

Health Ministry Announced on Tuesday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 128,406 With 134 More Iranians Killed by the Deadly Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

The Judiciary Spokesman Zabiullah Khodaeian Says That the Judiciary System Has Taken Significant Steps To Classify prisons and Separate Offenders From Each Other Based On Their Committed Crimes

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Iranian Automakers To Produce Trucks With Chinese Help

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has signed contracts with two domestic automakers to produce 6,000 trucks with the help of Chinese manufacturers, the head of Iran's Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization said on Tuesday.

"Good things have happened in the automotive industry and efforts have been made to use domestic capacity to modernize the truck fleet," Dariush Amani told reporters in Tehran.

"In this regard, a contract for 1,000 units has been signed with Mammut Company and 5,000 units with Iran Khodro. We are now working to secure finance for these contracts," he added.

The Mammut Industrial Group, also known as Mammut Industries, assembled and distributed Swedish truck maker Scania's vehicles in Iran. Similarly, Iran Khodro was the local distributor of German automaker Mercedes-Benz's trucks. However, both the European companies halted their operations in Iran after the US reimposed sanctions on the Islamic Republic in 2018.

"Given that we are under sanctions, Chinese companies are mainly the suppliers of domestically produced truck engines," Amani said.

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Iran Oil Sales Program Moving Ahead as Planned

TEHRAN (IFP) - President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi says Tehran is pressing ahead with its oil sales program successfully.

Raisi added that the revenues from crude exports have increased the Islamic Republic's foreign and domestic currency reserves and this is helping boost the country's economy.

Raisi was speaking before Parliament on Tuesday.

He added that Iran has already taken good economic steps which have decreased worries over resources such as basic goods and supplies.

He also referred to Iran's foreign policy with regard to relations with other countries. He underlined Iran's policy to prioritize ties with neighbors.

The president however said Iran already has good ties with nations that want interaction with the Islamic Republic based on mutual respect and dignity. On the Covid vaccination campaign, the president said Iran has taken a good step toward protecting the lives of citizens by providing 100 million doses of vaccine for the inoculation program.

Raisi said although the danger has not been fully averted, people are not concerned over access to vaccine and the situation has changed.

The president also noted that Iran's development today requires solidarity between the government and Parliament.

Majlis Rejects President's Second Pick For Education Minister



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iranian lawmakers once again did not vote in favor of President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi's proposed education minister and rejected his pick Masoud Fayyazi.

140 lawmakers voted against Fayyazi and 115 voted for.

The nomination was put to vote on Tuesday after Parliament reviewed the qualifications of the proposed Minister of Education with Raisi making a speech in defense of his pick with pros and cons delivering their own addresses before Parliament.

At the end of the voting, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf asked the president to introduce his next pick for the Ministry of Education in due course.

An Iranian MP says the president has one week to introduce his new nominee for Education Minister. Seyyed Nezameddin Mousavi, spokesman for the parliament presiding board said after Raisi's first pick lost the confidence vote, he was given three months under the law to propose any number of nominees and win the vote of confidence.

He added that seven days are left from that three-month period.

Mousavi said in the past, the period has been extended following approval by the Leader of Islamic Revolution. But he urged the president to introduce his new pick for Education Minister as soon as possible.

Addressing Majlis in defense of his pick, the president called the best method in the process of selecting ministers 'competence' and said that media pressure and friendship would not lead to the introduction of a minister.

Raisi stated that in the process of selecting the minister, workgroups were formed, and more than twenty people were interviewed; particular emphasis was placed on anti-corruption, having a revolutionary spirit, efficiency, and the spirit of change.

"Among all the studies conducted, Fayyazi enjoyed an acceptable and privileged position, and even a few former ministers of education approved of him," he added.

Pointing out that recommendations are not effective for introducing any official, Raisi stressed that the criterion for qualification is on him.

In defense of his proposed education minister, the president said: "He has been a teacher for many years and knows the class, education, and course content."

"Massoud Fayyazi has been the director-general of the education staff, sometimes he has been the designer of virtual education, he has been in charge of technology in the ministry and he is familiar with publishing," Raisi said.

In August, Majlis had rejected Raisi's pick for education ministry and he has now three months deadline to name his pick for this job.

ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

JCOA and Observance of Commitments

As November 29 is approaching and the world is getting ready for resumption of talks on Iran's nuclear issue and revival of the JCOA, there are different voices on the talks which are to be resumed in Vienna.

Since the U.S. withdrawal of the JCOA and its breaching of international commitments especially regarding the JCOA, the Islamic Republic of Iran has resumed its nuclear activities based on its commitments and has put aside its voluntary commitments and this move has angered the West but despite breaching the commitment by the U.S., the West is trying to blame Iran and has tried to increase the pressure on Tehran to return to the point where it was in 2015 while the West does not want to return to that point and fulfilling its promises to lift sanctions.

But the Islamic Republic of Iran is now in a new era where it has a revolutionary president which pursues the ideals of the Islamic Republic and is not ready to bow to the pressures and bullies, and he is not ready to give any concession to the West to please it.

As the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran has defined the policy of the country for talks on the nuclear issue and set the red-line, the country will only accept the deal when all sanctions are removed and be verified because the country has a bitter experience from the past and the 2015 deal as the U.S. withdrew from it unilaterally and other Western signatories followed their boss in continuing sanctions on Tehran.

Now the Islamic Republic of Iran is to send a new negotiating team to Vienna to fight for the country's interests and not for the personal interests.

Iran Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian says there is consensus among the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and world countries about the United States' culpability in the current situation that surrounds the deal.

So this is one part of the story to blame the culprit but the main part of the story is to lift the sanctions and without lifting sanctions no deal will be possible. This time the negotiating team is vigilant and will not be fooled by the Western side and they will sign a deal to meet all of Iran's demands.

"And some [other] parties contributed to creation of the unacceptable current situation through their irresponsible behavior and silence in the face of the US's excessive demands," Amir-Abdollahian added.

He was referring to refusal by the UK, France, and Germany--the US's allies in the deal--to defy the sanctions after Washington initiated its violations. See Page 7

Losses From Southern Iran Quakes Estimated at \$25m

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The Iranian government's estimates show that two quakes that hit areas in southern province of Hormozgan on Saturday have incurred around \$25 million in losses.

Hormozgan's Governor Mehdi Doosti said on Monday that initial loss estimates from the quakes that struck two southern counties of the province had amounted to 7 trillion rials.

Doosti said the estimate mainly covered the damage caused to residential units and the infrastructure in those regions.

He said the quakes had caused partial or total damage to nearly 3,000 houses, mostly in villages, in Hormozgan.

At least one person was killed and dozens were injured in the magnitude of 6.0 and magnitude of 6.3 earthquakes that hit areas near the port city of Bandar Abbas on Sunday.

Authorities have said that basic services including electricity has been fully restored in areas affected by the quakes.

Doosti said government agencies had handed out nearly 3,000 tents to people left homeless by the earthquakes.

He said the operation to rebuild the houses destroyed in the quakes will begin later this week.



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75% of Yemeni Kids Chronically Malnourished

GENEVA (Dispatches) - The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that 75 percent of Yemeni children suffer from acute malnutrition, as Saudi Arabia keeps bombing the southern impoverished neighbor in defiance of international calls to end its bloody war.

In a post on its Twitter account on Monday, the UN agency responsible for international public health warned that three out of four children in Yemen are "chronically malnourished."

It also estimated that 16.2 million Yemenis - more than half of the country's population of 30 million - are food insecure. Acute malnutrition is responsible for almost one-third of all deaths in children under five years of age. It damages a child's physical development and causes intellectual or cognitive impairment among those who survive. Malnutrition is largely irreversible, perpetuating illness, poverty, and inequality.

Back in February, four UN agencies, including the WHO, warned that acute malnutrition and severe acute malnutrition have increased by 16 and 22 percent, respectively, among Yemeni children under five years of age from 2020.

The figures are among the highest levels of malnutrition recorded in the country since the Saudi war began in 2015, they added.

"The increasing number of children going hungry in Yemen should shock us all into action," said UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore at the time. "More children will die with every day that passes without action. Humanitarian organizations need urgent predictable resources and unhindered access to communities on the ground to be able to save lives."

Today, Yemen is one of the most dangerous places in the world for children to grow up, with high rates of communicable diseases, limited access to health services, and inadequate sanitation and hygiene systems.

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Mali Hails IRCS Medical Services

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Some members of Mali's cabinet paid a visit to the health center operated by Iran's Red Crescent Society (IRCS), praising their activity.

Mali's Minister of Health and Public Hygiene Dr. Diéminatou SANGARÉ, Communications Minister Arouna Touré and Housing and Urban Planning Minister Ibrahim Kamena as well as Iran's Ambassador to Mali visited the health center operation by Iranian IRSC.

During the visit, the Iranian Ambassador discussed the problems with regards to medical supply and the possibility of investment by the Iranian private sector to launch a dialysis center and a portable dialysis device in the country.

Tehran Serious in Nuclear Talks for Lifting All Sanctions

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Emphasizing the need to lift all sanctions against the Iranian people, President Ebrahim Raisi said that his administration is serious in nuclear talks for lifting all sanctions.

Ebrahim Raisi made the remarks in a phone conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday.

Referring to the intention of the Islamic Republic of Iran to develop trade and economic relations with Russia, the Iranian President said, "We are ready to finalize the comprehensive document of long-term cooperation between the two countries so that the process of further enhancing relations and cooperation between Iran and Russia can be implemented quickly."

