (Fatah) Alliance - the political arm of the multiparty Hashd al-Shaabi, a pro-Iranian former paramilitary force, won about 15 seats, according to preliminary results. In the last parliament, it held 48, making it the second-largest bloc.

Reporting from Baghdad, Al Jazeera's Mahmoud Abdelwahed said the disgruntled protesters branded Friday "the last chance for the government [and the] election commission to hold a recount of all the votes".

Iraq's independent election commission received more than 1,300 appeals following the elections, lodged by the "Shia cooperation framework" - an ad hoc group consisting mostly of Shia groups that performed poorly in the election.

After an initial assessment, the commission threw out the majority of the complaints, citing a "lack of evidence", and said it would release its final decisions on the rest of the appeals before submitting them to the Supreme Court for final certification.

It is unclear when the final election results will be announced, although they are not likely to change significantly.

The election, which was staged months ahead of schedule, came amid widespread frustration with Iraq's political elite. Turnout stood at 41 percent, the lowest level since the fall of Saddam Hussein following the United States-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

"So many people in the streets say that they do not believe in this electoral process, because it's only reproducing the same old parties," Abdelwahed said.

An unprecedented protest movement broke out two years ago and railed against the political class running the oil-rich but poverty-stricken country where youth unemployment is soaring.

National elections were brought forward as a concession to protesters who had also complained that Iraq was beholden to Iran. Factions of the Hashd have faced accusations of targeting activists.

Republican Governors Lead Attack On Biden Vaccine Mandate

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Republican governors began filing lawsuits on Friday to stop the Biden administration's requirement that nearly 2 million U.S. employers get workers tested or vaccinated for COVID-19, saying it trampled civil liberties.

After President Joe Biden, a Democrat, said on Thursday he will enforce the mandate starting Jan. 4, the states of Florida, Georgia and Alabama jointly sued in the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta.

"The federal government can't just unilaterally impose medical policy under the guise of workplace regulation," Florida Governor Ron DeSantis said at a press conference on Thursday.

The lawsuit by the three states, as well as two trade groups, two private companies and two schools, said the mandate exceeded the administration's legal authority and conflicted with the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and with the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

Portugal's Socialists Gain Support Ahead of Snap Election

LISBON (Dispatches) - Portugal's ruling Socialists lead the race to win an election in January with more votes than they took in 2019, but short of a full majority, according to the first poll of voting intentions taken since parliament rejected their budget last week.

The combined left, including Prime Minister Antonio Costa's former hard-left partners who helped sink the budget bill and trigger the snap election, would retain a majority of seats in parliament, taking 52% of the vote, according to the survey by Aximage pollsters.

President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa on Thursday called the early ballot for Jan. 30 after the budget's defeat ended six years of relative political stability under the Socialists. The government is still serving in full capacity until parliament is formally dissolved.

Political analysts say an election alone might not solve the political impasse as no single party or workable alliance is likely to achieve a stable majority. Most consider the left's alliance all but impossible to rebuild due to mutual distrust.

The center-left Socialists would garner 38.5% of the vote, about one percentage point more than in a previous poll in July, and up from 36.3% they took in the 2019 general election.

The main opposition Social Democrats were on 24.4%, falling from 25.2% in July and nearly 28% in the last election.

The Left Bloc, on 8.8% now after taking 9.5% in 2019, would remain the third most popular party, closely followed by the rising far-right party Chega, which is polling at 7.7%, up sharply from just 1.3% in 2019.

The Communist Party, which along with the Left Bloc was once the government's partner in parliament, would get 4.6%.

Part of the Aximage poll released on Thursday showed that 54% of respondents thought a snap election would be "bad for the country", with 68% believing that no party would win a majority of seats in parliament. Aximage surveyed 803 people between Oct. 28-31.



Anti-Gov't Alliance Aims to Bring Down Ethiopian Gov't

NAIROBI (Dispatches) - A newly-formed alliance of Ethiopian factions said on Friday it aimed to bring down Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed by force or by negotiation and to form a transitional government.

The Ethiopian government dismissed the alliance as a publicity stunt and said some groups in it had a history of ethnic violence.

The alliance was announced by faction leaders in Washington despite calls from African and Western leaders for a ceasefire in the war, which pits the central government against the northern-based Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and its allies.

With the rebel forces threatening to move on the capital Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian army on Friday called on former personnel to rejoin the military to fight them, state media said. In a further sign of growing international concern, the U.S. Embassy advised all U.S. citizens to leave Ethiopia as soon as possible.

"The security environment in Ethiopia is very fluid," the embassy said in a statement. The year-long war has killed thousands of people and forced more than two million more from their homes. It has intensified in recent weeks.

Announcing the formation of the United Front of Ethiopian Federalist and Confederalist Forces at an event in Washington, the alliance said it was setting up a

command to coordinate its military and political efforts.

"The next step will be to organize ourselves and totally dismantle the existing government, either by force or by negotiation ... then insert a transitional government," said Mahamud Ugas Muhumed, Somali State Resistance.

The pact expands an existing agreement between the TPLF and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), organisers said, and includes nine groups who all have armed units.

"We're trying to bring an end to this terrible situation in Ethiopia, which is created single-handedly by the Abiy government," said Berhane Gebrekristos, a TPLF leader and former Ethiopian ambassador to the United States. "Time is running out for him."

