

President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi Is To Address People Live Tonight (Tuesday) Where He Is to Elaborate on Current Issues, Internal Affairs and Foreign Policy of the Government

IRAN NEWS

Minister of Economy and Finance Says That Iran's Economy Can Benefit From the Region's Opportunities and Its Neighborhood Policy Much More Than the Current Situation

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Tehran, Tashkent Explore Ways to Boost Cooperation On Customs Affairs



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Iran's Exports to India Witnessing 74% Rise This Year

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Iran's exports to India in the first 9 months of the current year have increased by 74% comparing to the same period in the preceding year while its imports have declined by 37%.

According to the report released by Tehran Chamber of Commerce, the trade volume between Iran and India in the first three quarters of the current Iranian calendar year has stood at around \$2.4b that non-oil exports of Iran to India are valued at \$1.34b while imports at \$1b. **See Page 7**

No Precondition Accepted in Vienna Talks



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry says his country has never accepted any preconditions for talks between representatives from the Islamic Republic and the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear deal on the removal of U.S. sanctions against Tehran.

U.S. Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley said recently that Washington is unlikely to strike an agreement with Iran unless Tehran releases US prisoners held in the Islamic Republic.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has not accepted any preconditions from the onset of [Vienna] talks. Such issues are simply intended for the domestic audience and media use," Saeed Khatibzadeh said at a weekly press conference in Tehran on Monday, responding to Malley.

"The unambiguous message has always been that negotiations are complex enough and should not be further perplexed by such complicated statements," he said.

Khatibzadeh pointed to the grave situation of Iranian citizens that are being held hostage inside America, stating that Tehran has either directly or indirectly raised the issue with the U.S. on multiple occasions.

"The matter has been on our agenda both before and after the talks. The case with Iranian and U.S. citizens, however, is of different nature. This humanitarian issue can be resolved in the shortest possible time if the United States adheres to the agreements it has already made," the Iranian diplomat pointed out.

Khatibzadeh further noted, "Unlike our citizens who have been taken hostage in the United States under the false pretext of circumventing illegal U.S. sanctions against the Iranian nation, those imprisoned in Iran have been found guilty of their crimes by the Judiciary, and necessary legal procedures have been conducted by competent courts of law."

The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry highlighted that all sides in Vienna talks agree that a guarantee that Washington will not once again leave the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is vital to a successful conclusion of the talks.

"We are witness progress of talks in Vienna, and we have already made good progress in four areas. The parentheses have been reduced and the ideas have turned into words. The important point is that all parties in Vienna agree that the United States must not quit the nuclear deal again," he said.

"We have presented very practical and realistic ideas in Vienna, and we think that our ideas will enable dialogue in the field of guarantees. Of course, it is natural that we do not re-negotiate what has already been negotiated behind closed doors," the Iranian diplomat pointed out.

"Iran is looking for a sustainable and reliable agreement. The path to receiving guarantees is the right one," he noted.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Khatibzadeh said Iran has always supported the oppressed Yemeni nation and has sought to facilitate intra-Yemeni dialogue through political mechanisms and diplomatic channels.

"Unfortunately, those making lucrative profits out of arms trade as well as some European countries like Britain, Germany and France and the United States are specifically involved [in Yemen crisis]. The latest string of bombings would not have happened if there were no support of these countries," the Iranian official said.

The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry also referred to the joint naval drills between Iran, China, and Russia in the Indian Ocean, stating that the military exercise carried the message of peace and stability in the region.

Khatibzadeh said Iran has agreed to the intra-Afghan talks and is seriously looking for the negotiations to be in the best interests of the Afghan people.

4 INTERNATIONAL

UK Accuses Russia of Trying to Install Pro-Kremlin Gov't in Ukraine



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8 SPORT

Shapovalov Sends Zverev Crashing, Nadal Survives



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Iran's East-Oriented Policy to Weaken Enemies

TEHRAN (MNA) – Top Military Aide to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said Iran's East-oriented policy and developing relations with China and Russia will surprise and weaken enemies.

Addressing the First National Conference of Iran and its Neighbors on Monday, Yahya Rahim Safavi stressed that neighborhood policy has become an undeniable regional necessity.

He went on to say that achieving lasting peace, security, progress, and prosperity are the basic goals of neighborhood policy.

Iran's regional policy in West Asia, East-oriented policy, and developing comprehensive relations with China and Russia will surprise and weaken arrogant enemies, Safavi said. **See Page 7**

Russian Firms to Develop Iran Oil, Gas Fields

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) announced the development of Iran's oil and gas fields with the participation of Russian companies.

According to IRIB, Mohsen Khojastehmehr, who accompanied Iranian Minister of Petroleum Javad Owji on his visit to Russia, said: "According to the agreements reached, the National Iranian Oil Company will develop Iran's oil and gas fields jointly with Russian companies."

He said that Iran and Russia are ranked first and second in the world in terms of oil and gas reserves, adding: "Russia has many capabilities in terms of developing oil and gas fields and providing the necessary equipment, and in this regard can enhance its cooperation with Iran in such fields as joint ventures, developing oil and gas fields and enhancing Iran's output." **See Page 7**

GTC Tenders to Buy 60,000 Tons Wheat

HAMBURG (Dispatches) - Iranian state agency the Government Trading Corporation (GTC) issued an international tender to purchase about 60,000 tons of milling wheat, European traders said on Wednesday.

The wheat is sought for shipment in February and March, traders said.

Volumes in Iran's tenders are nominal and the country regularly buys more than the original tonnage sought.

The tender continues a period of heavy wheat purchasing by Iran in international markets.

Iran needs to import around 8 million tons of wheat after its crop was damaged by the worst drought in 50 years, Reuters reported in October. But western sanctions on Iran continue to make payment difficult, traders stress.

Iran bought about 240,000 tons of wheat last week, expected to be sourced from Russia or Germany. This followed another purchaser of 240,000 tons earlier in January and 740,000 tons bought in December.

Neighboring Turkey, whose crops also suffered from drought, has also been purchasing wheat heavily.

Mirage of trade with Turkmenistan

The Problem of lack of Economic Indicators of the Turkmen Government

Abdullah Dashti is the chairman of the board of the Novin Tejarat Bashmaq Co. and a member of the Iran-Iraq Chamber of Commerce. He is also active in trade with Turkmenistan.



He said. Macroeconomic policies have been implemented. In the economic development programs of Iran during 4 decades of the political system of the Islamic Republic, the strengthening of the national economy has been emphasized. The aim was to resist integration into the international trade system. With the exception of the energy trading sector as the main source of government revenue, in other areas of international trade, governments in recent decades have strengthened regional markets by facilitating the regulation of ethnic, religious, and historical standards and commonalities and the preference for relative status.

Have given priority. Due to this, the largest volume of trade exchanges and export destinations of Iranian goods is limited to territorial neighbors. In addition to the benefits, there are threats to weaken the national economy. Non-return of capital, non-collection of Iranian commercial claims, inability to rely on legal and judicial support have been the most obvious problems of traders in neighboring countries. Perhaps the most insecure market for Iranian businessmen is the Turkmen government. According to the records of the International Deputy Judiciary and the number of complaints, Iranian businessmen involved in the Turkmen government, both the government and the private sector, have faced the problem of non-return of capital and non-receipt of claims. The main source of this problem is the lack of economic indicators of the Turkmen government. The governing, systematic and judicial structures of this government cannot be adapted to the accepted models of economic security and transparency. In the case of an Iranian company, a business partner with the Turkmen government named Novin Tejarat Bashmaq with registration number 527 was examined as a sample. According to documents available to the Deputy Foreign Minister for Eurasia, all the company's obligations regarding the export of raw materials needed by the petrochemical industry were handed over to the Turkmen. More than 89% of the total price of the delivered goods has not been received. About 6 years have passed since the delivery of the goods at an unusual cost, and a lawsuit has been filed in the courts of Turkmenistan. This complaint has led to the issuance of a final verdict condemning the Turkmen side to pay the foreign exchange claims of the Iranian company. Due to corruption and lack of transparency and conflict of interests in the structure of this government, no judicial ruling has been implemented. The managers of the Iranian company were even repeatedly threatened by the Turkmen. The possibility of traveling to this government to pursue the issue of demands from them has been curtailed. What is more strange is that the Turkmen embassy in Iran has repeatedly stated that it is not possible to fulfill its foreign exchange obligations and that it is impossible to pay the Iranian company due to the foreign exchange policies of the Turkmen government. Delivery of Turkmen goods is possible only on the basis of the domestic price and at the official exchange rate of the Turkmen currency against the dollar. Such a proposal was in complete contradiction with the principles and rules of international trade. This results in nothing but the destruction of the capital of the Iranian trading partner. In principle, the repayment of foreign currency liabilities has been immune from the application of domestic monetary and exchange rate policies. Every government is obliged to repay foreign and international currency obligations without imposing restrictions arising from monetary policy. Any government that violates this rule cannot be a party to foreign trade. In the current situation, the studied sample of the Iranian company can be a clear model for predicting the outcome of trade with the Government of Turkmenistan. Recently, according to the Turkmen Chamber of Commerce, a joint exhibition was held in Ashgabat on 2021. This exhibition provided the opportunity to invest and attract economic actors and transfer Iranian resources and investors. Studying the issue of Novin Tejarat Company can definitely pave the way for other Iranian businessmen and economic actors. The return on investment and economic security and the immunity of Iranian capital are in serious jeopardy given the trade of recent years.