Raisi also pointed to the common positions of the two countries on bilateral, regional and international issues, saying, "Countering unilateralism and consolidating multilateralism are among the similarities of the two countries."

The Iranian President stressed the need for joint cooperation between the two countries on regional issues, adding, "The continuation of the presence of foreigners in Syria is against the will of the Syrian people and government because it threatens the stability and security of this country."

Elsewhere in his remarks, Raisi pointed to the developments in Afghanistan, saying that the presence of ISIL in the country is dangerous for the region.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran believes in the establishment of an inclusive government with the presence of all ethnic and political groups," he noted, adding that the formation of such a government can guarantee the security of this country.

Appreciating Russia's stance in supporting Iran's nuclear rights and the need to lift all sanctions imposed on the Iranians, Raisi said that his administration is quite



serious in nuclear talks for lifting all sanctions against the Iranian people.

The President also welcomed Russia's initiative for stability and peace in the Caucasus region. "Any change in geopolitics and change of borders of the countries of the region is not acceptable," the two sides stressed.

Raisi further appreciated the assistance of the President and the Russian government in Iran's membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Vladimir Putin, for his part, said that Moscow supports Tehran's proposals in drafting a new document on long-term cooperation between the two countries, adding, "We are determined to finalize and implement it as soon as possible."

Moscow attaches great importance to improving the level of economic relations and finalizing joint investment programs with Iran, Putin stressed.

Russian President also pointed to the cooperation of the two countries in regional issues, especially Syria, saying that the two countries should continue their close cooperation in various regional areas.

Supporting the rights of the Iranian people in the nuclear issue, Putin expressed hope that in future negotiations, the parties will have sufficient political will to resolve the issues in talks.

Deputy FM Discusses JCPOA With Chinese, Russian Counterparts



TEHRAN (IRNA)- Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani talked with his Chinese and Russian counterparts, Ma Zhaoxu, and Sergei Ryabkov on Monday through videoconference, on upcoming nuclear talks for removal of sanctions.

Baqeri Kani in the videoconference talk referred to the Islamic Republic of Iran's relations with the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, as well as the three countries' shared stances on various international issues, such as the basic policy of favoring and promoting multilateralism and demoting unilateralism.

He added that the unjust, unilateral sanctions imposed against the Islamic Republic of Iran by the United States are the cost Iran is paying for objecting to the American unilateralism.

Bagheri Kani said that it is necessary that the entire sanctions contrary to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 to be removed in line with interests of the Iranian economy and normalizing Iran's economic and commercial ties, as a condition for the success of the upcoming negotiations.

The deputy foreign minister for political affairs while referring to his recent consultations with French, German, British and Spanish diplomats on the upcoming negotiations, reiterated that the effective termination of the illegal US sanctions is a necessity, and the main priority for the upcoming negotiations.

The Chinese and Russian deputy foreign ministers, too, in the videoconference emphasized the need for the continuation of trilateral consultations and harmony in various issues.

They said that the unilateral U.S. exit from the JCPOA and re-imposing of anti-Iranian sanctions were the major cause for the emergence of the existing problems for implementations of Iran's agreements with the former P5+1.

Iran-China Relations Ready To Surge

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Head of Iran-China Friendship Association said that important developments have taken place in Iran after this year's presidential election that lead to the emergence of a President who aligns with the Supreme Leader on China, proving grounds for a surge in Tehran-Beijing relations.

In an interview with China Radio International on Tuesday, Alaeddin Boroujerdi elaborated on Iran's "look to the east policy", saying that the West led by the United States historically hasn't had a good relationship with Iran and they have always had a hostile stance towards Iran, just as we see today that the US has a hostile approach towards China.

That's why China has taken determined stances against U.S. infringement of Beijing's defined red lines which is an admirable measure, Boroujerdi said, adding that naturally Iran can never have a strategic relationship with the West.

We have never seen a single dark spot in the history of Iran-China relations which has been even growing since Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979, he further elaborated.

Despite U.S. discontent over the development, the former National Security and Foreign Policy Commission chair in Iranian Parliament said, Iran and China strengthen their strategic ties in any circumstances, since they are sovereign countries and decide on their own.

He said that the recent signing of the 25-year strategic cooperation document by Iran and China was a good indicator of this relationship which has previously seen various agreements and deals signed by leaders of both countries.

Iran-China relations could be traced back to thousands of years ago through joint trade activity along the Silk Road, Boroujerdi said, adding that China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was in one sense an effort to revive the ancient Silk Road and Iran enjoys a sustainable security required for such projects.

He expressed hope that the Islamic Republic of Iran would retain its position in the significant path and the required measures and signing of agreements be done as soon as possible.

Contrary to the U.S. that illegally interferes here and there in the world and wages war everywhere, Boroujerdi said, China's presence in different regions, from Africa to Asia, has been in line with strengthening trade and political ties.

Iran Determined to Expand Cooperation With Italy

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - In a phone talk on Monday with his Italian counterpart Luigi Di Maio, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said that the Iranian new government is determined to expand cooperation with friendly countries, including Italy.

Amir-Abdollahian reviewed and exchanged views with his Italian counterpart on the latest status of bilateral relations, regional and international developments in the phone conversation.

He said that the Iran-Italy diplomatic ties date back to 160 years ago, which is quite a good and rich background for further expanding of political, economic, and cultural ties, reiterating that the new Iranian government is determined to provide an atmosphere of mutual respect based on the concealed capacities and opportunities with friendly countries, such as Italy to expand cooperation with them.

The Iranian foreign minister expressed delight that the path is well paved for further expansion of bilateral relations, especially in industrial, agricultural, medical, scientific, technological, and keeping in mind the past record of excellent bilateral ties and further strengthening of them.

Amir-Abdollahian also referred to Italy's forwarding of Covax to Iran among the noticeable points in friendly cooperation between the two countries.

Referring to the issue of the upcoming Vienna negotiations, Amir-Abdollahian said that the entire sides have come up with the shared viewpoints that the United States is the main violator and responsible side for the current condition of the nuclear deal, while some sides have in an irresponsible behavior remained silent about the US totalitarian approach, and in fact played



roles in the emergence of the unacceptable current conditions.

The foreign minister emphasized that the new Iranian administration is quite a pragmatist and goal-oriented, and has shared its viewpoints with all sides of the negotiations, hoping for reaching a good agreement, which is in need or full return of all negotiating sides to their JCPOA commitments.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Amir-Abdollahian pointed to the

latest development in Afghanistan and voiced support one more time for the establishment of an all-encompassing government, stressing that the illegitimate American presence there and its catastrophic departure are the causes for intensifying the chaotic conditions there.

He said that the deteriorating human catastrophe there and the flood of Afghan refugees into other countries, including Iran, too, are the outcome of the U.S. policies.

Amir-Abdollahian said that there are over four million Afghan refugees in Iran, adding that Iran is ready for forwarding humanitarian aids of the different countries, including Italy, to Afghanistan now.

He also referred to the deteriorating human catastrophe in Yemen, asking for intensification of diplomatic efforts aimed at ending the siege and war in Yemen.

The Italian foreign minister, for his part, emphasized Rome's will for furthermore expansion of bilateral ties with Iran; expressed satisfaction over the continued efforts for achieving results from the upcoming Vienna negotiations, and expressed hope that they will lead to favorable results that can lead to further expansion of Iran-Italy economic ties.

Luigi Di Maio also reflected Italy's viewpoints on some bilateral and regional issues.

Tehran, Vienna Call for Developing Cultural, Artistic Relations

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili in a meeting with Ambassador of the Republic of Austria in Tehran Wolf Dietrichheim on Tuesday stressed the development of cultural and artistic relations with Austria.

Esmaeili met and held talks with Dietrichheim in Tehran on Tuesday.

Pointing to the history of cultural relations between Iran and Austria, Esmaeili said that there is a cultural perspective in Iran towards Austria and Iranians know Austria with its cultural identity.

Referring to the necessity of dialogue between the two states, he also expressed hope for the expansion of mutual cooperation in the areas of cinema, drama, music, and visual arts.

Stressing that Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi pays special attention to the expansion of cultural and artistic interactions with other countries, he added that Iran's president looks for the expansion of cultural and artistic interactions with other countries as a prelude to other interactions in the economic and political sectors.

Wolf Dietrichheim, for his part, said that culture has a special position in Austria and cultural relations are more pronounced than other relations in diplomatic relations for this country.

Referring to Iran's historical, cultural and artistic history, Dietrichheim stated that Iran has a long historical and civilizational history and Austria is interested in introducing this history and culture in its own country.



U.S. Behind Cuba Riots

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh slammed Washington's blatant intervention in internal affairs of independent and freedom-seeking countries, namely Cuba, saying the U.S. is sponsoring riots in Cuba to interfere in its internal affairs.

Khatibzadeh attributed the defeat of US plot to wage riots in Cuba to the empathy between Cuban nation and government.

Calling for an end to U.S.' economic and unilateral sanctions against Cuba, he said that the sanctions were imposed to create dissatisfaction among people.

He also said that the U.S. is seeking interference in internal affairs of Cuba, violating international law.

In the framework of its principled stances, Iran sympathizes with Cuba and once again terms U.S. sanctions which are the main cause of economic problems of people in Cuba as illegal.

If Washington is honest in supporting Cuban people, it must first end its illegitimate economic sanctions against Cuba, he said.