Abiy's spokesperson, Billene Seyoum, asked for reaction, referred Reuters to a comment she posted on Twitter in which she defended Abiy's rule since he took office in 2018. She said in the post: "The opening up of the political space (after Abiy's appointment) three years ago provided ample opportunity for contenders to settle their differences at the ballot box in June 2021."

Abiy's party was re-elected by a landslide in June. She did not refer directly to the new alliance.

Attorney General Gedion Temothewos called the alliance "a publicity stunt" and said some of the groups had a track record of "ethnic cleansing".



China to Hold Taiwan Independence Supporters Criminally Liable

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China will make people who support Taiwan independence criminally liable for life, according to a spokeswoman for China's Taiwan Affairs Office, amid heightened tensions between Beijing and Taipei.

On Friday, the Taiwan Affairs Office in Beijing warned that "the mainland will pursue criminal responsibility for Taiwan independence diehards in accordance with the law, to be effective for life".

This is the first time that China has spelt out concretely the punishment for people deemed to be pro-Taiwan independence.

China claims Taiwan as its territory - to be seized one day, by force if necessary - and has intensified efforts in recent years to isolate the self-ruled island on the international stage.

The office on Friday named Taiwan's Premier Su Tseng-chang, parliament Speaker You Si-kun and Foreign Minister Joseph Wu as people who are "stubbornly pro-Taiwan independence", and made public for the first time it has drawn up a list of people who fall into this category.

China will enforce punishment on the people on the list, by not letting them enter the mainland and China's Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau said spokeswoman Zhu Fenglian in a statement on Friday.

The blacklisted people will not be allowed to cooperate with entities or people from the mainland, nor will their companies or entities who fund them be allowed to profit from the mainland, she said.

Taiwanese politicians partially rely on donations from companies to fund their election campaigns.

Many Taiwanese companies derive profits from doing business with the mainland. Tens of thousands of Taiwanese currently work in the mainland.

China will also take "any other necessary measures" against these people, Zhu said. She said the message China wants to send to supporters of Taiwan independence is: "Those who forget their ancestors, betray the motherland and split the country, will never end up well and will be spurned by the people and judged by history."



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Embraer Posts \$45m Loss in Q3

SAO PAULO (Dispatches) - Brazilian aircraft maker Embraer said today it lost \$45 million in the third quarter of the year, falling back into the red one quarter after posting its first net profit since the coronavirus pandemic began.

But the company narrowed its losses from the same period last year, when it lost \$121.2 million amid the havoc Covid-19 wrought on the aviation industry worldwide.

Embraer, the world's third-biggest plane maker, after Airbus and Boeing, said the recovery was fuelled by revenue growth and orders that have rebounded to near pre-pandemic levels.



Indonesia's Economic Growth Slows

JAKARTA (Dispatches) - Indonesia's economy decelerated in the third quarter as harsh lockdowns to contain a record spike in Covid-19 cases outweighed higher commodity prices and trade.

Gross domestic product in the quarter rose 3.51% from a year ago, the statistics bureau announced Friday, down from 7.07% growth in the second quarter, as the virus wave peaked in July and August. That undershot both the median estimate of 3.88% in a Bloomberg survey of economists and the government's projection of 4.5%.

"Third-quarter growth slipped below market consensus as mobility curbs implemented during the period likely weighed on consumption, offsetting robust exports" said Nicholas Mapa, a senior economist at ING Groep NV in Manila. "We expect better fourth-quarter GDP results as movement restrictions have been relaxed further."

Indonesian stocks extended declines Friday after the report, with the Jakarta Composite Index falling as much as 0.2%. The rupiah was down 0.4% to 14,388 rupiah to the dollar as of 9:41 a.m. in Jakarta.

Authorities had ordered people to stay home and shut most businesses in the third quarter as the highly infectious delta variant sent caseloads skyrocketing, inundating hospitals and spurring a race to vaccinate a million people a day. GDP growth for July-September was 1.55% compared to the previous quarter on a non-seasonally adjusted basis, lower than the 1.9% seen by economists.

"Indonesia's steep economic slowdown in 3Q keeps the country on track to underperform most of its Southeast Asian peers this year. Next year, though, should be different. Once Indonesia equalizes on vaccines -- by reaching a 70% vaccination rate deemed the minimum for returning to normal -- its demographics will become an advantage."

Public activity and domestic tourism during the period declined both from a year ago and the preceding quarter, Margo Yuwono, head of the country's statistics office, said in a briefing Friday. Meanwhile, the global economic recovery improved, including in trade partner countries, while commodity prices rose, he said.

While consumption and foreign direct investment stalled due to the outbreak, soaring prices of commodities have been a lifeline for Indonesia, a top exporter of coal and palm oil. Outbound shipments hit an all-time high in August, while the trade surplus surged to more than \$4 billion in the third quarter.

Exports in the third quarter jumped 51% from a year ago to \$61.4 billion, the statistics office said Friday, while imports rose 47% to \$48.2 billion.

Southeast Asia's largest economy expects the recovery to regain pace this quarter as the outbreak is brought under control and movement curbs are relaxed. Improved manufacturing activity and retail sales should add to export momentum and drive full-year GDP, which the finance ministry last month said it expects to grow at 4%. The government had earlier set a target range of 3.7%-4.5% for this year.