Gov't Aims to Nullify Sanctions' Effects

TEHRAN (IRNA)- Vice-President for Economic Affairs Mohsen Rezaei said that one of many objectives of President Ebrahim Raisi's recent visit to Moscow is to nullify unlawful sanctions.

"President Raisi's visit to Russia had many objectives, just like foreign minister's visit to China, and they were both aimed at showing mighty interactions of Iran's diplomacy, like the mighty interactions of the Iranian diplomats in Vienna and Iran's broadening of relations with its neighbors and with the Latin American countries," Rezaei wrote in a Twitter message.

"The recent measures by the government are all parts of the significant, pragmatist strategy of the 13th government, aimed at nullifying the sanctions and pursuing its balanced foreign policy," Rezaei added.

Iran Attaches Great Importance to Relations With Africa

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi has met with new ambassadors of Algeria and Brunei submitting their credentials as well as the visiting Foreign Minister of Togo.

In the meeting with the new ambassador of Algeria to Tehran, the Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said that the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the development of relations with the North African country.

Raisi pointed to the glorious resistance of the Algerian people against French colonization during the struggle for independence in the middle of the 20th century and said that the colonialists have never given up their colonial spirit and are always pursuing their colonial goals with a new approach, and of course, the Algerian people always maintain their spirit of resistance.

Addressing the new ambassador, the President said that the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the development of relations with Algeria, adding, "I appreciate the Algerian President's expression of interest in expanding relations with Iran".

At the same meeting, the new Ambassador of Algeria to Tehran said, "We believe that the current level of economic relations between the two countries is not equal to the excellent political relations, and I will do my best to improve the level of my country's economic and trade relations with Iran as an important economic partner".

"I want to assure you that Algeria's principled positions and policies, including in support of the Palestinian cause, for which we have paid exorbitant costs, will continue in earnest," he said.

Also in another meeting with the new ambassador of Brunei, the president said that Iran seeks to expand relations and engagement with all countries, especially neighboring and Muslim countries.

Speaking in a meeting with the new ambassador of Brunei Darussalam, while receiving his credentials, Raisi referred to the cultural relations between the two nations, adding, "The two countries' relations are rooted in heartfelt relationship between the two Muslim nations and it is essential to develop political, economic and trade relations between the two countries on the basis of these relations".

The President stated, "In its foreign policy, the Islamic Republic of Iran seeks to expand interaction with all countries around the world, especially neighboring and Muslim countries".

"We hope that the bilateral cooperation and friendly interactions between Iran and Brunei further expands into the field of regional and international relations between the two countries," he said.

At the same meeting, the new ambassador of Brunei Darussalam to Tehran also conveyed the greetings of his country's Sultan to Raisi and said, "As the ambassador of Brunei, I will do my best to expand and deepen the relations and cooperation between the two Muslim brotherly and friendly nations".

Moreover, Raisi told the new Togo ambassador to Tehran that strengthening relations with African countries will be pursued more seriously and vigorously, adding that the Islamic Republic of Iran supports the independence and progress of the African people.

Speaking on Monday in a meeting with Togolese Foreign Minister Robert Dussey, Ayatollah Dr Seyed Ebrahim Raisi said that African countries have rich and talented natural resources, minerals and human resources, adding, "Tehran seeks comprehensive development of relations with African countries, including Togo, to serve the common interest of the two nations".

Stating that throughout the history, Westerners have mainly sought to colonize and exploit the African continent, and today they are pursuing their desires and interests in various forms, noting, "The efforts of the people of this continent to maintain their independence are valuable and their success depends on the emphasis on national and cultural identity and resistance to extravagance".



The President stated, "African countries have the necessary capacities for development and prosperity, and the Islamic Republic of Iran supports the independence, progress and welfare of the African people".

The Foreign Minister of Togo Robert Dussey also stressed that his country wants to establish wide-ranging and comprehensive relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, adding, "Lomé trusts Tehran's approaches in the development process of relations, and hopes that the policies of development of economic cooperation with Africa boosts through mutual partnership".

Condemning the West's tough sanctions against independent states and nations, the Togolese Foreign Minister stressed, "We seek joint cooperation with Iran to activate our capabilities in the mutual interest".

Killing Civilians as Result of U.S. Anti-Terrorism Policy

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Judiciary Deputy Chief for International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi said killing civilians was the result of US policy to fight terrorism.

"Under the pretext of countering terrorism, the U.S. has conducted at least 14,000 drone strikes in seven countries over the last two decades," Gharibabadi wrote in his Twitter account on Monday.

"The result? 48,000 civilians killed, tens of thousands of homes shattered into pieces," he added.

Earlier, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations Majid Takht Ravanchi reiterated Iran's commitment to its international obligations to effectively prevent and combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Iranian Ambassador Meets With Georgian Deputy Interior Minister

TEHRAN (IP) - The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Tbilisi and Georgia's Deputy Minister of Interior held a meeting to discuss the cooperation between the two countries in various fields.

Iranian Ambassador to Tbilisi Akbar Ghasemi met with Georgian Deputy Interior Minister Alexander Darakhvelidze to discuss ways to strengthen ties between the two countries in the new phase of reopening the border, including those deported at entry and exit points.

The Iranian ambassador and the Georgian deputy interior minister also discussed the details and mechanisms needed to sort out the deportees' affairs and hold workshops to exchange experiences between middle managers of border, sea and air crossings.

On 22 November 2021, the tenth round of the Iran-Georgia Joint Road Commission meeting was held in Tbilisi with the participation of representatives of road transport organizations and trade unions of the two countries.

TCCIMA to Host Conference On Iran-India Trade

TEHRAN (MNA) - Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) is going to hold an Iran-India trade conference titled "Development of Iran-India trade relations: trade and investment opportunities" on February 2, TCCIMA portal announced.

The conference which is going to focus on exploring ways of developing economic relations between the two countries and solving the existing problems in the way of mutual trade will be held in collaboration with India's PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

As reported, the virtual conference is going to be attended by senior officials from both sides including the Indian ambassador to Tehran and Iranian Ambassador to India, as well as the heads of TCCIMA and PHD Chamber of Commerce.

The trade between Iran and India has been following an upward trend over the past two years, despite the U.S. sanctions.

According to TCCIMA data, the trade between the two countries increased over 74 percent in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2021) as compared to the same period in the previous year.

Based on the mentioned data, the value of non-oil trade between Iran and India stood at \$2.4 billion in the mentioned nine months, of which \$1.34 billion was the share of exports and about \$1.05 billion was for imports.

Interacting With U.S. Goes Nowhere

TEHRAN (IP) - Interior minister said that the U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) showed that interaction with the U.S. is not going anywhere; Westerners have never been reliable and have been our enemy since the beginning of the revolution.

Tehran hosts the first National Conference of Iran and Neighbors in the presence of some Iranian ministers and top officials on Monday at two consecutively morning and evening sections at the Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS).

Since taking office in August, under President Ebrahim Raisi, the new Iranian administration has constantly stressed that expansion of relations with neighbors and Asian countries is a top priority of its foreign policy.