As the U.S. destabilizing measures were defeated, Cuban people and government will also overcome problems and foil the wishful thinking of those who try to interfere.

Iran Condemns Terrorist Attack in Burkina Faso

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh expressed sympathy towards Burkina Faso on the death of several people in a terrorist attack.

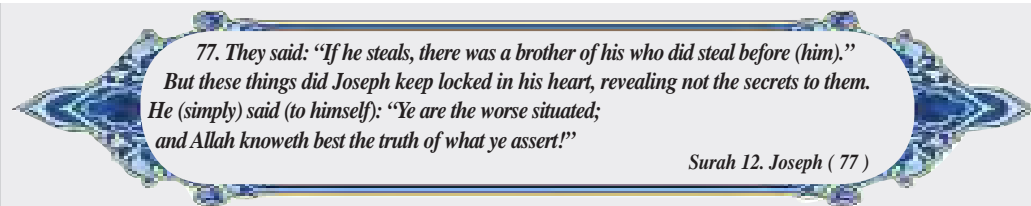
In a message released on Tuesday, Khatibzadeh offered his condolences to the government and people of Burkina Faso and the families of the victims, expressing 'sympathy and deep sorrow' over the death of several people in the terrorist attack that took place on Monday.

Khatibzadeh condemned any terrorist act, announcing Iran's readiness to cooperate with Burkina Faso and other friendly countries in West Africa and convey experiences on fighting against terrorism.



PRAYER TIME

| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| ■ Noon (Zohr) | 11:49 |
| ■ Evening (Maghreb) | 17:15 |
| ■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr) | 05:16 |
| ■ Tomorrow's Sunrise | 06:43 |



Iran-Turkey Trade Exchanges Valued at \$5b

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Head of Tabriz Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mine and Agriculture says the amount of trade volume between Iran and Turkey is currently around \$5b which shows a slight growth comparing to last year but it is far beyond 2016 and 2017 after Iran signed the JCPOA.

Speaking to ILNA, Younes Zhaeleh talked about the latest trade condition of Iran and Turkey and said the amount of the trade exchange between the two countries this year has slightly grown comparing to last year but it is still far from the volume which was registered in 2016 and 2017. He went on to say that after the JCPOA and in 2016 and 2017 the bilateral trade was around \$7b but this year it is around \$5b which shows 2b decline but this year's trade has been better than last year. He noted although presidents of the two states have set a 30-billion-dollar target for bilateral trade the volume has not grown.

Zhaeleh went on to say that both countries should reconsider in some of their economic policies. He said Turkey buys oil, gas and petrochemicals from Iran and



due to some policies in supporting the domestic production Iran stops imports with the preferential tariffs and this issue should be reconsidered.

He said Iran and Turkey for 400 years have been friends and there has been no war between the two countries and there has also been no major dispute between them although the Caucasus issues created some problems but currently there is no problem and trade and travel between the two countries are active.

On construction of a dam by Turkey which will affect both Iran and Iraq, he said Turkey has constructed Ilisu Dam on Tigris River on its own soil and definitely will affect the Tigris River in Iraq and Iran, and therefore they have to pay water right to both countries and probably it will not affect Iran too much.

Zhaeleh noted that Iran and Turkey have many common interests, and Iran can sell its gas to Turkey and it also can sell its gas to Europe via Turkey and in return Turkey can get transit right and both countries benefit the deal.

He went on to say that Turkey also can sell its products to Afghanistan, Pakistan and China via Iran and therefore both countries need to reconsider their trade behaviors in order to boost their economic relations. The two states enjoy many cultural and ethnical commonalities and should take advantage of it, he added.

Head of SATBA Visits MAPNA Wind Turbine Manufacturing Plant



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Deputy Energy Minister and Managing Director of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) with his presence at Pars Generator Company paid a visit to the main hall of wind turbine and generator manufacturing of the company as well as the research and technology hall and got acquainted with the capabilities and products of the MAPNA Group.

During the visit and addressing the participants, the CEO of SATBA Mr. Mahmoud Kamani pointed to the programs of the energy ministry for developing renewable energies and emphasized the necessity for a change in the approach from producing electricity from fossil fuel to the power plants with clean fuel.

He added that the plan of the ministry for construction of 10,000 megawatts of renewable energies has created a new climate in this field and currently a determination has been emerged which needs efforts and implementation.

Kamani went on to say that in order to reach a favorable condition in the global scene, the country needs efforts more than before. He also hailed MAPNA Group as a strong and capable set and said that the country can take advantage of the broad capacities of MAPNA in this field.

Then the CEO of MAPNA Group Mr. Abbas Aliabadi briefed the minister of the activities of the group in the different industrial fields and explained the achievements of the group in the field of renewable energies.

He said that the group currently is focused on manufacturing 2-megawatt and 2.5-megawatt wind turbines and in the near future, the group will focus on manufacturing 4-5 megawatt wind turbines, adding that the solution for expansion of renewable energies technologies in Iran needs license for export of electricity to other countries, and indigenization of the technology will make cheaper the price of power.

Aliabadi pointed to the role of electricity, transportation, construction and industries in the growth of CO2 and said the share of renewable energies in producing electricity in the power plants, electrification and digitalization of the systems should be taken into consideration.

Tehran Ready to Boost Economic Cooperation With Dhaka



TABRIZ (IRNA) - Deputy head of Tabriz Chamber of Commerce said here on Monday in a meeting with Bangladesh Embassy's economic attaché that Tabriz Chamber is ready for increasing economic cooperation with that country.

Abolfath Ebrahimi said in the meeting with the Bangladesh diplomat that Iran's East Azarbaijan province is one of the country's most important industrial and agricultural poles, particularly in such fields as handwoven fine carpets, foodstuff, pastries, candies and chocolates, the lower hand spare part industries, car and tractor manufacturing, as the major industries of the province.

He said the Iran's East Azarbaijan province is the neighbor of countries that are the highway to Europe, and doing commerce with Muslim countries, such as Bangladesh is definitely a priority and therefore, the two sides must be more familiar with the economic capacities of each other. Ebrahimi expressed hope for further expansion of ties thanks to the current decrease in sanctions, arguing that East Azerbaijan province is capable of providing lots of the Import goods of Bangladesh, including machinery, machine tools, and tractors.

The deputy head of Tabriz Chamber of Commerce, meanwhile, expressed hope that by dispatching economic delegations of both countries the Iranian and Bangladeshi economic activists will get better informed about the capacities and needs of the other side.

Bangladesh Embassy's economic attaché in Iran, too, in the meeting expressed regret that the volume of the two countries' trade volume is very low and emphasized the need to increase it meaningfully, announcing that Bangladesh has the fastest economic growth rate in southeast Asia, and is the 10th in the world currently.

Julia Moin set example of some of her country's economic capacities as: the 2nd top exporter of clothes, the third exporter of vegetables, the 4th produces of rice, and the 3rd producer of fisheries in the world.

She added that Bangladesh has a high status in producing cotton threads, medicines, tea, sesame, tropical fruits, bicycles, and a number of other industries.

Moin said that there are 200 active weaving factories in Bangladesh, 25 of which are state-owned, and the rest are run by the private sector, manufacturers of electrical appliances, jewelry, and producers of dried nuts.

In the year 2013 the volume of Iran-Bangladesh was less than 20 million dollars, which in recent years has become parallel to the further easing of the economic ties between Iran and other countries while the two countries' trade volume increased to more than 100 million dollars.

Iran, Azerbaijan Hold Roads Transportation Expert Commission

BAKU (IRNA) - The meeting of Islamic Republic of Iran and Republic of Azerbaijan expert commission on roads transportation began on Monday in Baku, the capital city of Azerbaijan.

The Iranian experts delegation, headed by Javad Hedayati, the managing director of Transit Office of the Iran Roads and Transportations Organization is commissioned to survey the ways for the two countries' cooperation in roads transportations and facilitating it for the two nations.

Highlighting the great significance of the meeting, Hedayati said: In this bilateral commission both the difficulties and the obstacles in the way of expansion of commercial and roads transportations between Iran and Azerbaijan Republic will be surveyed.

"We are determined to design and initiate new plans in collaboration with our colleagues from Azerbaijan Republic so that the projects will be defined in a goal-oriented method to facilitate the road transportation between the two countries, especially at the border points, by decreasing the transportation costs, and by taking advantage of the emerged conditions aimed at development of regional transportations, and especially in the North-South Corridor," he said.

Anar Rezayev, the head of the Azerbaijan Republic state office for roads and transportations services, too, emphasized the need for increased cooperation for further facilitating transportations between the two countries.

He referred to the old ties and numerous commonalties between Iran and Azerbaijan Republic, saying that they serve as a good platform for comprehensive cooperation.

Anar Rezayev referred to the existing potentials for further expansion of cooperation in roads and transportations and transit, and expressed certainty that both sides will be benefitted from such bilateral transactions.

The Azerbaijan Republic official also said any difficulty and obstacle in the way of materializing those objectives, too, can be resolved.

The experts commission of Iran and Azerbaijan Republic will also continue its work on Tuesday.

Iran, Russia Discuss Religious, Cultural Cooperation

TEHRAN (IQNA) – An Iranian envoy met and held talks with religious authority in Russia, conferring on ways to boost bilateral ties.

Iran's cultural attaché to Russia Masoud Ahmadvand held a meeting with Mufti Demir Mukhetdinov, First Deputy Chairman of the Muslim Spiritual Administration of the Russian Federation and the head of the Moscow Islamic Institute.