Uzbekistan Starts Buying Solar Power From Households

TASHKENT (Reuters) - Uzbekistan's government has signed its first contract to buy electricity from a household equipped with solar panels, the Central Asian nation's energy ministry said.

The former Soviet republic imports electricity and is investing heavily in renewables to boost domestic output and is also in talks with Russia on building a nuclear power plant.

The household in capital Tashkent that signed the first contract to sell energy back into the grid will be paid 300 Uzbek sums (\$0.028) per kilowatt-hour (kWh), the ministry said, roughly the same as it pays for consumed power, although the price varies depending on location.

Entrepreneur Rustam Yodgorov, 43, who clinched the deal this week, says his initial plan was to have backup power supply for his family of six in the event of blackouts which were frequent at the time when he renovated his house in 2019.



Last year, he installed 40 solar panels with a total capacity of 6 kWt and a solar collector which heats water and has allowed him to cut gas consumption by 30%.

But the equipment provider advised him to connect to the grid rather than use them autonomously, and sell surplus energy to offset the costs he still incurs during peak hours when the panels' output is insufficient.

"During the daytime, we use minimum electricity," Yodgorov says. "Now I have started selling electricity, but to do that I had to give up the comfort which was my initial goal."

He has spent 50 million sums (around \$5,000) to buy and install the equipment and has filed for partial reimbursement under another government program, although it is limited to just 3 million sums.

ECB Policymakers Push Back on Rate Hike Bets

MADRID (Reuters) - Euro zone inflation will fall next year, even if more slowly than once thought, suggesting conditions for a 2022 interest rate hike, which markets have priced in for October, will not be met, European Central Bank policymakers said on Friday.

With annual inflation at a 13-year high of 4.1%, more than twice the ECB's target, the bank is facing pressure to tighten policy. Markets have priced in a 10 basis-point deposit rate hike next year, a move policymakers have spent the last week pushing back on.

Echoing comments from ECB President Christine Lagarde and board member Isabel Schnabel, policymakers speaking on Friday including Vice President Luis de Guindos, Austria's Robert Holzmann and Greece's Yannis Stournaras all said that inflation will be coming down next year.

Holzmann, one of the most conservative members of the rate-setting Governing Council, said that a rate hike in 2022 could even be counterproductive and that based on the bank's current guidance such a move is unlikely.

But de Guindos also said inflation was coming down slower than once thought, carrying a risk that some of the price pressure would become more durable.

"It's essentially and mainly transitory, but if the supply disruptions last longer than expected, this may affect the speed and intensity of price declines," he told an event in Madrid.

"It is therefore essential to monitor the second round effects, which have not yet occurred in the labour market but which may start to occur," he added.

Holzmann also noted that if housing costs were included in inflation data, price growth could be 0.5 percentage point higher than now thought, a potentially significant difference.

Housing costs, not fully included in headline inflation, were once thought to add 0.2 to 0.3 percentage point to inflation but comments from Holzmann suggest that cheap credit is accelerating housing inflation more than thought.

Such an impact is significant as it could reduce the need for stimulus by the European Central Bank, which has pulled all the stops in recent years to lift anaemic price growth.

China Iron Ore Futures Report Fourth Weekly Loss



BEIJING (Dispatches) - Benchmark iron ore futures in China fell on Friday and logged a fourth straight weekly decline as industrial demand remained sluggish due to steel output curbs in the country.

Capacity utilisation rates of 163 blast furnaces at mills across the country stood at 62.39%, as of Nov.5, data from Mysteel consultancy showed, down from 66.17% the week earlier.

"We expect iron ore prices to find a floor around current levels," ANZ Research wrote in a note. "But, constraints on China's steel output are likely to remain until after the Beijing Winter Olympics, so the upside looks limited in the short term."

The most-traded iron ore futures on the Dalian Commodity Exchange, for January delivery, ended down 3.2% at 561 yuan (\$87.65) per tonne. The contract fell 12.1% this week.

Prices for other raw materials also declined. Dalian coking coal futures faltered 0.8% to 2,390 yuan a ton and coke prices slipped 1.9% to 3,046 yuan per ton. They rose 5.4% and 2.3%, respectively, this week.

Weekly steel consumption in the world's top metals consumer also dipped, down 2.3% from the previous week, according to Mysteel.

"Intensifying expectation on lower costs and weak demand will further drag steel prices," analysts with Galaxy Futures wrote in a note, adding that futures prices are still lower than spot prices.

Construction rebar on the Shanghai Futures Exchange edged down 0.6% to 4,247 yuan a ton.

Hot-rolled coils, used in the manufacturing sector, dropped 2.2% to 4,569 yuan per ton.

Shanghai stainless steel futures were down 0.6% at 18,270 yuan a ton.

U.S. Trade Deficit Surged in September Amid Buying Spree

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - With American firms on a buying spree for computers and industrial goods amid higher fuel prices, the U.S. trade deficit surged in September to another record, the government reported today.

But purchases of autos declined amid the ongoing shortage of semiconductors, the data showed.