Interior minister, Ahmad Vahidi, in the Conference stressed: "As long as the United States is present in the region, will not allow peaceful coexistence among the countries."

The Minister of Interior pointed out: "The Islamic Republic has extended a hand of friendship to its neighbors since the 1979 revolution, but Saddam's imposed war on Iran was the first dagger into the back of the policy."

"U.S. policy in the region undermines the belief that cooperation with that country can lead to security," he said.

Vahidi also referred to the policies of Britain and Israel in the region and said: "Britain and the Israel regime are trying to sow discord in the region, in particular, the Israel regime considers the insecurity of the region, differences, and mistrust between countries as a guarantee of its survival."

He said neighborhood policy was not a one-sided issue for the Islamic Republic to decide alone, but that it should be agreed upon in the region and among its neighbors.

UNESCO-Inscribed Churches, Pilgrimage Ritual in Northwest Iran

TEHRAN (IRNA) - There are more than 400 registered churches in Iran, out of which three churches and one pilgrimage ritual in East Azarbaijan and West Azarbaijan provinces have been inscribed on the List of World Heritage of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Saint Thaddeus Monastery in Chaldoran and Saint Mary Church in Maku, both in West Azarbaijan Province, and Monastery of Saint Stepanos in Julfa, East Azarbaijan Province, are three important tangible cultural monuments and among cultural and religious attractions of northwestern Iran.

Pilgrimage ritual of Saint Thaddeus Monastery was registered on UNESCO List in 2020. More than 5,000 Christians participate in the ritual, which is held in July each year.

It is worth mentioning that 17 intangible cultural heritages of Iran have been registered on the World List. An intangible cultural heritage is a practice, representation, expression, knowledge, or skill considered by UNESCO to be part of a place's cultural heritage.

Saint Thaddeus Monastery is located in Chaldoran county some 20 kilometers from Maku.

The annual three-day pilgrimage to St. Thaddeus Apostle Monastery in northwestern Iran

The commemoration ceremony includes special liturgies, processions, prayers and fasting. It culminates in a Holy Mass with Holy Communion.

The pilgrimage is the primary social and cultural event of the year; because attendees reside in tents in close proximity to one another, the sense of community is enhanced.

Gov't Starts Offering Collateral-Free Loans to Gov't Employees

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has launched a major collateral-free lending program covering all members of the public amid plans by the government to encourage more business and economic activity in the country after the easing of the coronavirus restrictions.

Iran's finance minister Ehsan Khandouzi said on Sunday that collateral-free loans had been made available to government and private sector employees in a first phase of the program launched over the weekend.

Khandouzi said that employees will need to submit documents showing they are on payroll of government departments or other organizations to receive up to 500 million rials (US\$1,785) of loans from banks in the country.

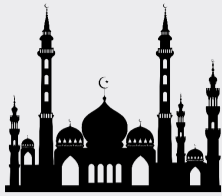
Credit rating requirements will also be applied by the banks in the process to give out the loans to the clients, he said.

The minister added that collateral-free loans will double to 1 billion rials (US\$3,570) and will cover all members of the public in the very near future.

This is a first time Iran rolls out a comprehensive program for collateral-free lending. The measure comes amid efforts by the government to boost economic activity in Iran now the country is emerging from closures and restrictions imposed for nearly two years to curb the spread of coronavirus.

Experts believe the program can give Iranian households more purchasing power at a time they are grappling with high levels of inflation.

The collateral free lending program was finalized earlier this month after a meeting between President Ebrahim Raisi and CEOs of state and private banks where the Iranian president had urged the lenders to use rating measures instead of collaterals for giving out small loans.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:16
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:43
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:41
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	07:08

76. (Remember) Noah, when he cried (to Us) aforetime:
We listened to his (prayer) and delivered him and his family from great distress.
77. We helped him against people who rejected Our Signs:
truly they were a people given to Evil: so We drowned them (in the Flood) all together.
Surah 21, The Prophets (76 - 77)

Tehran, Tashkent Explore Ways to Boost Cooperation On Customs Affairs

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Iran and Uzbekistan yesterday explored ways for boosting their cooperation on the customs affairs and trade relations during the meeting between Head of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Alireza Moqaddasi and visiting Deputy Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan Mr. Bakhtiyar Rakhimov.

During the meeting, both Iranian and Uzbek sides explored ways for boosting trade between the two countries as well as cooperation on the customs affairs.

In the meeting Moqaddasi pointed to the capabilities of IRICA in implementing customs projects based on modern information technologies and possibility of sharing its experiences with Customs Administration of Uzbekistan and called for boosting cooperation on the customs affairs as well as trade exchanges between the two states in the framework of the signed agreements and economic pacts. He then announced readiness of the IRICA for easing and accelerating the Customs formalities of the commercial goods as well as the transit and transport of the goods.

Touching upon the eTIR, Moqaddasi said Iran has achieved some successes in this field as it has implemented this project with Turkey as the pilot plan, adding that the customs administrations of Iran and Uzbekistan can have good cooperation with just signing a simple agreement.

He then pointed to the policies of the Islamic Republic regarding the boost in cooperation in the field of customs and trade with neighboring and friendly countries, and said the cooperation in the field of customs can include fighting the smuggle of goods and combating with the fake documents through e-exchange of information.

Moqaddasi noted that one of the concerns of the customs office is the smuggle of drugs and for this reason, some advanced x-ray-equipped devices have been installed at the border checkpoints and customs of Iran like at Lotfabad, Bazargan, Sarakhs, Dowqarun and Incheboron and it can boost the security of the trade.

He also invited his Uzbek counterpart for signing a MoU for cooperation on the



customs affairs in the future.

Then Rakhimov who is leading the Uzbek delegation to Tehran, for his part, expressed his satisfaction over the meeting and voiced the interest of his country for expansion of cooperation with Iran on the customs affairs and trade exchanges and expressed hope that with signing the MoU on bilateral cooperation, the trade volume of the two countries would increase more.

He then pointed to the emphasis of presidents of the two countries for broadening economic and trade cooperation and said that all existing capacities should be used for enhancing the bilateral trade.

Rakhimov noted that Uzbekistan has prepared a MoU which is ready to be signed and the draft for MoU on TIR project is ready to be signed. On the e-exchange of customs information, he said condition should be provided for the project to be operationalized.

He also called for formation of a specialized group for exchange of information and answering to questions of those who are involved in the trade and transport, adding that a new level of co-operations between the customs and trade officials of the two countries should start.

Rakhimov reiterated that Uzbekistan wants more trade and exchange of information with Iran and to this end, two cooperation documents are under study to have the final signing.

According to the statistics, the trade between Iran and Uzbekistan in 9 months this year has exceeded \$407m that Iran's share of trade is \$310m while Uzbekistan has exported goods worth \$97m in this period. The studies show that the trade between the two countries is gradually on the rise.

Appraisal of Human Resources Processes at KSC



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The process of appraising the level of organizational maturity at Khorasan Steel Complex Company (KSC) in the field of human resources was conducted based on the ISO 34000.

According to the Head of Planning and Technology of KSC, in the past two editions of the Human Resources Awards competitions, some parameters related to the labor relations and social health, salaries and benefits and compensation for services, leadership and strategic planning had been considered as the strong spots of Khorasan Steel Complex Company in the field of human resources.

Shafian went on to say that some measure like design and plan of horizontal promotion of the staff, establishment of the evaluation center of competency, reviewing definition of jobs and advantages of the hardship of the organizational posts as well as the project for vocational rating based on the G20 model can be mentioned as measures taken by the company for improving the condition by the human resources and social affairs department of the company for achieving excellence in the human resources systems of the company in line with materializing strategies of the company.

Meanwhile Head of Human Resources and Social Affairs of the Company Mr. Saborian said the process of appraisal was conducted by an evaluation team and in presence of some of senior managers and officials of the company last month.

He went on to say that Khorasan Steel Company in the past two years have won some top awards for its human resources management which is seriously pursued by the management of the company for boosting excellence in its human resources systems.