The Russian mufti hailed the role and effects of Iran's culture and civilization on Muslims in Russia, noting, "The Persian language was among the main languages among Russian Muslims and prior to the Soviet era, and most Muslim scholars knew Arabic, Persian, and Turkish."

According to the remained evidence, he continued, at least three muftis used Persian in their bilateral letters. Noting that Islam entered the region through Bukhara and Transoxiana, Mukhetdinov stressed that these areas were Persian-speaking.

Despite the far geographical distance, there was a strong link between Khorasan and Volga regions, he added. He also explained some of the plans that the administration is set to perform on the occasion of the 1100th anniversary of the adoption of Islam.

For his part, the Iranian envoy expressed readiness to cooperate with the Russian organizations for introducing influential Iranian Muslim scholars during the upcoming event.

Reflecting on the mufti's remarks about the Persian language, Ahmadvand said Iran's cultural office is ready to reopen the Iran Room at Moscow Islamic Institute for teaching Persian to students while also sending them to Iran for complementary courses on the Persian language.



100 Years of Museum In Iran Confab to Be Held on Saturday

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran is holding a conference entitled "100 Years of Museum in Iran" on the occasion of 75th anniversary of International Council of Museum (ICOM) on November 20.

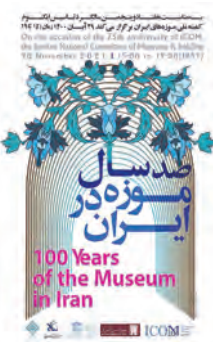
The conference has been organized by Iranian National Committee of Museums in collaboration with Post and Communications Museum.

The head of Post and Communications Museum Hassan Amidi pointed to ICOM's this year theme "The Future of Museums – Recover and Reimagine" and said that the conference will address the developments taken place in the last 100 years regarding museums in Iran.

Museums constitute a bridge between our past, present, and future and mutely speak a thousand words, Amidi said.

He added that Post and Communications Museum has helped other museums in Iran launch virtual museums, which has been noticed by Universal Postal Union and ICOM.

The conference will be held on November 20 from 15:00 to 18:00 and livestreamed on Iran Post page at Aparat video platform.



UK Raises Terror Threat Level After Liverpool Taxi Blast

LONDON (Dispatches) - Britain raised its terrorism threat level today after a deadly explosion outside a hospital in Liverpool in an attack involving a homemade bomb that was reportedly foiled by a quick-thinking taxi driver.

Interior minister Priti Patel said intelligence officials had increased the threat from “substantial” to “severe”—the second-highest level meaning an attack is highly likely.

Patel said the decision was made because Sunday’s blast, which destroyed a taxi and killed a passenger outside the Liverpool Women’s Hospital, was the second incident in a month.



Egypt Tightens Rules on Unvaccinated Officials, Students

CAIRO (AFP) - Egypt on Monday barred officials and students not vaccinated against Covid-19 from government offices and universities unless they show a negative PCR test.

Officials who have not had a jab must show a PCR test, which is prohibitively expensive in Egypt, “every three days to access their workplace”, the tourism and antiquities ministry said after a government order was issued.

The same rules apply for students to access universities, state newspaper Al-Ahram said.

The North African nation said the restrictions will be extended from December 1 to apply to all Egyptians.



NATO Warns Russia Over Ukraine Military Build-Up



BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg warned Russia on Monday that the western military alliance was standing by Ukraine amid a large and unusual concentration of Russian troops on Ukraine’s borders.

Stressing that the important thing now was to prevent situations from spiralling out of control, Stoltenberg urged Russia to be transparent about military activities, to reduce tensions and prevent an escalation.

“We have to be clear-eyed, we need to be realistic about the challenges we face. And what we see is a significant, large Russian military build-up,” Stoltenberg told a news conference with Ukraine’s Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba in Brussels.

He said he did not want to speculate about Russia’s intentions but added: “We see an unusual concentration of troops, and we know that Russia has been willing to use these types of military capabilities before to conduct aggressive actions against Ukraine.”

The Russian troop movements have over the past days spurred fears of a possible attack. Moscow has dismissed such suggestions as inflammatory and complained about increasing activity in the region by the NATO transatlantic alliance.

Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and says the waters around it belong to Moscow now, despite most countries continuing to recognise the peninsula as Ukrainian.

Workers unload a shipment of ammunition delivered as part of the United States of America’s security assistance to Ukraine, at the Boryspil International Airport outside Kyiv, Ukraine November 14, 2021. Picture taken November 14, 2021. Press service of the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine/Handout via REUTERS

Russian-backed separatists took control of Ukraine’s eastern Donbass region that same year and soldiers on both sides continue to be regularly killed in the conflict there.

The troop border build-up - which Ukraine last week estimated at 100,000 - was dangerous, said Stoltenberg, because it reduced the amount of warning time, should Russia decide to “conduct a military aggressive action against Ukraine.”

“This is partly forces close to the border between Russia and Ukraine, but it is also partly troops and capabilities which are inside Ukraine, meaning they are in Crimea, which is illegally annexed, and also we see the militants, the separatists in Donbass, which is also part of Ukraine, supported and helped by Russia,” he said.

A NATO source, asked to describe how Russia is going about deploying its military equipment towards Ukraine, said: “large equipment such as tanks, self-propelled artillery and infantry fighting vehicles is moved at night to avoid tell-tale pictures showing up on social media as they did during the Russian military build-up in spring.”

New Centrist Party Wins Bulgarian Election

SOFIA (Dispatches) - A new centrist political party won Bulgaria’s parliamentary election, partial official results showed, boosting hopes for an end to months of political deadlock in the European Union’s poorest member state.

The anti-graft We Continue The Change party (PP), launched only two months ago by two Harvard-educated entrepreneurs who served as interim ministers, won 25.5% of the vote, based on 93% of ballots counted from Sunday’s election, Bulgaria’s third this year.

After two previous elections in April and July produced an inconclusive outcome, Bulgarian voters are keen to see a new government formed quickly to tackle a dire COVID-19 situation, surging energy prices and widespread graft.

“I voted for what we are fighting for and hoping to happen - a more serious change in everything, so that we can have a better life here, at least for our children,” Kostadin Manov, a 39-year-old father of two, said after casting his vote in Sofia.

“This corruption and all this theft should stop.”

But the partial results show the next parliament will be even more fragmented than in April and July, with seven parties represented.

Voter turnout in Sunday’s vote is estimated at about

40% - a historic low amid public disillusionment and apathy and also coronavirus infections that have left hospitals overwhelmed.

The center-right GERB party of long-serving premier Boyko Borissov came in second with 22.2% of the vote. His decade-long rule ended with the April election amid public anger over his failure to crack down on corruption.

President Rumen Radev, a harsh critic of Borissov, won 49.4% of votes in a presidential election that also took place on Sunday and is tipped to win a second five-year term in the largely ceremonial post in a runoff set for Nov. 21.

Analysts said the new PP party looked better positioned to seal a coalition with the support of the Socialists, the anti-graft alliance Democratic Bulgaria and the ITN party of TV talk show host Slavi Trifonov.

However, tough coalition negotiations lie ahead before a workable government can be formed.

“Negotiations will likely be challenging... Nonetheless, the urgent need for a stable government will likely facilitate compromises on all sides, at least in the near term,” said Andrius Tursa of consulting firm Teneo in a note.



EU Agrees New Sanctions on Belarus, Airlines Over Border Crisis

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - The European Union agreed on Monday to step up sanctions against Belarus, which denounced as “absurd” Western accusations that it was driving a migrant crisis that has left thousands of people stranded in freezing forests on its borders with the EU.

The Western bloc is seeking to stop what it says is a policy by Belarus to push migrants towards it in revenge for earlier sanctions over a crackdown on protests last year against veteran leader Alexander Lukashenko’s contested re-election.

Migrants - mostly from Iraq and Afghanistan - began appearing on Belarus’ land borders with the EU this year, trying to cross into member states Lithuania, Latvia and Poland via routes not used before.

“This inhumane system of using refugees as tools to exert pressure on the European Union ... has got worse over the last days,” said German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas, pledging to target those involved in what he called “human trafficking”.

The top EU diplomat, Josep Borrell, said a fifth package of sanctions had been agreed by EU foreign ministers and would be finalised in the coming days. They would target airlines, travel agencies and individuals involved in “this illegal push of migrants”, he said.



U.S. Imposes Sanctions on Nine Nicaraguans

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States imposed sanctions on nine Nicaraguan officials while Britain targeted Vice President Rosario Murillo, President Daniel Ortega’s wife, in a coordinated response on Monday to an election that many countries have denounced as a sham.

The U.S. sanctions, which included the energy minister, vice minister of finance and an entire government ministry, followed Ortega’s re-election to a fourth consecutive term on Nov. 7 after jailing political rivals and cracking down on critical media.

U.S. President Joe Biden had accused Ortega, a former Marxist guerrilla leader, of organizing a “pantomime” election in the Central American nation, and U.S. officials have pledged to work with allies to ratchet up the pressure.

“The United States is sending an unequivocal message to President Ortega, Vice President Murillo and their inner circle that we stand with the Nicaraguan people in their calls for reform and a return to democracy,” Andrea Gacki, director of the U.S. Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control, said in a statement.

A senior State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said last week that a sanctions announcement would be the first in a series of steps the U.S. government will “ramp up over time.”