U.S. exports fell while imports rose, driving the trade gap to \$80.9 billion (RM336 billion), an 11.2 per cent increase over August, the Commerce Department reported.

The deficit has widened 33 per cent in the first nine months of the year compared to the same period of last year as the U.S. economy has bounced back strongly from the Covid-19 downturn, driving demand for goods.

Imports of computers jumped \$1.2 billion, while industrial supplies increased nearly \$1 billion, including a \$400 million increase in crude oil, which has seen prices jump in recent months to above \$80 a barrel.

But auto and parts imports plummeted by over US\$2 billion, according to the report.

Mahir Rasheed of Oxford Economics said the deficit is likely to remain high through the end of 2020, but "moderation in domestic demand will cool import volumes while steady vaccine diffusion and slower virus spread should underpin stronger export growth."

The U.S. trade deficit with China jumped by \$3.4 billion to \$31.5 billion, while the gap with Mexico rose \$2.3 billion to \$8.8 billion, according to the report.



German Industrial Production Drops in September

BERLIN (Dispatches) - German industrial production unexpectedly fell in September, official data showed on Friday, as supply bottlenecks for raw and preliminary materials continued to take a toll on output in Europe's biggest economy.

The Federal Statistics Office said industrial output fell by 1.1% on the month after an upwardly revised drop of 3.5% in August. A Reuters poll had pointed to a rise of 1% in September.

Compared with the previous quarter, production in the manufacturing sector fell by 2.4% in the third quarter and is currently 9.5% lower than in February 2020, before measures to curb the coronavirus pandemic in Germany began.

The fall in September was driven by a drop in the production in the mechanical engineering, electrical equipment and data processing equipment sectors, the economy ministry said.

"Supply bottlenecks for raw materials and intermediate products that have been going on for a long time are being reflected on a broader front," the ministry said.

Thomas Gitzel, an economist at VP Bank, said Germany's industrial production outlook was bleak as companies expect material shortages to persist until the end of next year.

Rising gas and electricity prices were additional negative factors that would weigh on production, he said.

"The coming quarters will remain difficult," Gitzel said, adding that Germany's economic output was set to stagnate in the fourth quarter.

"But it is also clear that when the flow of materials is up and running again, the current situation will turn into its opposite," he said.

Prominent Cartoonist Kambiz Derambakhsh Passes Away

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iranian prominent cartoonist Kambiz Derambakhsh passed away in Tehran on Saturday at the age of 79. Kambiz Derambakhsh passed away on Saturday afternoon in Atieh Hospital in Tehran after a short illness due to the infection of coronavirus. Born in 1942 in Shiraz, Derambakhsh was a cartoonist and graphic artist. His works are included in the collections of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran, and the Cartoonmuseum Basel, Switzerland, as well as in the collections of museums in Bulgaria, Japan, Turkey, Poland, and Germany. He was made a Chevalier of Arts and Letters by the French government in 2014.



New Pledges Could Push World Close to Paris Climate Goal

GLASGOW (Dispatches) - Net-zero emissions pledges and a commitment by leaders at the COP26 climate conference to cut methane, if enforced, could enable the world to limit global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius, the International Energy Agency said today.

"New @IEA analysis shows that fully achieving all net-zero pledges to date & the Global Methane Pledge by those who signed it would limit global warming to 1.8C," IEA chief Fatih Birol wrote on Twitter.

The comments, made a few days after the pledges were announced at the Glasgow summit, drew warnings of caution as the IEA's new assessment relies on countries and companies following through with their promises for years if not decades to come.

Nicholas Stern, who produced a landmark 2006 report on the economics of climate change, said COP26 was showing promise but told Reuters: "All the estimates have their own uncertainties, but also it's the whole path that matters. You can't estimate a temperature just from a point."

Taking note of the IEA report, he urged delegates at the UN conference to remember that, even as temperature projections improve, "we really mustn't lose sight of the 1.5C".

A global deal agreed in Paris in 2015 set the goal of preventing global warming above 1.5C — the limit that scientists say could prevent the most catastrophic and irreversible impacts of climate change.

To meet it, the IEA has said the world needs to eliminate new fossil fuel investments.

During a panel discussion in Glasgow on Wednesday, Birol said he asked his colleagues at the IEA to run climate models again, asking "What would it mean if all the pledges announced ... were to be implemented?"

And his team reported to him Tuesday night the result, which was "extremely encouraging," he said.

He acknowledged that some net-zero pledges were "a bit longer-term horizons". Big-emitter India on Monday announced it would aim to reach net zero only by 2070 — 20 years after scientists say is needed.

Nevertheless, with the potential for rapid impact from the promised drawdown of methane emissions, Birol said "we would have a temperature increase trajectory that is 1.8 degrees Celsius."

A UN report released days before the Glasgow talks said pledges to cut climate-warming emissions put the planet on course for a 2.7C temperature rise this century.

Non-governmental organisations said they could not confirm the IEA assessment, but were encouraged by the number of new pledges. "I can't verify those numbers," said Jules Kortenhorst, CEO of RMI, a non-profit working on the global energy transition. Though, "the impact of the methane pledge is really enormous."

Likewise, the rapid series of financial and company commitments has been "very, very powerful, and is completely unrivalled" by action committed at other COPs held over the last 15 years, Kortenhorst said.