The first industrial treatment plant in the country was opened by DAF method in Steel Baft Rehabilitation Company



The first industrial treatment plant in the country was opened by DAF method with an investment of 30 billion Tomans. This treatment plant was inaugurated and put into operation at the same time as Clean Air Day in Kerman Steel Rehabilitation Company. Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF) became known as a particle separation method in the late twentieth century. According to the public relations of the Tourism Finance Group, this treatment plant has been built in order to comply with the environmental standards of the Steel Baft Rehabilitation Company. This treatment plant has been constructed on a land with an area of 1600 square meters with an input

capacity of 2400 cubic meters per day. While preventing environmental pollution, the amount of water abstraction will be reduced by 2400 cubic meters. According to the report, Steel Baft Rehabilitation Company has taken other significant measures in line with environmental considerations. These measures include: installing an online monitoring system, constructing a sanitary treatment plant with a capacity of 60 cubic meters per day, expanding the complex green space to 49 hectares and planting 29,000 trees, and changing the irrigation method from flood to drip. Rehabilitation Steel Baft Company has spent over 100 billion Tomans to carry out the mentioned projects. Several national, provincial and local officials were present at the inauguration of the refinery. Present participants include: Valdkhani, Director of HSEE Imidro, Naimi, Director of HSEE of National Iranian Steel Company, Shakeri, Director General of Environmental Protection of Kerman Province, Nazari, Deputy Minister of Environment of Kerman Province, and managers and experts of Rehabilitation Steel Baft Company. Baft Steel Rehabilitation Factory is the largest and only large industrial complex in the region in the three cities of Baft, Rabar and Arzooieh, which was opened and put into operation in 2019.



Expensive Transportation Blamed For Enhancing Exports to Brazil

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Expensive transportation is the major obstacle in way of enhancing exports to Brazil, it was claimed during a seminar on Sunday.

Head of Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture says trade relations between Iran and Brazil are maintained and increased during the sanction time.

In a seminar on the development of relations with Brazil held on Sunday evening in the presence of business activists in Tehran, Gholamhossein Shafei stated: "Basic needs, corn, soybeans, sugar, meat, and coffee were the important part of our imports from Brazil."

"The trend of imports has decreased by 58% and exports have increased by 110%, but the trade balance between the two countries is still not acceptable," he noted.

"Petrochemical, petroleum products, and pharmaceutical equipment are other part of Iran-Brazil trade," he added. "There are two obstacles to exporting to Brazil," he said; "The first one is the lack of air and shipping lines, and the second is the lack of agreement to avoid additional tax."

Shafei stressed that Brazil has always been of special importance to Iran, especially for the supply of basic goods and foodstuff, saying: "Brazil has always been an attractive market for us and although only four years have passed since the establishment of Iran-Brazil Joint Chamber of Commerce, Iran-Brazil Joint Chamber was the first to establish an office in the destination country."

He went on to say that relations between the two countries have a history of more than 100 years and even during the sanctions the two sides not only maintained their trade relations but also increased them.

Mentioning the establishment of Iran-Brazil Joint Chamber of Commerce in July 2017, the official said: "In 2020, Iran's direct imports from Brazil reached \$1.15 billion, while exports to this country were only \$116 million. In the first 10 months of 2021, we imported \$1.7 billion of products from Brazil."

According to Shafei, the top imported items from Brazil include basic goods, corn, soy, oil, sugar, meat, and coffee, and Brazil's mineral and industrial capacities have received less attention.

He emphasized that to enhance exports to Brazil there are two main obstacles, noting that transportation is the first major hurdle and unfortunately due to reloading in the third party country, the cost of transportation becomes expensive and Iranian goods lose the competition race to its rivals. He added that launching the direct shipping line and direct flight between Tehran and Sao Paulo can solve this problem to some extent.

He also said lack of basic trade agreement between the two countries is the other major hurdle for trade with Brazil. President of the Iran-Brazil Joint Chamber of Commerce, Fakhroddin Amerian, also stated: "Iran-Brazil economic relations go back to 116 years ago and the country's trade relations with Iran were also positive during the sanctions."

"Brazil is a country prone to selling Iranian goods, which unfortunately has been neglected," he said.

Meanwhile Ambassador of Brazil to Tehran Laudemar Gonçalves de Aguiar Neto, addressing the seminar, said that the trade between Iran and Brazil witnessed growth in 2021 comparing to 2020, adding that the trade level between the two countries has grown in the field agriculture and expressed hope this trade can be diversified and expanded to other fields.

He went on to say that the trade volume between Iran and Brazil was some \$2.5b in 2021 and corn accounts for \$750m of the total trade.

He also assessed the horizon of the bilateral trade favorable in 2022, adding that of course some openings like the agreement in Vienna can expand this cooperation. He reiterated that recently Brazil has approved a law in the parliament which can help cooperation between small Brazilian companies with Iranians.



Nightclub Blaze Kills at Least 16 in Cameroon's Capital

YAOUNDE (Dispatches) - A fire engulfed an upmarket nightclub in Cameroon's capital Yaounde in the early hours Sunday, killing at least 16 people and injuring eight others, the government said.

"The incident was caused by the explosion of fireworks usually used in the nightclub," said the government, adding that this had caused a fire to break out on the ceiling, leading to further explosions and panic in the venue.

The fire started at about 2.30 a.m. (0130 GMT), according to the government statement, which said authorities had launched an investigation. — Reuters



Kyrgyz Reporter Hit With Drug Charge

BISHKEK (Dispatches) - A renowned investigative journalist in ex-Soviet Kyrgyzstan has been charged with possession of narcotics, police said on Sunday, days after he released an investigation into the fuel business of a powerful political family.

The move has raised fears of a media crackdown by the Central Asian country's new president, whose tenure has seen the arrests of high profile politicians and increasing controls over civic organizations.

Bolot Temirov, whose YouTube channel Temirov Live is known for its hard-hitting anti-corruption investigations, was taken into custody late Saturday after police raided the media outlet's office.



UK Accuses Russia of Trying to Install Pro-Kremlin Gov't in Ukraine



LONDON (Dispatches) - The UK has accused the Kremlin of seeking to install a pro-Russian leader in Ukraine as fears of a Russian invasion of Ukraine grow.

The Foreign Office said in a statement Russian intelligence officers had been in contact with a number of former Ukrainian politicians as part of plans for an invasion and that former parliamentarian Yevgen Murayev was being considered as a potential leader.

"The information being released today shines a light on the extent of Russian activity designed to subvert Ukraine, and is an insight into Kremlin thinking," said UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss.

"Russia must de-escalate, end its campaigns of aggression and disinformation, and pursue a path of diplomacy."

The British foreign ministry did not provide evidence to back its accusations.

Russia will face severe economic sanctions if it installs a "puppet regime" in Ukraine, Britain's deputy prime minister Dominic Raab said on Sunday. "There'll be very serious consequences if Russia takes this move to try and invade but also install a puppet regime," Raab told Sky News.

Murayev, the man named by London, lost his seat in the Ukrainian parliament when his party failed to win five percent of the vote in the 2019 elections. He is the founder of TV channel Nash, which regulators have been seeking to shut down since last year, accusing it of airing pro-Russian propaganda.

Four other politicians named by the UK as possible Russian picks were Mykola Azarov, Sergiy Arbutov, Andriy Kluyev, and Volodymyr Sivkovich.

Murayev said on Sunday his country needed new leadership.

"The Ukrainian people need rule of law, peace, sound and pragmatic economic and social policies, and new political leaders," Murayev wrote on Facebook.

Moscow has insisted it has no plans to invade Ukraine, despite currently having about 100,000 troops on the Ukraine border. The Russian foreign ministry dismissed London's claims as "disinformation" and urged London to "stop spreading nonsense".

In Washington, DC, US National Security Council spokeswoman Emily Horne said Russia's alleged "plotting" was "deeply concerning".

"The Ukrainian people have the sovereign right to determine their own future, and we stand with our democratically elected partners in Ukraine," Horne said.

The claims came hours after a senior UK defense source said Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu had accepted an invitation to meet his UK counterpart Ben Wallace to discuss the crisis.

Tensions have soared in recent weeks as Russian troops mass on Ukraine's border along with an arsenal of tanks, fighting vehicles, artillery and missiles.