Previous sanctions imposed by Biden and his predecessor Donald Trump failed to deter Ortega, and many analysts are skeptical whether new measures will have much impact.

The Nicaraguan government did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Monday’s announcement.

Ortega has derided his U.S. critics as “Yankee imperialists” and accused them of trying to undermine Nicaragua’s electoral process. Cuba, Venezuela and Russia all have offered Ortega their backing.

The Washington-based Organization of American States (OAS) on Friday adopted a resolution saying Nicaragua’s election lacked “democratic legitimacy.” Twenty-five nations voted in favor and seven abstained, including Mexico, Honduras and Bolivia.

Former French PM Appeals Five-Year Sentence for Corruption

PARIS (Dispatches) - A French court on Monday began hearing an appeal by former prime minister François Fillon against a conviction in a corruption scandal that torpedoed his presidential ambitions and sealed the rise of Emmanuel Macron.

After five years of turbulent Socialist rule the conservative Fillon, now aged 67, was hotly tipped to win back the presidency for the right in 2017. But three months before the vote, his campaign was hit by revelations that his wife Penelope was paid over €800,000 (\$915,000) over 15 years for a suspected fake job as a parliamentary assistant.

Fillon, a former MP who was premier from 2007 to 2012, denied any wrongdoing and refused to quit the race but was eliminated in the first round after being charged with embezzling public funds.

In June 2020, a court ruled that Penelope’s job was either “fictitious or greatly overstated” and gave Fillon a five-year jail term, three years of which were suspended, and barred him from holding elected office for 10 years.

His Welsh-born wife, 66, received a suspended sentence.

Fillon, who subsequently retired from politics, was allowed to go free pending the outcome of the couple’s appeal.

The pair did not address reporters as they arrived at the courthouse in Paris on Monday.

Fillon is one of several senior French politicians to have been put on trial for corruption in recent years, most of them from the ranks of the conservatives.

His former boss, ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy, was given two prison sentences in two separate trials this year, one for attempting to corrupt a judge and the other for illegal campaign financing.

Sarkozy, who was France’s first postwar president to be sentenced to jail, has appealed against both rulings.

In 2011, center-right former president Jacques Chirac was given a suspended sentence over a party funding scandal while on the left, former budget minister Jérôme Cahuzac caused deep embarrassment after being found guilty of tax fraud.





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(adviser)

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J, balcony
marble fl
Fully Furn

Fereshteh Villa (\$5000)
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5bdrs, S/p
S, J, balcony
yard, & pkg
Fully Furn

(\$2700)
Mahmoodieh Apt
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S/p, S, J, yard
roof garden, F.F

Jordan (\$14000)
200sq.m, 3bdrs, pkg, F.F

Sa'adat abad (\$1200)
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(\$3000)
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GM to Launch 10 EVs in S.Korea by 2025

SEOUL (Dispatches) - General Motors Co will launch 10 electric vehicles (EVs) in South Korea by 2025, but has no plans yet to manufacture EVs in the country, Steven Kiefer, the head of GM's international operations said on Friday.

The No.1 U.S. automaker, which warned last year that persistent industrial action was preventing further investment in South Korea, builds EVs in the United States and China. It also has plans to build them in Mexico and Canada.

Kiefer's visit after a Korean labor union delegation went to Detroit in June had led to speculation in local media that he could announce new EV production plans.



Japan's Economy Shrinks More Than Expected

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Japan's economy contracted much faster than expected in the third quarter as global supply disruptions hit exports and business spending while new Covid-19 cases soured the consumer mood, undermining efforts to stoke a virtuous growth cycle.

While many analysts expect the world's third-largest economy to rebound this quarter as virus curbs ease, worsening global production bottlenecks pose increasing risks to export-reliant Japan.

"The contraction was far bigger than expected due to supply-chain constraints, which hit car output and capital spending hard," said Takeshi Minami, chief economist at Norinchukin Research Institute.

"We expect the economy to stage a rebound this quarter but the pace of recovery will be slow as consumption did not get off to a good start even after Covid-19 curbs were eased late in September."

The economy shrank an annualised 3.0 per cent in July-September after a revised 1.5 per cent gain in the second quarter, preliminary gross domestic product (GDP) data showed today, much worse than a median market forecast of a 0.8 per cent contraction.

The weak GDP contrasts with more promising readings from other advanced countries such as the United States, where the economy expanded 2.0 per cent in the third quarter on strong pent-up demand. In China, factory output and retail sales unexpectedly rose in October, data today showed, despite supply shortages and new Covid-19 curbs.

On a quarter-on-quarter basis, Japan's GDP fell 0.8 per cent compared with market forecasts for a 0.2 per cent decline.

Some analysts said Japan's heavy dependence on the auto industry meant its economy was more vulnerable to trade disruptions than other countries.

Shinichiro Kobayashi, principal economist at Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting, said automakers make up a large part of Japan's manufacturing sector with a wide range of subcontractors directly affected.



Lagarde Keeps Pushing Back On Rate Hike Bets and Hopes

FRANKFURT (Dispatches) - Tightening monetary policy now to rein in inflation could choke off the euro zone's recovery, European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde said today, pushing back on calls and market bets for tighter policy.

With inflation already twice its 2 per cent target and likely rising further later this year, the ECB is coming under increased pressure to abandon its ultra easy monetary policy and tackle price growth that is eroding households' purchasing power.

Speaking to European Union lawmakers, Lagarde admitted the inflation spike will be higher and longer than once thought but maintained it would fade next year, so policy action now would hit the economy just as price growth starts to moderate on its own.

"At a time when purchasing power is already being squeezed by higher energy and fuel bills, an undue tightening of financing conditions is not desirable, and would represent an unwarranted headwind for the recovery," Lagarde told a hearing of the European Parliament's committee on economic affairs.

"If we were to take any tightening measures now, it could cause far more harm than it would do any good," she said.

With commodity price soaring and supply chain bottlenecks persisting, inflation is proving to be more sticky than once predicted.

Similar to elsewhere, euro zone bond markets have rushed to position for higher inflation and the prospect of tighter monetary policy in the months ahead.

A key market gauge of euro zone inflation expectations is not far off the ECB's 2 per cent inflation target and money markets price in a first, 10-bp rate hike in September 2022. Bond yields edged up after Lagarde's comments.

Lagarde repeated that conditions for a rate hike in 2022 are "very unlikely" to be met but said she could not make a similar commitment for the following year.

"I don't think I would venture into 2023 but certainly for 2022 I repeat that point I made at the time," she said.

Deutsche Bank Chief Executive Officer Christian Sewing he disagreed with the narrative that inflation was temporary and called on global central banks to act.

"I think monetary policy must take countermeasures here — and sooner rather than later," Sewing said. "The supposed panacea of recent years — low interest rates with seemingly stable prices — has lost its effect, and now we are struggling with the side effects."

Lagarde admitted inflation is likely to be high for longer but bottlenecks were likely to ease next year and energy futures also point to a noticeable fall next year, suggesting that inflation will fall.

She noted wage growth could also accelerate but repeated that the ECB still did not see price growth lingering via so-called second-round effects.

Russian Central Bank Says High Inflation a Disaster

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russia's central bank chief warned that record-breaking inflation was a "real disaster" for the country and urged the government to take action.

Inflation in Russia has been rising steeply for months, reaching 8.1 per cent year-on-year in October — a record since 2016 and more than double the central bank's target.

Like around the world, food prices have skyrocketed, in a blow for a population with little savings.

"Inflation is a real disaster that makes people poorer," central bank chief Elvira Nabiullina said in an address to Russia's lower house of parliament.

Nabiullina, who is one of the few officials occasionally critical of government policies that are typically ordered by President Vladimir Putin, said that "high inflation really destroys prosperity".

"Inflation should return to the four per cent target at any cost," she told the State Duma.

The respected central bank chief has been sounding the alarm about rising inflation for months, raising the key rate — currently at 7.5 per cent — several times this year to curb skyrocketing prices.

She has been critical of government measures to cap prices of certain goods on Putin's orders, and today once again repeated her stance, deeming the move harmful to the economy.

Shepherded by Nabiullina, Russia's central bank has previously stopped runaway inflation and dragged the country out of economic crises. Drastically raising the key rate to 17 per cent in 2014, the central bank successfully curbed inflation after Russia was faced with a historical collapse of the ruble due to sanctions imposed over Moscow's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine and a drop in oil prices.

China October Industrial Output

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China's industrial output grew at a surprisingly faster pace in October, despite fresh curbs to control Covid-19 outbreaks and supply shortages that have threatened to undercut the recovery in the world's second-largest economy.

China's industrial output grew 3.5 per cent in October from the same period a year ago, official data showed on Monday, accelerating

from a 3.1 per cent increase in September. Retail sales growth also picked up.

The industrial output growth beat expectations of a 3.0 per cent year-on-year increase in a Reuters poll of analysts.

Retail sales in October rose 4.9 per cent on the year compared with the same period last year. Analysts in the poll had expected them to grow 3.5 per cent in October after rising 4.4 per cent in September.

Fixed asset investment slowed however, rising 6.1 per cent in the first 10 months from the same period a year earlier, compared with the 6.2 per cent increase tipped by a Reuters poll and the 7.3 per cent rise in January-September.

China's sprawling manufacturing sector has slowed this year, with output in September growing at its most feeble pace since March 2020 due to environmental curbs, power rationing and higher raw material prices.