Birol's comments don't "detract from the urgent need to close down coal production in this decade, and thereafter oil and gas," said Mark Campanale, founder and executive chair of Carbon Tracker, a London-based non-profit think tank.

Today, 77 countries pledged to phase out coal, the dirtiest of the fossil fuels. But China and India, both heavily reliant on coal-fired power, were conspicuously absent.

The Paris-based IEA, the world's top energy watchdog, was founded after the 1973 oil crisis to ensure developed countries had access to affordable and reliable energy.

The United States, one of the world's top fossil fuel producers and consumers, is among its top financial backers.

In May, the IEA departed from years of describing the status quo in the energy industry with a warning that no new fossil fuel projects beyond this year besides those already approved should be given the go-ahead if the world hoped to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

The agency doubled down on the recommendation in its flagship annual World Energy Outlook last month, which aids countries and companies in making billions of dollars worth of investment decisions.

The report said clean energy investment needed to triple within the next decade if net-zero goals are to be reached by mid-century, and that the recovery from the pandemic had relied excessively on fossil fuels.

A study released today showed that global carbon emissions have already rebounded nearly to pre-pandemic levels.

Army...

FROM PAGE 1

The upcoming drill is aimed at raising the combat and defense capabilities of the Army units in protecting the country's territorial integrity, the commander stated.

He also noted that the Iranian troops will be demonstrating the Islamic Republic's power in remote waters during the war game, warning the enemies that any act of aggression against Iran will draw a crushing response from the Army.

Iran's Armed Forces hold routine military exercises throughout the year.

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

Foreign...

FROM PAGE 1

Attracting \$1.3 billion in foreign investment in Iran during 2020, while total international investments last year were \$999 billion and the year before that was up from \$1,530b.

Over the past 10 years, Iran has attracted a total of less than \$30 billion in foreign capital and invested only \$2.3 billion abroad, while the UAE, for example, attracted \$87 billion in foreign capital during this period and invested more than \$148 billion in foreign projects.

Recently, the World Bank published a report showing that Iran's GDP fell to \$192 billion based on the "current dollar rate" last year, equivalent to half of the UAE's economy, with a population eight times lower than Iran's.

A six-month report by the ministry of industry shows that half of the country's industrial and mineral products declined during the first six months of the year and the other half faced growth.

Hezbollah's Stockpile of...

FROM PAGE 1

The Israel Hayom went on to highlight that Israel's existing missile systems are neither capable of intercepting such a number of missiles and rockets, nor can protect Israeli settlers as well.

Israeli media estimate that Lebanon's Hezbollah currently possesses an arsenal of 150,000 missiles of different types, warning that the resistance movement will be capable of firing up to 3,000 missiles toward the occupied territories per day if a war breaks out.

"According to the estimates of the Israeli occupation army, the arsenal of Hezbollah includes 150,000 missiles of various types," Lebanon's al-Mayadeen television news network quoted Israel's Hebrew-language Walla website as saying on July 14

The report added that Hezbollah's arsenal includes "missiles with a range of 15 to 700 kilometers, winged missiles with a range of 200 kilometers and drones capable of covering a distance of 400 kilometers."

"In any upcoming confrontation with the organization (Hezbollah), the Israeli army estimates that around 1,000-3,000 rockets will be fired per day," it added.

Additionally, former Israeli army chief of staff Gadi Eisenkot has warned of the threat posed to the regime by Hezbollah, saying the resistance movement possesses thousands of long-range rockets and dozens or more precision-guided missiles.

Speaking to The Jerusalem Post newspaper in early July, Eisenkot discussed "the unmatched more than 150,000 rocket threat," which the group presents to Israel.

He said the movement, which is Lebanon's de facto military power, has "strengthened its capabilities" since the 2006 war.

Lebanon fought off two Israeli wars in 2000 and 2006. On both occasions, battleground contribution by Hezbollah proved an indispensable asset, forcing the Israeli military into a retreat.

Climate Adaptation Cash One Tenth of Amount Needed



GLASGOW (Dispatches) - Developing countries need up to 10 times more funding to protect themselves from increasingly ferocious effects of climate change than the world has currently earmarked, the UN said.

While the COP26 meeting tries to wrestle down emissions and keep warming within the Paris deal target of 1.5 degrees Celsius, a new report from United Nations Environment Program highlights the need to prepare countries for effects that are already starting to be felt.

"Even if we were to turn off the tap on greenhouse gas emissions today, the impacts of climate change would be with us for many decades to come," said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP.

"We need a step-change in adaptation ambition for funding and implementation to significantly reduce damages and losses from climate change. And we need it now."

Slammed by storms, floods and droughts intensified by global warming, the world's poorest nations have put at the heart of the COP26 climate negotiations calls for richer countries to honour a pledge to provide US\$100 billion (RM415 billion) annually.

But only a part of that funding promise — which is now not set to be met until next year at the earliest — is set aside for adaptation measures that would help nations reduce the exposure of people and property to the growing threats of climate change.

The UNEP report found that developing countries alone will need to spend up to US\$300 billion a year on such measures by 2030, and up to US\$500 billion annually by 2050.

"Overall, estimated adaptation costs in developing countries are five to 10 times greater than current public adaptation finance flows, and the gap is widening," UNEP said.