Le Pen Shrugs Off Defections In Battle for French Far-Right

PARIS (Dispatches) - Veteran French far-right politician Marine Le Pen shrugged off another defection from her party to rival Eric Zemmour amid an increasingly bitter battle ahead of presidential elections in April.

One-time Le Pen ally and confidant Gilbert Collard formally announced yesterday that he was joining Zemmour's team and appeared at a rally alongside the anti-Islam writer and pundit in the south of France.

The European MP follows two other anti-immigration hardliners from Le Pen's National Rally party to join Zemmour in the last week: fellow MEP Jerome Riviere and senior party official Damien Rieu.

"I don't pay much attention to all these little manoeuvres between politicians because all of my energies are directed towards the issues of French people," Le Pen told France 3 television on Sunday.

A new poll published yesterday showed President Emmanuel Macron winning the first round of the election on April 10 with 25 per cent, followed by Le Pen and right-winger Valerie Pécresse from the Republicans party on 15.5 per cent each.

Brussels Police Fire Water Cannon, Tear Gas

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - Police in Brussels fired water cannon and tear gas to disperse protesters near the European Commission's headquarters on Sunday, after a protest involving some 50,000 people opposing COVID-19 restrictions turned violent.

Although Belgium announced a slight easing of coronavirus restrictions on Friday, despite record infections, the government also said people must have booster shots after five months to maintain the COVID-19 passes which allow them to access bars or cinemas.

The passes, which are mandatory for anyone wishing to enter a restaurant, museum or many other public space, have sparked fierce opposition among some Belgians.

In scenes reminiscent of similar clashes last November, when around 35,000 protesters took part in demonstrations that started peacefully but later turned violent, some streets in the Belgian capital were soon filled with acrid tear gas.

The building housing the European diplomatic service and a sandwich shop were broken into, a Reuters witness said.

Some protesters let off fireworks as police advanced in force into a nearby park where large groups of demonstrators had gathered, the water cannon surrounded by officers wearing body armour, helmets and carrying riot shields.

One demonstrator, standing on a stage, told the others to put up their hands, saying the protesters would not give up.

"I'm angry about the blackmail that the government is doing, mostly for the young people but for everybody, but mostly for the young people, they are really blackmailing that everybody has to go for the vaccine", Caroline van Landuyt, who said she had been vaccinated against COVID-19 herself, said.

Belgium is in the midst of a fifth wave of COVID-19 infections, with the peak not expected for at least a couple of weeks. Some 89% of adults in Belgium are fully vaccinated and 67% have now also received a booster shot.



Burkina Faso Gov't Denies Army Takeover After Barracks Gunfire

OUAGADOUGOU (Dispatches) - Burkina Faso's government says the army has not seized control of the country after exchanges of gunfire took place at multiple army barracks, including two in the capital, Ouagadougou.

Heavy arms fire on Sunday at Sangoule Lamizana camp, which houses the army's general staff and a prison whose inmates include soldiers involved in a failed 2015 coup attempt, began as early as 5am (05:00 GMT), a Reuters news agency reporter said.

The reporter later saw soldiers firing into the air in the camp. A witness also reported gunfire at a military camp in Kaya, about 100km (62 miles) north of Ouagadougou. Shots were heard at another military camp, Baby Sy, in the south of the capital, and at an airbase near the airport, military sources said.

Burkina Faso's government confirmed gunfire at some military camps but denied reports on social media that the army had seized power.

Speaking on national television on Sunday, Defence Minister General Bathelmy Simpore denied rumours that President Roch Marc Kabore had been detained, adding the motive behind the gunfire was still unclear.

"The head of state has not been detained; no institution of the country has been threatened," Simpore said. "For now, we don't know their motives or what they are demanding. We are trying to get in contact with them," he said, adding that calm had returned to some of the barracks.

Protesters siding with soldiers who staged mutinies

at several barracks set fire to the headquarters of the ruling party in the capital on Sunday, according to an AFP journalist at the scene.

The blaze destroyed the ground floor of the building of the People's Movement for Progress (MPP) party, where protesters also vandalised the facade before being dispersed by police firing tear gas, the reporter said.

The unrest came a day after clashes between police and demonstrators during protests against the authorities' failure to stem violence ravaging the West African country.

It also follows the arrest earlier this month of numerous soldiers over a suspected plot to "destabilise institutions" in the country, which has a long history of coups.

Al Jazeera's Nicolas Haque, reporting from Dakar, Senegal, said a general leading the mutiny in one barracks presented six demands to the government on Sunday.

"One is hiring more troops to fight on the front lines against groups linked to ISIL [and] al-Qaeda," he said.

"They also demand better care for the wounded and the families of those who lost their loved ones as well as better wages, training and forming of permanent battalions to deal with threats," Haque said.

"[The mutineers' demands] fall short of asking President Kabore to resign, but in their latest statement they say that if their demands are not met, then they will ask for Kabore to step down. They feel that his leadership has not led to a safer Burkina Faso, but a country that has seen an increase in attacks," Haque added.



Turkish Cypriots Vote Under Shadow of Economic Crisis

NICOSIA (Dispatches) - Turkish Cypriots cast their ballots on Sunday in a snap legislative election in the breakaway northern third of the Mediterranean island after a campaign dominated by an economic crisis.

The self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) -- recognised only by Ankara -- has been hit hard by the Covid pandemic and the plummeting value of the Turkish lira.

Analysts said there has been a lack of interest in the poll among the roughly 204,000 voters mainly concerned with health, safety and economic welfare.

"Compared to the previous elections in northern Cyprus, there is much less energy and enthusiasm in the air," political scientists Ahmet Sozen and Devrim Sahin wrote on the website of Italian think tank ISPI.

Cyprus has been split since 1974 when Turkish forces occupied the northern part of the island in response to a military coup sponsored by the junta in power in Greece at the time.

Unlike in previous TRNC elections, campaigning this time has focused on the territory's economic woes rather than any talk of a solution to the problem.

Hopes of resolving the intractable dispute suffered a setback when right-wing nationalist Ersin Tatar pulled off a surprise, narrow win over pro-unification candidate Mustafa Akinci in the TRNC's 2020 presidential election.

A man passes an election poster in the northern part of divided Nicosia -- analysts said there has been a lack of interest in the poll among the roughly 204,000 voters.

Tatar, a close ally of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has pressed for recognition and insisted on a two-state solution at UN-brokered talks on ending the division.

His stance was flatly rejected by the majority Greek-speaking Republic of Cyprus, a European Union member with effective control over the southern two-thirds of the island.

The Erdogan administration was accused of interference in the TRNC's 2020 presidential election, sparking resentment among many Turkish Cypriots.

This time, however, "there is no need for Turkey's government to play an active role to change the course of the election", Sozen and Sahin wrote.



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J, balcony
marble fl
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Darrou Villa (\$5000)
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S, J, balcony
yard, & pkg
Fully Furn

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All with S/p, balcony, F.F

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SCO to Consider Draft Program Proposed by Uzbekistan

TASHKENT (Dispatches) - Shanghai Cooperation Organization countries will consider a draft program to stimulate industrial cooperation in the member states, which was proposed by Uzbekistan.

The member states agreed to submit the document for consideration at the next meeting of the Council of National Coordinators of the SCO countries. The meeting will be held in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) on January 25-28, 2022. The program to stimulate industrial cooperation between the business circles of the SCO member states was initiated by the Uzbek side at the Moscow (Russia) summit in 2020. The president of Uzbekistan called for the adoption of this document to be accelerated at the summit of the organization in September 2021.



Panic Strikes Turkish Industrialists as Iranian Gas Supplies Drop

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkish industrial representatives continue to warn that production could be at risk if the energy crisis continues to grow. Turkey might introduce electricity cuts to industrial sites and urge power plants to slash use as neighboring Iran has been supplying only a small amount of gas after the flow was cut over a technical issue.

Iran has been supplying 2 million cubic meters (mcm) of natural gas to Turkey instead of its 28 mcm requirement since exports resumed on Friday, after being cut a day earlier.

Initially, the natural gas use of the factories was restricted by 40% in Turkey, however, following a recent decision, electricity cuts would be imposed in all organized industrial zones (OIZs) across the country as of 12 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 24, and the country's industrial production will stop completely for at least three days.