Sentiment in China's property market has been shaken by a deepening debt crisis, with property giant China Evergrande and Kaisa Group grappling with looming defaults.

Regulators and the state council think-tank have held meetings with developers in the past few weeks, and the market is expecting some easing in credit and housing policies to prevent a hard landing for the sector.

China is also battling a new wave of Covid-19 cases in the north.

The economy had staged an impressive rebound from last year's pandemic slump but has since lost some momentum.

Gross domestic product expanded 4.9 per cent from a year ago in the third quarter, its slowest pace in a year.

China's official purchasing managers' index for October showed factory activity declined for a second straight month in October, hurt by persistently high raw material prices and softer domestic demand.

Thai Economy Shrinks, Hopes for Tourism-Led Recovery

BANGKOK (Dispatches) - Thailand's economy shrank in the third quarter, official data showed Monday, but hopes for a gradual recovery are picking up following this month's return of foreign tourists after the kingdom's reopening.

The country last year suffered its worst performance since the Asian financial crisis of 1997 with a 6.1 per cent economic contraction.

The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) said gross domestic pro

"The measures to control the outbreak affected the economic activities," said Danucha Pichayana, secretary general of the NESDB, on Monday during a news conference.

An outbreak in April this year saw the emergence of the highly contagious Delta variant, which led to reimposing tough restrictions on services and restaurants.

According to NESDC data, the food service and accommodation sector shrank 18.6 per cent July-September because of "a decrease in domestic tourism and household spending".

In Bangkok — a key hotspot during the Delta wave — restrictions only started to ease in recent weeks, with the government allowing certain restaurants to reopen and serve alcohol.



The relaxation of Covid restrictions — along with a gradual return of vaccinated foreign tourists since November 1 — has officials hopeful for growth of 1.2 per cent this year.

The country also expects five million tourists to return next year, bringing revenues of up to 440 billion baht (RM55.7 billion), said the NESDC.

Danucha said the forecast for 2022 is between 3.5 and 4.5 per cent as Thailand slowly recovers from the pandemic.

But with China — the source of most of Thailand's foreign travellers before the pandemic — still restricting returns, the kingdom's cash cow industry is unlikely to fully recover before 2024, experts say.

Thailand has so far registered more than two million cases of coronavirus and more than 20,000 deaths. The bulk of the infections came after the emergence of the Delta variant.

World Still Needs to Invest Billions in Oil and Gas



ABU DHABI (Dispatches) - The UAE, one of the world's top crude exporters, said a recent UN climate summit in Glasgow was a "success" but that the world needs to keep investing billions in oil and gas.

Nearly 200 countries at the COP26 summit pledged Saturday to speed up the fight against rising temperatures, after two weeks of negotiations.

But they failed to secure a consensus to keep coal in the ground, and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has warned that "climate catastrophe" is still knocking at the door.

The summit "was indeed a success", said Sultan al-Jaber, the UAE's minister of industry and advanced technology.

But he forecast that the oil and gas industry would have to invest "over \$600 billion (RM2.4 trillion) every year until 2030 just to keep up with the expected demand".

"While the world has agreed to accelerate the energy transition, it is still heavily reliant on oil and gas," he told the opening session of the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference. "As economies bounce back from the Covid-19 pandemic at the fastest rate in 50 years, demand has outpaced supply."

Both the United Arab Emirates and neighboring Saudi Arabia, the world's number one oil exporter, have announced net zero carbon goals, despite plans to ramp up oil production.

Net zero refers to emissions created within a country, not by products sold and consumed abroad.

The UAE, Saudi Arabia and other major oil producers have defended their plans to continue investing in fossil fuels.

"The future is coming, but it is not here yet," said Jaber, whose country is set to host COP28.

"We must make progress with pragmatism. If we are to successfully transition to the energy system of tomorrow, we cannot simply unplug from the energy system of today."

Also at the Abu Dhabi conference, Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman hit back at critics questioning Riyadh's net zero ambitions.

Terror Groups Continue U.S. Soldiers Role in Region

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's special representative for Afghanistan says the United States has withdrawn from Afghanistan, but has left terrorist groups such as Daesh to continue its role in the region, including in the Central Asian country.

"The Daesh and other Takfiri terrorist groups, in fact,

continue the role of American soldiers in the region," Hassan Kazemi Qomi told Press TV on Tuesday.

"I believe this is a real proxy war. We witnessed the same thing in Iraq and Syria. After its defeat in Iraq, the United States replaced its own forces with other groups to pursue the American goals in the region," he added.



China Rebuffs UK Criticism Over Coal Move After Climate Summit



But he said his delight at the progress achieved was tinged by disappointment that the deal did not go further.

"Sadly, that's the nature of diplomacy," he said. "We can lobby, we can cajole, we can encourage, but we cannot force sovereign nations to do what they do not wish to do."

LONDON (Dispatches) - China pushed back at criticism that it helped weaken language on phasing out coal at the COP26 conference, saying that it had already made "enormous efforts" to reduce coal consumption.

COP26 president Alok Sharma said yesterday that China and India owed developing nations an explanation for why they pushed to water down clauses.

UN climate talks in Glasgow, Scotland, ended on Saturday with a deal that targeted fossil fuels for the first time.

But India, backed by China and other coal-dependent developing nations, rejected a clause calling for a "phase out" of coal-fired power, and the text was changed to "phase down".

"In terms of China and India, they will on this particular issue have to explain themselves," Sharma told a news conference at Downing Street in London.

China's foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian, when asked about Sharma's comments at a news briefing in Beijing, said that China has already made "enormous efforts" in controlling coal consumption.

Energy transitions should be based on national circumstances and developing countries' energy security should be guaranteed, he added.

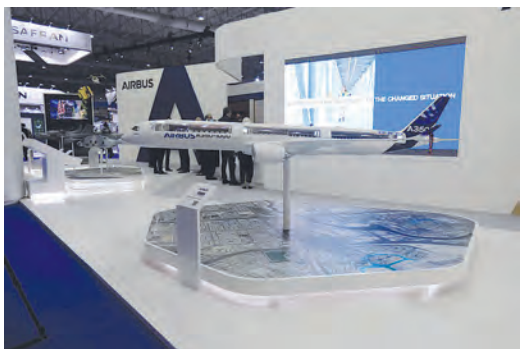
British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said: "Whether the language was 'phase down' or 'phase out' doesn't seem to me as a speaker of English to make that much difference.

"The direction of travel is pretty much the same."

Johnson said COP26 had delivered a mandate to cut the use of coal-powered generation that was backed up by real action from individual countries.

"When you add all that together, it is beyond question that Glasgow has sounded the death knell for coal power," he said at the news conference.

Airbus Wins Air Lease Launch Order For A350 Freighters



DUBAI (Dispatches) - European planemaker Airbus secured a provisional debut order for seven A350 freighter jets from U.S. leasing company Air Lease Corp on Monday, stepping up efforts to challenge Boeing for a bigger slice of the booming cargo market.

The expansion of e-commerce has accelerated since the global pandemic, while upcoming international rules on plane emissions are putting pressure on freight operators to modernize fleets.

"It is very clear that ... e-commerce is a very stabilizing factor in the freighter market place and a growing factor," said Air Lease Chief Executive John Plueger.

A letter of intent for the freighters signed at the Dubai Airshow on Monday also included more than 100 passenger jets: 25 A220-300s, 55 A321neos, 20 A321XLRs and four wide-body A330neos.

Industry sources said the coveted endorsement from one of the powerhouse lessors that drive the \$150 billion jet market may have included sweeteners such as some conversions between models and attractive delivery slots for the in-demand A321XLR.

"We are supremely confident with this order, and that we will have more orders in the future," Air Lease Corp Chief Executive John Plueger said.

The order will be finalized in coming months, Airbus said, without giving a value for the deal.

Airbus and ALC also said they would launch a multimillion-dollar ESG (environmental, social and governance) fund initiative that would contribute towards investment into sustainable aviation development projects.

Boeing, which dominates the market for cargo planes, is expected to launch a competing freighter version of its 777X wide-body passenger plane within weeks. It said on Sunday it was in advanced talks with potential customers.

Toyota Chases Hydrogen Dream

TOKYO (Dispatches) - As U.N. climate conference delegates considered how to save the planet over the weekend in Glasgow, Toyota Motor's chief executive was in Japan racing an experimental hydrogen car - a vehicle he says could preserve millions of auto jobs.

The colorful Toyota Corolla Sport that Akio Toyoda steered around the Okayama International Circuit in western Japan was powered by a converted GR Yaris engine running on hydrogen. Making such a powerplant commercially viable could keep internal combustion engines running in a carbon-free world.

"The enemy is carbon, not internal combustion engines. We shouldn't just focus on one technology but make use of the technologies we already possess," Toyoda said at the track. "Carbon neutrality is not about one having a single choice, but about keeping options open."

Toyota's latest push into hydrogen tech comes as the world's biggest carmaker joins the rush to win a share of the growing market for battery electric vehicles (BEV) as the world tightens emission regulations to meet carbon-cutting pledges.

Although still only a small portion of vehicles on the road, global electric car registrations in 2020 grew 41% even as the overall car market contracted by almost a sixth, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA).

By 2025, Toyota plans to have 15 EV models available and is investing \$13.5 billion over a decade to expand battery production.