In 2019, wealthy countries provided US\$79.6 billion in climate assistance to developing countries—but two-thirds of that was for efforts to reduce emissions, with adaptation given lower priority.

Pfizer Says Antiviral Pill Cuts Risk of Severe COVID-19 By 89%

NEW YORK (Dispatches)

A trial of Pfizer Inc's experimental antiviral pill for COVID-19 was stopped early after the drug was shown to cut by 89% the chances of hospitalization or death for adults at risk of developing severe disease, the company said on Friday.

The results appear to surpass those seen with Merck & Co Inc's (MRK.N)

pill, molnupiravir, which was shown last month to halve the likelihood of dying or being hospitalized for COVID-19 patients also at high risk of serious illness.

Full trial data is not yet available from either company.

"Just stunning results," Ashish Jha, dean of the Brown University School of Public Health, said in a Twitter post of Pfizer's results. "Implications of effective therapeutics for ending the pandemic are very, very large."

Infectious disease experts stress that preventing COVID-19 through wide use of vaccines remains the best way to control the pandemic, but only 58% of Americans are fully vaccinated and access in many parts of the world is limited.

"Vaccines are going to be the most effective and reliable tool that we have in this pandemic," said Dr. Grace Lee,

Professor of Pediatrics, Stanford University School of Medicine.

"These oral medications are going to augment our ability to really reduce the risk of severe disease, hospitalization and death, which is huge, but it won't prevent infection."

Shares in Pfizer, which also makes one of the mostly widely used COVID-19 vaccines, were up 7.6% to \$47.19 at 1445 GMT, while Merck's were down 8.5% to \$82.83. Shares of other vaccine makers also took a hit, with Moderna Inc, Pfizer's German partner BioNTech SE and Novavax all down 10-18%.

Meanwhile, travel stocks rose, with American Airlines, United Airlines, Delta Air Lines, cruise operators Carnival Corp and Norwegian Cruise rising between 4% and 5.9%.



Pfizer said it planned to submit interim trial results for its pill, which is given in combination with an older antiviral called ritonavir, to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as part of the emergency use application it opened in October.

That filing is expected to be submitted before the U.S. Thanksgiving holiday on Nov. 25, Pfizer Chief Executive Albert Bourla said

in an interview with CNBC.

The company said it expects to manufacture at least 50 million courses of the oral treatment by the end of 2022.

The combination treatment, which will have the brand name Paxlovid, consists of three pills given twice daily.

The planned analysis of 1,219 patients in Pfizer's study looked at hospitalizations or deaths among people diagnosed with mild to moderate COVID-19 with at least one risk factor for developing severe disease, such as obesity or older age.

It found that 0.8% of those given Pfizer's drug within three days of symptom onset were hospitalized and none had died by 28 days after treatment. That compared with a hospitalization rate of 7% for placebo patients. There were also seven deaths in the placebo group.

India's Tea...

FROM PAGE 1

It is to be noted that the country's total exports in 2020 (January-December) had dropped by around 16 per cent to 207.58 mkg down from 248.29 mkg in 2019. The drop in exports was due to lower production, primarily orthodox variety, due to the lockdown and higher prices of Indian CTC. Value sale was however up by 8 per cent at ₹5,610.65 crore (₹5,159.46 crore) while unit prices was up by 10 per cent at ₹248.55 a kg (₹225.97 a kg).

According to Anshuman Kanoria, Chairman, Indian Tea Exporters' Association (ITEA), tea exports are down despite an increase in production of both CTC and orthodox tea this year over same period last year. Tea production was impacted in 2020 due to Covid-induced lockdown during the prime first and second flush season.

"Exports are likely to be down by 5-10 per cent this year and this is on expected lines. CTC prices are ruling higher and this is affecting exports. Moreover there has been a sharp increase in freight rates. This apart, the container shortage is impacting the business badly," Kanoria told BusinessLine.

CTC accounts for nearly 60 per cent of the country's total tea exports at around 150 mkg. So any impact in demand for CTC

affects overall exports. The lower prices of Kenyan tea have also been offering a stiff competition to Indian CTC exports in some markets, which are price sensitive.

India's total exports to Iran during January-August 2021 were down by around 35 percent at 15.47 mkg (23.87 mkg) due to the unresolved payment crisis with Iran. Exports to CIS countries declined by 18 percent to 28.18 mkg (34.51 mkg).

Iran, which is one of the major markets for Indian orthodox tea, accounts for nearly 21 percent of the country's total exports.

Orthodox tea accounts for less than 10 per cent of the country's total production, which is estimated to be close to 1,300 mkg. However nearly 90 per cent of the 110 mkg of orthodox produced each year is exported. Exports to Iran have been impacted due to payment related issues.

Ever since the U.S. imposed sanctions on Iran, India could not engage in dollar-denominated trade with the country. Hence a rupee-rial trade mechanism was put in place in 2018. Under this, oil refineries from India would deposit Indian rupees in the two designated banks - UCO Bank and IDBI Bank - for import of crude oil from Iran; the fund was used to clear dues of exporters from the country to Iran.