The first notification regarding the three-day restriction was issued by the Turkish Electrical Transmission Company (TEİAŞ) over the phone to the OIZs, Turkish economics daily Dünya reported Saturday. The report also said, following industrialists' strong reactions against the restrictions, the days were made consecutive after Energy and Natural Resources Minister Fatih Dönmez intervened on the businesses' behalf.

The restrictions allows the OIZs to draw enough energy for lighting and heating purposes. On the allotted days, the regions that draw more energy than the determined amount will be cut off by the TEİAŞ and subjected to penalties.

Memiş Küttükcü, head of the Supreme Organization of Organized Industrial Zones (OSBÜK), underlined that the power outages in OIZs continue to challenge the industrialists at a time when production and exports have accelerated and that they, as OSBÜK, are following the issue closely. He added that some officials from Turkey also went to Iran and are trying to fix the problem.

Turkey is almost fully dependent on imported gas from Russia, Azerbaijan and Iran. Iran fulfilled 16% of Turkey's natural gas needs in the first 10 months of 2021, according to the latest official data.

"The zones are currently making extraordinary efforts to manage this process and to keep the production losses of our industrialists to a minimum. However, despite this, we know that power cuts experienced at a time when production and exports are accelerating will harm the economy and industrial production," he said.

Orhan Aydın, head of the Middle East Industry and Trade Center (OSTIM) in Ankara told Dünya that they created a cut-off plan that would cause the least damage after meeting with the industrialists, noting that they determined the appropriate method for their members. Veysel Yayan, secretary-general of the Turkish Steel Producers Association, also told Dünya that notification of the power outage was issued to the sector via an official letter.

The iron and steel sector uses the most electricity in Turkey, and Yayan stated that the power cut meant "every second of power cut was a financial loss" for it.

He said they expect this process to be resolved quickly as it creates an extraordinary, serious problem for the industry. "We hope that Turkey will overcome the troubled moment as soon as possible. Every second causes material damage, but there is one thing: We do not only live as the steel industry, but we also share this difficulty, the whole industry sector, a problem faced by Turkey. We hope that lessons will be learned from this problem and that we will not encounter similar situations in the coming years," he said.

Lufthansa Set to Buy 40% Stake in Alitalia Successor ITA

MILAN (Dispatches) - Germany's Lufthansa is set to buy a 40 percent stake in state-owned Alitalia's successor ITA Airways and a deal could be unveiled next week, Italian daily Il Foglio reported.

ITA Airways started flying on Oct. 15 with nearly 2,300 employees and a fleet less than half the size of that operated by Alitalia, the 75-year old former national carrier which passed through a dizzying succession of restructurings and changes of ownership.

The newspaper did not give a price for any deal, but said the two companies were very close to agreeing over some key terms, such as the role of Rome's Fiumicino airport as a hub for direct flights to Africa and some routes to the Americas.

An ITA spokesperson said on Saturday that the airline's top management would present a strategic plan to the company's board on Jan. 31. A data room would be opened in the following days, he added, allowing a potential bidder or partner to have access to key financial documents to assess the value of the company.

Lufthansa declined to comment.

The report comes after sources told Reuters on Jan. 12 that ITA was in contact with Lufthansa, British Airways and United States-based Delta Air Lines for an equity partnership, saying that formal talks could start by the end of March.

A Lufthansa spokesperson said at that time that the German carrier was open to the possibility of a partnership with ITA, whereas Delta denied it planned to invest in ITA.

The German government currently holds 14 percent of Lufthansa shares following a bailout at the height of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 and aims to sell its stake by October 2023 at the latest.

The group was saved from bankruptcy by Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Belgium with \$10.21 billion in financial support approved by the European Commission. A German economy ministry spokesperson declined to comment on the Italian newspaper report.

A deal with ITA would be subject to a European Union competition approval, Il Foglio said.



Poverty Rate In Pakistan Reduced During PTI Gov't

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Sunday that World Bank figures show the poverty rate in the country has reduced during the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government, adding that the opposition parties propaganda over inflation is baseless.

While answering a question of a caller during the fifth session of the 'Aap Ka Wazir Azam Aap Key Sath' program, the premier said: "The opposition says poverty increased in the PTI government, but World Bank's figures say poverty decreased."

"The World Bank has estimated an increase of 5.37pc in Pakistan's gross domestic product (GDP)," PM Khan said.

Speaking about the ongoing wave of inflation, the premier said that Pakistan was not the only country that faced skyrocketing prices. "The prices of vital commodities have soared all over the world and the situation is similar in Pakistan," he said.

He added that the world was facing a supply shortage due to the Covid-19 pandemic. "The US has spent \$6,000 billion for the welfare of the people during the pandemic and we spent \$8bn. We must compare the situation of both countries."

He said that the government was taking measures to provide relief to the salaried class, as they were the most affected due to the recent hike in inflation.

The premier reiterated that the economic situation in Pakistan was not as bad as in other countries. He said that due to a boom in the agriculture and construction sectors, the income of people linked to these industries has risen significantly.

"There is a 73 per cent increase in the income of the farmers," he said, adding that the farmers earned additional profits to the tune of Rs1,400 billion last year.

Talking about the government's response to the Covid-19 crisis, the premier said that efforts were being acknowledged globally.

"We have been told that we are incompetent. But The Economist magazine has rated us among the top countries that effectively tackled Covid-19. We will also come out of this inflation crisis," he vowed.

Talking about the possibility of negotiations with the opposition, he said Gen Pervez Musharraf committed the "biggest sin" by offering NROs (National Reconciliation Ordinances) to the opposition.

"Half of the taxes we collect are spent on paying back debts incurred during the previous government's tenures," he claimed.

The premier urged the people to strictly follow the Covid-19 protocols and wear a face mask to counter the fifth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

He maintained that the government will not shut down any businesses, as the economy cannot bear another lockdown.

According to the Prime Minister Office's Media Wing, the prime minister had held four such live TV sessions with the public last year. About 86 questions, 74 on telephone calls and 12 others via social media, were answered by the prime minister during these sessions.

In the previous sessions, the callers had raised different issues about corruption, land grabbing, inflation, coronavirus, among others.

Sri Lanka Inflation Hits Record 14%



COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Sri Lanka consumer prices shot up a record 14 per cent in December, surpassing a previous high of 11.1 from a month earlier, official figures showed on Saturday as food and fuel shortages worsen.

Senior ministers warned parliament earlier in the week of a growing food crisis with rice harvests due in March expected to be drastically lower after an agrochemical import ban last year saw farmers abandoning more than 30 per cent of agricultural land.

The island's tourism-dependent economy has been hammered by the pandemic with the government imposing broad import restrictions to avert a foreign exchange crisis, triggering a shortage of essential goods.

The Census and Statistics Department said year-on-year inflation in December was the highest since the National Consumer Price Index (NCPI) was established in 2015.

It said food inflation also hit a record 21.5 per cent, up from 16.9 per cent in November and 7.5 per cent a year ago. The use of substandard organic fertilizer and pesticides has sharply reduced vegetable and fruit crop yields.

Iraq Schedules Crude Shipments for March Loading

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Iraq has already scheduled some oil shipments for loading in March due to projections of strong demand, Ali Nizar, deputy head of Iraq's State Organization for Marketing of Oil (SOMO), told reporters.

On the subject of oil prices, Nizar said it was still too early to say if prices will exceed \$100 per barrel, as some analysts have forecast.

Oil prices hit a seven-year high just above \$89 a barrel on Wednesday. Any price increase will not last, Nizar said, but the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was taking the current fluctuations into consideration.

OPEC+, the group of producers comprising OPEC and allies including Russia, have aimed to raise output by 400,000 bpd a month but production has increased by less than that as some producers struggle to pump more, according to OPEC's monthly report in January.

The market could need additional quantities of oil and OPEC+ will offer more to the market if needed, Nizar said.

He added that Iraq's average oil exports are expected to rise to 3.3 million barrels per day in February, from 3.2 million barrels per day in January.



Cuba Can Generate 1,100 Megawatts of Electricity From Wind

HAVANA (Dispatches) - Promoting greater use and diversification of renewable energy sources (FRE) so that electricity generation in Cuba depends less on the use of fossil fuels and thus achieving higher levels of independence and security in such a vital sector, is part of the National Economic and Social Development Plan until 2030.