At the gathering in Glasgow, six major carmakers, including General Motors, Ford Motor, Sweden's Volvo and Daimler AG's Mercedes-Benz signed a declaration to phase out fossil-fuel cars by 2040.

Toyota declined to join that group, arguing that much of the world is not ready for a shift to EVs. Another notable absence was Germany's Volkswagen.

"We don't want to be seen as an EV maker, but as a carbon-neutral company," Toyota Vice Chairman Shigeru Hayakawa told Reuters in an interview.

Hayakawa likened the technological choice facing the auto industry to the late 19th century contest that pitted direct current electricity transmission against alternating current. The stakes are high.

"If the adoption of carbon-free fuels happens quickly, that could bring the first battery EV boom to an end," said Takeshi Miyao, an analyst at auto industry research company Camorama.



In Japan, where mass layoffs are politically difficult, hydrogen's allure is that it would cause less disruption than a full switch to EVs. The Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association estimates the automotive industry employs 5.5 million people.

Toyota Motor Corporation's hydrogen engine racing car driven by the company's President Akio Toyoda is surrounded by pit crew members during a refueling stop at Okayama International Circuit in Mimasaka, Okayama Prefecture, Japan November 13, 2021. REUTERS/Tim Kelly

Although Toyota and other car makers are putting resources into building hydrogen fuel cell vehicles (FCV), none have shown the appetite Toyota has for hydrogen engine technology.

One problem is that the engine is not completely carbon-free and cannot therefore be classed as zero-emission.

Although the byproduct of hydrogen and oxygen combustion is water, a small amount of engine metal burns as well, resulting in about 2% of the emissions of a gasoline engine. The exhaust also contains traces of nitrogen oxide.

There is a carbon cost to building electric car batteries, but EVs do not pollute when operated.

Hydrogen cars also need bulky pressurized tanks for their fuel. Much of the rear seat and trunk in Toyota's hydrogen car was taken up by fuel tanks that blocked the rear window.

Safety concerns meant Toyota engineers had to refuel the vehicle far from the pits where other teams worked on their cars.

Such concerns have also slowed the construction of hydrogen fuelling stations in Japan, despite Japanese government backing for the fuel, which it sees as a key component in the country's future carbon-neutral energy mix.

At the end of August, there were 154 hydrogen stations in Japan - six short of what the government wanted by the end of March. "Hydrogen has long been known as a potential low-carbon transport fuel, but establishing it in the transport fuel mix has been difficult," the IEA said in a progress report this month.

Even with adequate fuel infrastructure, Toyota still must build a vehicle that can compete in price, range and operating cost with conventional gasoline cars and EVs.

In Okayama, Toyoda declined to say when Toyota might launch a commercial hydrogen-engine car.

"It's good to have a lot of choices. If everything becomes EVs then much of that industry is in China," said Eiji Terasaki (57), who had travelled to the Okayama circuit from neighbouring Kagawa prefecture to watch the races.

JCPOA... FROM PAGE 1

"The new Iranian government is practical and result-oriented. We have shared our views with the parties to the negotiations and are prepared for arriving at a good agreement," the Iranian foreign minister said.

"This [however] requires that all the negotiating parties return to their obligations," he added.

Meanwhile Iran's top negotiator in talks aimed at removing U.S. sanctions imposed on Tehran says ensuring effective removal of sanctions is the main priority of the upcoming talks in the Austrian capital.

He said, "The effective removal of the illegal US sanctions is a necessity and the main priority of the upcoming negotiations."

The Iranian chief negotiator emphasizes that the removal of all sanctions, which have been imposed on Tehran in violation of the 2015 nuclear agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and an end to measures, which are inconsistent with UN Security Council Resolution 2231, in a verifiable way that would help Iran enjoy the economic and trade benefits of the landmark deal are "necessary conditions" for the Vienna talks to succeed.

So the Islamic Republic of Iran's policy and position is crystal clear and if the West and the U.S. want to get a positive result from talks in Vienna, they should put aside the cruel sanctions against Tehran because Tehran is very determined on this condition and it is only ready to talk on nuclear issue and not adding other issues to the talks like the missile program.

If the West accepts Iran's condition, the talks may have some results otherwise it will be waste of time and energy and Tehran government should not tie all activities to the JCPOA like what the former government did and made the national economy conditional. The JCPOA was and is a test for observance of the international commitments that the West so far has failed in doing it.

The West should know this point that it is facing a tough and revolutionary government ahead of it and it is better to stop bullying and continuing its excessive demand because the era of bully and excessive demand is over or at least regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran is over.



Iranian Automakers... FROM PAGE 1

Before the sanctions, Iran was one of Scania's top ten global markets with annual business of more than 330 million. The company had been in operation in the country since 2000 through Oghab Afshan, a privately-owned partner and distributor of buses.

Scania produced nearly 1000 trucks a year emblazoned with its famous red griffin badge in Qazvin. Oghab Afshan meanwhile produced more than 800 Scania buses a year at its facility outside Isfahan.

Mammut had signed an agreement with Iran's Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization and the Iranian Fuel Conservation Company to support the replacement of 5,000 aging trucks with Scania models, but it had to cancel the deal because of the sanctions.

Similarly, Mercedes-Benz halted its plans for local production of trucks and powertrain components as well as its return as a shareholder in the Iranian Diesel Engine Manufacturing Co (IDEM) in Tabriz to build diesel engines.

Thanks to the sanctions, however, Iran's auto sector has started standing on its own feet after years of reliance on imported car kits which foreign companies stopped supplying in fear of the US sanctions.

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

"Thanks to the efforts of automakers and component makers, the \$4 billion dependence of the automotive industry on foreign companies has been reduced to \$1.5 billion today, and the depth of internalization has increased," he said at a signing ceremony.

Iran Khodro and Saipa are the two largest local manufacturers, which have picked up the slack since France's Peugeot and Renault exited Iran along with other international companies in the wake of US sanctions, creating a supply crunch which saw car prices vault to unprecedented highs.

The auto industry forms the second biggest sub-sector of the economy behind oil, accounting for some 10 percent of the gross domestic product and 4 percent of employment.

More than 100,000 people are employed by Iran Khodro and Saipa, while another 700,000 Iranians work in industries related to car manufacturing.

When the Trump administration reimposed sanctions on Iran in August 2018, it reserved Washington's first hammer blow for the car industry to hurt as many Iranians as possible.

75% of Yemeni Kids...

FROM PAGE 1

Last month, the UN Security Council voiced "grave concern for the dire humanitarian situation [in Yemen], including prolonged starvation and the growing risk of large-scale famine, which is compounded by the dire economic situation."

Saudi Arabia, supported by its regional and Western allies, launched the devastating military aggression against its southern neighbor in March 2015 in collaboration with a number of its allied states and with arms and logistics support from the US and several Western states.

The aim was to return to power the former Riyadh-backed regime and crush the popular Ansarullah movement which has been running state affairs in the absence of an effective government in Yemen.

The war has stopped well shy of all of its goals, despite killing tens of

thousands of Yemenis and turning entire Yemen into the scene of the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Meanwhile, Yemeni forces have in recent months gone from strength to strength against the Saudi-led invaders and left Riyadh and its allies bogged down in Yemen.

Throughout the course of the war, the United States has supported and armed Saudi Arabia. The Ansarullah movement, which runs the Sana'a government, frequently refers to the war as the "US-Saudi aggression" to underscore Washington's leading role in the war.

Despite his February promise to end "all American support for offensive operations in the war in Yemen, including relevant arms sales," US President Joe Biden has recently approved \$650 million worth of weapons purchases to Saudi Arabia.

Smith Named Boss of Struggling Norwich City

LONDON (Dispatches) - The Premier League's bottom side Norwich City today named former Aston Villa boss Dean Smith as their new head coach, tasked with saving them from relegation.

The 50-year-old Smith, who was axed by Villa on November 7 after five successive defeats, takes over at Carrow Road on a two-and-a-half-year contract, the club said.

Smith succeeds Daniel Farke, who was sacked on November 6 with Norwich rooted to the bottom of the Premier League.

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Barcelona Target Chelsea Outcast Pulisic

LONDON (Dispatches) - Barcelona are convinced Chelsea are prepared to sell Christian Pulisic.

Pulisic, 23, has struggled to secure a regular spot in the side since Thomas Tuchel took over, with injuries limiting his time on the pitch.

Catalunya's El Nacional says manager Thomas Tuchel has told owner Roman Abramovich to sell Pulisic.

The report suggests Barcelona's new manager Xavi is a fan of the winger, and has asked the club to make an attempt to sign him.

8 IRAN NEWS

SPORTS

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 17, 2021

Bulls Halt Clippers' 7-Game Winning Streak

CHICAGO (Dispatches) - DeMar DeRozan scored 35 points and Zach LaVine chipped in 29 as the visiting Chicago Bulls defeated Los Angeles 100-90, snapping the Clippers' seven-game winning streak.

The first game of a Southern California back-to-back belonged to the Bulls' homecoming guards. DeRozan, a Los Angeles-area native, shot 12-of-16 from the floor and 10-of-11 from the free-throw line, while grabbing seven rebounds and dishing five assists. LaVine, who played college basketball at nearby UCLA, shot 6-of-13 from 3-point range and grabbed eight rebounds.

LaVine's hanging jumper over two defenders with 51.8 seconds remaining ended any hope of a Clippers comeback.