Lukaku out of Belgium World Cup Qualifiers

BRUSSELS (AFP) - Belgium coach Roberto Martinez said on Friday forward Romelu Lukaku will miss next week's World Cup qualifiers with an ankle injury, with the Red Devils only two points away from clinching qualification for Qatar.

Chelsea striker Lukaku's fitness issue adds to the absence of Besiktas' Michy Batshuayi with Martinez calling up uncapped 23-year-old Union Saint-Gilloise attacker Dante Vanzeir.

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Firmino Faces More Than Four Weeks Out

LONDON (AFP) - Roberto Firmino is facing a month on the sidelines after suffering a "serious" hamstring injury in Liverpool's midweek Champions League win against Atletico Madrid, manager Jurgen Klopp said on Friday.

The Brazil forward lasted just over half an hour as a substitute during the 2-0 win at Anfield before he was forced off and is not expected back immediately after the upcoming international break.

Celtics End Heat's Five-Game Win Streak

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Jaylen Brown scored 17 points to lead six Boston scorers in double figures as the visiting Celtics routed the Miami Heat 95-78, using an impressive defensive effort to snap the Heat's five-game winning streak.

Dennis Schroder scored 14 points, Aaron Nesmith had 13 and Romeo Langford chipped in 12 for Boston, which won its second straight following a three-game losing streak.

Miami, which entered the contest averaging a league-high 115.6 points, recorded a season-low point total and shot 34.6 percent from the field and 9 of 41 (22 percent) from 3-point range.

Jimmy Butler scored 20 points, Duncan Robinson had 16 and Bam Adebayo recorded 13 points and seven rebounds for Miami. Lowry committed six of the team's 18 turnovers. Kyle Lowry had six points for Miami before leaving at the end of the third quarter due to a sprained left ankle.

76ers 109, Pistons 98

Seth Curry had 23 points, Tyrese Maxey supplied 20 and visiting Philadelphia pulled away from struggling Detroit for its fifth straight victory.

Joel Embiid contributed 19 points and nine rebounds for the 76ers while Shake Milton tossed in 16 points with eight rebounds and five assists. Georges Niang chipped in 14 points and seven rebounds off the bench for Philadelphia, which played without starters Tobias Harris and Danny Green.

Jerami Grant had 27 points, six rebounds and four assists for the Pistons, who were limited to 32 second-half points. Cade Cunningham, the top pick of the draft, recorded his first double-double with 18 points and 10 rebounds despite 4-for-17 shooting from the field.

Jazz 116, Hawks 98

Jordan Clarkson came off the bench to score a season-high 30 points and lead visiting Utah past Atlanta to its third straight win.

Clarkson was 10-for-19 from the field and made four 3-point baskets. He combined with Joe Ingles, who had a season-high 19, to offset the absence of Donovan Mitchell (24.9 points per game), who missed the game with a right ankle sprain.

Samsonova Powers Russia Past U.S. Into Final

PRAGUE (Dispatches) - Liudmila Samsonova won her singles rubber before returning with Veronika Kudermetova in the deciding doubles to help Russia beat the United States in a thrilling tie on Friday and reach the Billie Jean King Cup final for the first time since 2015.

With American great Billie Jean King watching from the stands, Samsonova and Kudermetova defeated the American pair of Shelby Rogers and CoCo Vandeweghe 6-3 6-3 before breaking into joyous celebrations with their team mates on court.

Danielle Collins earlier levelled the tie for 18-times winners United States with a 6-7(9) 7-6(2) 6-2 win over Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova after Samsonova had given the Russians the lead with a 1-6 6-4 6-3 victory over Sloane Stephens.

Russia, bidding to win what was formerly-known as the Fed Cup for the fifth time, are competing in Prague as the Russian Tennis Federation team due to sanctions that prevent them using their country's flag and anthem were imposed due to doping scandals.

The two teams had contrasting paths to the semi-finals with the Russians cruising through with wins in both their group ties while United States had to dig deep against Spain after an upset defeat to Slovakia.

World number 40 Samsonova is the lowest ranked in the RTF team in Prague but she got the nod for the singles against Stephens given her 2-0 head-to-head record against the 2017 U.S. Open champion.

Former world number three Stephens, who has slipped down the rankings to 63rd currently, got off to a brisk start at the O2 Arena's Centre Court, breaking the 22-year-old Russian three times to take the opening set.

Making her Billie Jean King Cup singles debut, Samsonova, however, found her range with powerful groundstrokes to rally to victory.

"It's an unbelievable feeling to win my first match in the Billie Jean King Cup," Samsonova said. "I was very positive before the match. I knew it's gonna be a very, very tough match against Sloane."



Trae Young led the Hawks with 21 points, though he hit just 8 of 20 field-goal attempts and missed all four of his 3-point tries. Clint Capela contributed 13 points and 10 rebounds.

Suns 123, Rockets 111

Devin Booker recorded 27 points, nine rebounds and five assists to help Phoenix beat visiting Houston.

Landry Shamet scored 19 points off the bench, Deandre Ayton added 16 points and 11 rebounds and Mikal Bridges also scored 16 points as the Suns won their third consecutive game.

Kevin Porter Jr. scored 20 points and Christian Wood added 18 points and 15 rebounds for the Rockets, who lost their sixth straight game.