In the special case of wind energy (that which is converted into electrical energy, produced by the movement of the wind turbine blades, driven by wind), since the mid-2000s, the country has begun to on a larger scale, studies aimed at discovering the potential that exists in the Cuban archipelago.

Wind energy, along with photovoltaics, is among the two fastest growing renewable energy sources in the world, does not emit toxic substances into the environment, and does not pollute water, in addition to having one of the lowest indicators of consumption of this important resource. It is inexhaustible and its effective use contributes to sustainable development.

Professor Alfredo Roque Rodriguez, a researcher in the Center for Atmospheric Physics of the Institute of Meteorology (Insmet), and one of the most experienced specialists working on the subject told, gramma That in 2005 the Temporary Group for the Promotion of Wind Energy (Gtiee) was established, which consists of about 20 institutions affiliated with eight ministries.

Under the leadership of a team of scientists from the same Institute of Meteorology, with the active participation of professors from the Center for the Study of Renewable Energy Technologies (Ceter), what is now the José Antonio Echeverría Technological University of Havana, and other entities, the first major contribution from Gtiee came a year later, when the Completion of the first wind map of Cuba.

Roque Rodriguez specified that by implementing two international projects, in order to obtain this result, highly efficient and reliable mathematical-physical models, developed by the Renewable Energy Laboratory in Riso, Denmark, and Environment Canada, were applied.

"We were able to digitize all wind data from 68 weather stations based in the country, a task in which we received the support of a young computer club in the county capitals.

So we created a database containing records, at different times, of the strength and direction of the winds, measured at a height of ten metres. "At 43 of the stations participating in the study, the measurements collected for this variable were in the range of 30 to 35 years," said Professor Rodriguez Rodriguez.

Iranian Minister Visits Baku for Talks

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran's Minister of Road and Urban Development Rostam Qassemi travelled to the Republic of Azerbaijan for a series of negotiations with the purpose of facilitating the transportation of trade cargoes and implementing joint projects between the two neighbors. The Iranian minister left Tehran for Baku on Monday

morning and will hold talks with the Azeri officials until Wednesday, IRNA reported.

The meetings will reportedly revolve around ways to promote cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan in the transportation and transit sectors and carry out the joint infrastructural projects.



Russia's Oil Output Could Peak in 2023

LONDON (OilPrice) - Russia, the world's third-largest oil producer, has long been an unknown when it comes to the OPEC+ production agreement which caps the petroleum output of participants to support higher prices. It was Moscow's spat with Saudi Arabia over production quotas in early 2020 which, combined with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, caused crude oil prices to plunge into negative territory for the first time ever. The North American benchmark West Texas Intermediate plunged to minus \$37.63 per barrel before recovering, while Brent did not enter negative territory the international benchmark, plunged to an intraday low of less than \$15 per barrel.

During that time Moscow, Riyadh and other OPEC+ signatories were finally able to agree on production quotas. However, Moscow's economic ambitions remain a threat to the agreement's firmness, particularly with Washington threatening further sanctions. With OPEC gradually expanding production quotas set out in the agreement confirmed at the 19th ministerial meeting, there is considerable speculation as to how much global petroleum supply will expand and how that will affect crude oil prices. A key point of conjecture is whether Russia can grow its crude oil output as planned and allowed by its OPEC+ quota, with it speculated that the world's third-largest oil producer is operating at or near capacity. For December 2021 Russia, according to the Ministry of Energy, pumped an average of 10.903 million barrels of crude oil and gas condensate daily. That number was marginally lower than the 10.906 million barrels produced per day for November 2021 but an impressive 8.4% higher compared to the same period a year earlier.

Government data shows that total annual oil and gas condensate production during 2021 averaged 10.5 million barrels per day, which is over 2% higher than a year earlier. It is anticipated that Russia's crude oil output will expand further during 2022. The energy ministry predicts that forecast average annual daily crude oil output will climb to between 10.84 million and 11.05 million barrels, which is a 3% to 5% increase over 2021.

Despite concerns that Russia's petroleum industry reaching production capacity Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak, in October 2021, claimed there is ample room to expand crude oil output. Novak, who is the Kremlin's key negotiator with OPEC, claimed Russia possesses sufficient spare capacity to ramp up production to over 11 million barrels per day. To support this assertion the deputy prime minister cited earlier production records where Russia was pumping up to 11.4 million barrels daily, in February 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit forcing operational shut-ins. While some analysts believe this is not achievable, industry consultancy Rystad Energy, in an August 2021 press release, predicted that Russia's petroleum production during July 2022 will hit a new record.

Rystad is tipping that the world's third-largest oil producer will pump 11.6 million barrels per day during that month which, if achieved, represents a notable 11% increase compared to the same month in 2021. The consultancy went on to forecast that the world's third-largest oil producer's output will continue growing, peaking at 12.2 million barrels per day by mid-2023.

Regardless of those optimistic predictions, there are signs that Russia could struggle to lift petroleum production as predicted. The primary elements governing Moscow's planned increase in crude oil output are Russia's OPEC+ quota, external factors such as climate and whether the petroleum industry has spare productive capacity. Under the OPEC+ agreement, which was confirmed at the July 2021 19th Ministerial Meeting, Russia is permitted to pump up to 11 million barrels of crude oil daily until the end of April 2022. For May 2022, the quota will increase to 11.5 million barrels of crude oil per day. Energy consultancy Platts Analytics, in a December 2021 statement, indicated that Russia can produce the volume permitted by the OPEC+ agreement.

Nevertheless, there are several headwinds that can impact Russia's planned expansion of its petroleum production. One notable risk is the impact of extreme winters on Russia's hydrocarbon sector, which is an ongoing threat to industry operations and the



ability to expand petroleum output. Current harsh subzero temperatures are hampering petroleum operations forcing wells to be shut-in and reducing pipeline flows. That will impact Russia's January 2022 crude oil production volumes, meaning the country may not achieve the target set by Novak who in a TASS article stated the country would pump 10.1 million barrels of crude oil daily for the month. This has sparked speculation among industry analysts that Russia will not meet its January 2022 OPEC+ production quota of 10.122 million barrels per day. There is also the potential for the coronavirus to sharply impact industry operations with COVID-19 cases soaring since the emergence of the Omicron variant. Russia is ranked sixth globally by COVID-19 cases and fourth for deaths. Pandemic related supply chain breakdowns and the threat of further lockdowns are weighing on the planned ramp-up of industry activity to support the projected production growth. U.S and European Union sanctions against Russia, in response to among other incidents the invasion of the Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, are also a major risk that may impact plans to grow petroleum production. The sanctions targeting various individuals, commercial entities and vessels, including the Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline, prevent access to U.S. capital as well as technology to be used in hydrocarbon exploration and field development.

Furthermore, recent investment in developing greenfield and brownfield petroleum projects will not be enough to bolster Russia's crude oil output. Analysts are concerned that rising oilfield depletion rates will more than offset the volume of new production coming online as various projects are completed and online. The U.S. Energy Information Administration went as far as to state that the development of greenfield projects in Russia may be unable to boost production much higher than the 10.9 million barrels pumped during December 2021. This, according to the EIA, is because the additional barrels those operations will add, when operations come online, are offset by declining output from mature oilfields, particularly in Siberia.

There are growing doubts as to whether Russia can grow petroleum production to the volumes forecast by Moscow and pump the amount of crude oil allowed by the OPEC+ agreement. This is despite some industry experts including Rystad and Platts Analytics predicting that Russian petroleum production will hit a new record by July 2022 and continue rising into 2023. The headwinds faced by Russia's oil industry could derail those plans. A combination of extreme climate, rising depletion rates in mature Siberian oilfields and U.S. sanctions potentially blocking access to industry investment as well as technology is weighing on the development of hydrocarbon projects. If Russia is unable to grow its oil production at the rate predicted and allowed by its OPEC+ quota, with the country permitted to pump 11.5 million barrels per day as of May 2022, then global supply will not expand as expected. This is because not only are there questions about whether Russia's petroleum industry is reaching capacity but if OPEC can lift crude oil output as planned during 2022. If supply does not grow, crude oil prices will remain high further underpinning the inflationary threat which has emerged and possesses the potential to derail the global post-pandemic economic recovery.