Los Angeles played from behind most of the night, falling behind 30-17 through one quarter in the second game of a weekend back-to-back. Behind Paul George (27 points), Los Angeles fought back in the fourth quarter. George banked in a floater to give the Clippers a 78-77 lead, but DeRozan's layup on the subsequent Chicago possession sparked a 9-0 Bulls run.

Suns 115, Rockets 89

Devin Booker scored a game-high 26 points and JaVale McGee recorded a double-double as Phoenix extended its winning streak to eight games with a victory over host Houston.

Booker tallied 16 first-quarter points to get the Suns off to a solid start while McGee excelled filling the void for Deandre Ayton (leg). McGee added three blocked shots to his 19 points and 14 rebounds to anchor the Suns' interior defense as Phoenix took advantage of another ragged display of ball handling from Houston.

Lakers 114, Spurs 106

Anthony Davis scored 34 points, including 27 in the first half, and grabbed 15 rebounds as Los Angeles powered its way past visiting San Antonio.

Talen Horton-Tucker added 17 points in his season debut for Los Angeles, with Malik Monk scoring 16, Wayne Ellington and Carmelo Anthony 15 each, and Russell Westbrook recording 14 points and 11 rebounds. Los Angeles has won



three of its past four games and is 4-4 this season in games in which LeBron James (abdominal strain) hasn't played.

Keldon Johnson scored 24 points (on a career-best six 3-pointers) for San Antonio, which lost its second straight. Dejounte Murray added a triple-double (22 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists), and Devin Vassell scored 19 points, Thaddeus Young 17, and Derrick White 10.

Hawks 120, Bucks 100

Trae Young scored a season-high 42 points to help Atlanta end its six-game losing streak with a win over visiting Milwaukee.

Young was 16-for-26 from the field and 8-for-13 on 3-pointers -- matching his career high for successful threes -- and had 10 assists and eight rebounds. John Collins scored 16 of his 19 points in the second half, and Clint Capela added 12 points and 13 rebounds for the Hawks.

Hornets 106, Warriors 102

Miles Bridges scored 22 points and LaMelo Ball had 21 as Charlotte edged visiting Golden State.

The big contribution came from Terry Rozier, who scored all 20 of his points in the second half as the Hornets stretched their winning streak to three games.

The Warriors, who lost for just the second time in 13 games, had a seven-game winning streak snapped. They're 3-1 in road games. Andrew Wiggins poured in 28 points and Stephen Curry, playing in his hometown, had 24 points for the Warriors. Jordan Poole added 13 points and Draymond Green 11. Curry was just 3-for-13 on 3-pointers.



TURIN (Dispatches) - World number one Novak Djokovic began his quest for a sixth title at the season-ending ATP Finals with a 7-6(4) 6-2 victory over Norway's Casper Ruud in their round robin encounter in Turin.

Djokovic suffered a fall and lost his opening service game but recovered to find his rhythm against Ruud, who is making his debut at the event following five tournament wins this season.

"It was strange. I played a good forehand and came into the net and had a comfortable overhead. I slipped, tripped, dropped my racquet and lost my serve," Djokovic said.

"The conditions here are tough. If you lose your serve, it's difficult to get it back. But I managed to stay in. I'm pleased with the way I handled the match."

Ruud's powerful forehand helped him keep pace with Djokovic for much of the first set, but he was outplayed in the tiebreak as the 20-times major winner forced his 22-year-old opponent into a string of errors to take the opener.

It was plain sailing in the second set for Djokovic, who broke in the first game and dominated the longer rallies as Ruud struggled on serve before eventually going down in an hour and 31 minutes.

Djokovic was later presented with the year-end world number one trophy for a record seventh time, bettering the mark set by 14-times Grand Slam champion Pete Sampras.

Cam Newton Leads Panthers to Win in Return to Carolina

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Cam Newton ran for a touchdown and threw for a score in his first game back with Carolina as the Panthers stunned the Arizona Cardinals 34-10 Sunday at Glendale, Ariz.

The Cardinals (8-2) had the best record in the league and one of the top defenses, but the Panthers scored 17 first-quarter points and were in control throughout the game.

Starting quarterback P.J. Walker did much of the work for Carolina, finishing 22-for-29 for 167 yards with an interception. Christian McCaffrey gained 95 rushing yards and 66 receiving yards for the Panthers (5-5).

It seemed unlikely Newton would play with such a short preparation window after the Panthers signed him Thursday. Instead, Newton scored the game's first points on a 2-yard run with 11:12 left in the first quarter. His second touchdown came on a 2-yard pass to Robby Anderson later in the first quarter.

Packers 17, Seahawks 0

AJ Dillon scored two fourth-quarter touchdowns on short runs as Green Bay (8-2) blanked visiting Seattle (3-6) with light snow falling at Lambeau Field. The game marked the first time Seattle has been shut out since 2011.

Dillon, who finished with 66 yards on 21 carries, scored from 3 yards out with 10:37 remaining and from 2 yards with 1:56 left.

Quarterbacks Russell Wilson of the Seahawks and Aaron Rodgers of the Packers returned after missing time, but the game ended up as a defensive battle. Rodgers completed 23 of 37 passes for 292 yards, and Wilson went 20 of 40 for 161 yards.

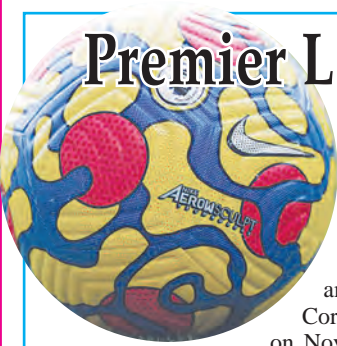
Eagles 30, Broncos 13

Jalen Hurts was 16-for-23 passing for 178 yards and two touchdowns, DeVonta Smith had four receptions for 66 yards and two scores, and visiting Philadelphia beat Denver.

Darius Slay returned a fumble 83 yards for another touchdown to help the Eagles (4-6) continue their road success. All of Philadelphia's wins have come away from home.

Teddy Bridgewater was 22-for-36 passing for 226 yards and Melvin Gordon III ran for a touchdown but had a costly fumble in the fourth quarter for Denver (5-5), which had its two-game winning streak stopped.

Premier League Nears Record Sale of U.S. TV Rights for About \$2b



KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - The English Premier League is nearing the sale of its U.S. television rights for about US\$2 billion (RM8.3 billion), setting a new overseas record, the Financial Times reported, citing sources familiar with the matter.

ViacomCBS and Walt Disney Co.-owned ESPN are among the broadcasters bidding for the rights with Comcast Corp's NBC, the current holder, with second-round bids due on Nov. 18, the FT report said. Under the deal, which will be

functional from the 2022-23 season until the 2027-28 season, Premier League will sell all 38 matches in a single block rather than in separate packages.

Deal discussions occurred amid fears revenue from football's domestic broadcast rights deals will fall across Europe's top leagues this year, due to a lack of competition between broadcasters.

If a deal comes through, it could set a record for Premier league's U.S. broadcasting rights, making it the football league's most lucrative overseas deal, according to the FT report.

Disney's ESPN, the Premier League and Comcast did not immediately respond to a Reuters requests for comments after business hours, while ViacomCBS could not be reached for a comment.

Alves Feels Like A Superhero in Barca Kit

BARCELONA (Dispatches) - Brazilian defender Dani Alves said donning Barcelona's colors again made him feel like a superhero but stressed that there is no margin for error in the team's bid to rescue their Spanish La Liga campaign.

Alves, who played for Barca between 2008-16 winning six La Liga titles and three Champions League crowns among other major honours, reached an agreement last Friday to rejoin his former club until the end of the current campaign.

The 38-year-old right back completed a medical today and said he is excited to begin working with former team mate and current manager Xavi Hernandez.

Barca are ninth in the league with 17 points from 12 games after a difficult start to the campaign in which Ronald Koeman was sacked as manager.

"I've worked so hard all my life and now I'm here to help Barcelona grow," Alves told Barca's television channel.

"It's an incredible challenge and I'm fascinated by it. To fight and defend this jersey... when I wear this jersey, I feel like a superhero."

Alves said he is still in shock on returning to the team after five years.

He joined Brazilian side Sao Paulo in 2019 after spells with Juventus and Paris St Germain but terminated the deal following a dispute over unpaid salaries.



Nadal Calls Those Refusing COVID Vaccine "Selfish"

MADRID (Dispatches) - The Australian Open may require tennis players to be vaccinated against the coronavirus in 2022, and that appears to be quite all right with superstar Rafael Nadal.

Nadal, who cut his 2021 season short due to a foot injury, told Spain's Marca last week he thought it was a bit "selfish" for players to be unvaccinated against the illness.

"I understand that there are people who do not want to be vaccinated, but it seems a bit selfish to me," Nadal said. "We have suffered a lot."

"We do not know 100 percent the effects of vaccines, but we do have to trust the doctors... we do know the effect of the virus if we are not vaccinated. It seems that today we [Spain] are the country that is least affected by the virus and I think it is because we have a large part of the population vaccinated." Tennis Australia, the country's governing body for the sport, has yet to announce rules for the Jan. 17 event. Novak Djokovic, one of the top tennis players in the world, has refused to be vaccinated and was unsure whether he would play in the Australian Open - a tournament he's won nine total times and three consecutively.

"I'm going to decide on whether I go to Australia or not after I see the official statement from Tennis Australia," Djokovic said after winning the Paris Masters, via The Wall Street Journal. "Right now we don't have any official announcement or statement. So until that's out, I won't be talking about this anymore."