Thunder 107, Lakers 104

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 28 points, capped by a 34-foot 3-pointer with 1:18 remaining, as visiting Oklahoma City continued to find success against Los Angeles.

Luguentz Dort added 17 points as the Thunder defeated the Lakers for the second time in nine days. They are the only two victories for Oklahoma City in eight tries this season.

Russell Westbrook had 27 points for the Lakers, and Carmelo Anthony had 21 off the bench. LeBron James did not play due to an abdominal strain that is expected to sideline him for a week.



Hazard Not Happy But Staying Professional

MADRID (Dispatches) - Carlo Ancelotti admitted on Friday that Eden Hazard is unhappy with his lack of playing time at Real Madrid.

Hazard has not started any of Madrid's last six matches and he was an unused substitute on Wednesday in the Champions League victory over Shakhtar Donetsk.

The 30-year-old is fit again after an injury-plagued two years in Spain but he is not in favour under Ancelotti, who said last month he "prefers other players".

"The player is not happy," said Ancelotti in a press conference on Friday, ahead of Madrid's game at home to Rayo Vallecano on Saturday in La Liga.

"He has quality and is training well and he deserves to have minutes. He will have them. If he continues like this, if he has faith, he will have them.

"It may be tomorrow or it may not. The important thing is that he is focused. I feel sorry because it's easy to put a player on the bench who is not professional, but he is."

Ancelotti recalled feeling angry as a player when he was left out at AC Milan. "I would get angry with (Fabio) Capello when he didn't play me and he told me that when I was a coach, I would understand. Now I understand it very well," Ancelotti said.



Xavi Appointment as Barcelona Coach Delayed

But while Barcelona remain confident Xavi will be their new coach, the club disputed that a deal had been agreed and were yet to confirm the Spaniard's appointment almost five hours later.

MADRID (Dispatches) - Barcelona's attempt to appoint Xavi Hernandez as coach was held up on Friday over his Al Sadd release clause, with Xavi and Barca considering splitting the payment to complete the deal.

Al Sadd announced in a statement earlier on Friday that Barca had agreed to pay the clause in Xavi's contract, which is reportedly set at around 5 million euros (\$5.8 million).

A source close to negotiations told AFP on Friday discussions were still ongoing over the clause and one possibility was Xavi and Barcelona would each contribute to the payment.

"Al Sadd have said it is official but Barca have not. Let's wait," said Barca's interim coach Sergi Barjuan, who is expected to be in charge for the La Liga game against Celta Vigo this weekend.

Al Sadd published photos on social media of Xavi saying goodbye to the club's players and staff.

Al Sadd chief executive Turki Al-Ali had earlier said in a statement: "The Al Sadd administration has agreed on Xavi's move to Barcelona after the payment of the release clause stipulated in the contract.

"We've agreed on cooperation with Barcelona in the future. Xavi is an important part of Al-Sadd's history and we wish him success."

India Blitz Scotland To Keep Alive Faint Semi Hopes

DUBAI (Dispatches) - Former Twenty20 World Cup champions India kept alive their slim chances of making the semi-finals with an eight-wicket rout of Scotland in their Super 12 Group II match on Friday.

Virat Kohli elected to field after winning his first toss of the tournament and the 2007 title holders bundled out the Scots for 85 in 17.4 overs at the Dubai International Stadium.

KL Rahul blasted an 18-ball fifty as India chased down the paltry target in 6.3 overs for their second win in four matches.

Unbeaten Pakistan have already qualified from the group with eight points.

New Zealand beat Namibia earlier on Friday to sit in second place on six points with India third on four.

Importantly for Kohli's team, they now have the best net run-rate in the group should it be required in case of any qualification logjam.

"I don't want to say too much about today because we know how we can play," Kohli said after the win. "We spoke about 100-120 max, but we restricted them to a total that allowed us to leapfrog everyone else."

"We spoke about finishing in the 8-10 over bracket."

India's fate in the tournament is beyond their control after thrashings by Pakistan and New Zealand in their first two games.



Hurkacz Seals ATP Finals Spot In Paris

PARIS (AFP) - Hubert Hurkacz qualified for the season-ending ATP Finals on Friday after seeing off a stern challenge from Australian journeyman James Duckworth 6-2, 6-7(4/7), 7-5 in the Paris Masters quarter-final.

The 24-year-old Pole will be looking to go one better than his compatriot, 2012 finalist Jerzy Janowicz, in Paris.

He will have a tricky semi-final as he faces the winner of world number one Novak Djokovic or in-form big-serving American Taylor Fritz. "It is crazy," said Hurkacz referring to his Masters qualification. "The match was so hard today, knowing that I had to win the match.

"That obviously upped the pressure a little on me too."

Hurkacz had looked well in control as he eased through the first set 6-2.

However, 55th ranked Duckworth levelled the match with a commanding performance in the tie-break -- wagging his fingers at the crowd after taking it 7/4.

Seventh-seeded Hurkacz put real pressure on Duckworth in his first service game of the second set before the Australian took it after eight minutes of to-ing and fro-ing.

Duckworth took Hurkacz to duce at 5-5 before the Pole held his serve but it was the Australian who came under pressure in the next game, saving two match points.

Hurkacz, though, took the match at the third opportunity, the Wimbledon semi-finalist raising his arms and then punching the air in delight.