Germany Cries Foul Over Nuclear Energy in EU's Green Rule Book

BERLIN (Dispatches) - German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's three-party coalition government has raised objections to a European Union draft plan to label nuclear power plants as a sustainable energy source in a formal letter to Brussels, ministers said.

The EU taxonomy aims to set a gold standard for green investments, helping climate-friendly projects to pull in private capital and stamping out "greenwashing," where investors and companies overstate their eco-credentials.

"As the federal government, we have once again clearly expressed our rejection of the inclusion of nuclear energy. It is risky and expensive," Vice Chancellor and Economy Minister Robert Habeck said in a joint statement with Environment Minister Steffi Lemke, both senior members of the Greens party.

In its letter to Brussels, published by the Economy Ministry on its webpage, the German government also pointed to the lack of any safety requirements regarding nuclear power plants.

"Serious accidents with large, cross-border and long-term hazards to humans and the environment cannot be excluded," Berlin said in its letter, adding that the question of where to store radioactive waste in the long term was still unanswered.

Habeck and Lemke said that Berlin should reject the plan in their opinion if the European Commission disregarded Germany's objections and left the draft plan unchanged.

However, German government sources told Reuters earlier this month that coalition parties wanted to avoid escalating the EU dispute and agreed in coalition talks behind closed doors to abstain in any upcoming vote.

The EU rules have been long delayed, with countries split over whether nuclear energy and natural gas deserve a green badge. Austria has already said it would take legal action if the European Commission proceeds with its draft plan to label both as sustainable investments.

The German government said in its letter that it supports a temporary green label for natural gas as a bridge solution on the bloc's path to climate neutrality.

Peru Declares Environmental Emergency in Area Fouled by Oil Spill

LIMA (Dispatches) - Peru declared an environmental emergency to battle an oil spill caused by freak waves from a volcanic eruption in the South Pacific.

The stunningly powerful eruption last Saturday of an undersea volcano near Tonga unleashed tsunami waves around the Pacific and as far away as the United States.

In Peru, the oil spill near Lima has fouled beaches, killed birds and harmed the fishing and tourism industries.

With its 90-day decree, the government said it plans "sustainable management" of 21 beaches tarred by 6,000 barrels of oil that spilled from a tanker ship unloading at a refinery last Saturday.

One aim of the decree is to better organize the various agencies and teams working in the aftermath of the disaster, said the environment ministry.

Foreign Trade and Tourism Minister Roberto Sanchez estimated Saturday that economic losses total more than \$50 million, all sectors combined.

The government is demanding payment of damages from the Spanish energy giant Repsol which owns the refinery.

The environment ministry said 174 hectares – equivalent to 270 football fields – of sea, beaches and natural reserves were affected by the spill.

Crews have been working for days to clean up the spill. But the ministry said it issued the emergency decree because the crude still in the water was still spreading, reaching 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the spot of the original spill.

The environment ministry said "the spill amounts to a sudden event of significant impact on the coastal marine ecosystem, which has major biological diversity."



It said that over the short term, Repsol is responsible for emergency cleanup operations.

The refinery is in the town of Ventanilla near Lima.

Repsol has said the spill occurred because of the freak waves caused by the eruption.

The company has argued that it is not responsible for the spill,

however, because it says the government gave no warning that there might be rough waters from that undersea blast.

On Saturday, Repsol issued a statement outlining the cleanup operation by 1,350 people using big-rig trucks, skimmers, floating containment barriers and other equipment.

Repsol said it is "deploying all efforts to attend to the remediation of the spill." In addition to the fishing industry, Peru's tourism sector has taken a major blow, including everything from restaurants, to beach umbrella rentals to food and beverage sales by vendors.

"In a normal season, between January and March (during Peru's summer) five million people visit the affected beaches. The economic loss is immense," Sanchez said, adding that thousands of jobs had been affected and the tourism sector "mortally wounded."

On the pier in the town of Ancon north of Lima, only the crew members of larger vessels that fish on the high seas continued to work, while the fish stalls were empty, because there are no longer any customers.

"The fish more than anything comes out with the smell of oil, and people don't buy it, they don't eat it because they are afraid of getting poisoned by it, by the oil spill," said Giovana Rugel, 52, who sells fish at the entrance to the Ancon pier.

Last week, fishermen and other local people who live off the sea and tourism staged protests over the sudden loss of their livelihood.

Iran's Exports to...

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Accordingly, the value of exports comparing to the same period last year has increased by 74% while the value of imports has declined by 37%. Therefore the trade balance has been positive and in favor of Iran by \$296m.

The report also shows that India has been the sixth export destination of Iranian goods and the country has been the seventh exporters to Iran.

TCCIMA's report shows that Iran has exported some 5m tons of goods to India in 9 months which shows 5% growth in terms of weight.

15 imported items of goods from India has accounted for 64% of Iran's total imports in the first three quarters of the current year and rice is the major export of India to Iran which is valued at around \$220m. Black tea, aluminum oxide and green banana have been the other major exports of India to Iran.

Meanwhile methanol and water free ammonia have been Iran's major exports to India in the same period. Sponge iron, pistachio, urea and toluene have been the other major exporting items of Iran to India in 9 months.

According to the report, the trade between Iran and India can improve in the remaining days of the current Iranian calendar year and the total trade volume can exceed \$3b.

Russian Firms to...

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The NIOC CEO noted the expansion of economic relations, especially in the field of energy, as one of the most important features of the President's state visit to Russia.

Khojastehmehr, noting that Iran and Russia as two powerful countries in the region have geopolitical importance and potential economic capabilities, said: "Iran and Russia with these capacities are among the most influential countries in the world."

Meanwhile Iran's former OPEC Governor Mohammad Ali Khatibi has said strengthening energy cooperation between Iran and Russia is going to bring the two countries even closer in international forums like OPEC+, Shana reported.

Mohammad-Ali Khatibi said that Iran and Russia pursue common policies in international energy forums such as OPEC+ and the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF), adding that increasing bilateral cooperation between the two countries could lead to closer positions of both countries in these important arenas.

Pointing out that the establishment of a joint risk management hedge fund between Iran and Russia can ensure Iranian and Russian companies to cooperate with each other, Khatibi said: "The presence of Russian public and private companies in the Iranian oil industry and vice versa can be fruitful."

Emphasizing that the presidents of Iran and Russia have repeatedly stressed the need for boosting the volume of trade between the two countries, he said: "According to the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the level of cooperation between the two countries should reach \$10 billion annually, which requires more support and follow-up by governments."

"The problems and obstacles in the way of developing trade relations between the two countries should be examined and resolved as soon as possible," Khatibi stressed.

Iran's East-Oriented...

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According to him, achieving mutual understanding and interests, lasting peace, security, the prosperity of nations, and countering all kinds of threats are among the basic goals of Iran's neighborhood policy.

Arranging a 20-year non-aggression pact with any of these neighbors or several complementary countries would be a turning point in achieving lasting collective security, he added.

Iran's special geographical position in the world is unparalleled because it is connected with 11 regional geopolitical systems, he said, adding that Iran can link the Shanghai Cooperation Organization with Eurasia and ECO to benefit from their common interests for the next 20 years.

Western powers seek to undermine Iran's power and make the country surrender, he said, adding, "But we can achieve victory against arrogant powers through the continuation of the strategy of resistance, adopting new neighborhood policies and East-oriented policy."

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Australia Coach Covid-Positive

MELBOURNE (Dispatches) - Australia's build-up to a crunch World Cup qualifier this week suffered a setback Sunday when coach Graham Arnold tested positive for Covid-19 and was forced into isolation. The Socceroos face Vietnam in Melbourne on Thursday with Arnold's deputy, former Manchester United assistant coach Rene Meulensteen, taking the reins. Football Australia chief executive James Johnson said no one else in the set-up had failed a test so far.

Ngannou Retains Heavyweight UFC Title

LONDON (Dispatches) - Cameroonian fighter Francis Ngannou, known as 'The Predator', scored a decision victory over Frenchman 'Bon Gamin' Cyril Gane to hold on to his heavyweight UFC 270 title. In a surprising turn of events, Ngannou, the UFC's king of the fast knockout, saved his heavyweight championship with his grappling game after dropping the first two rounds. The Las Vegas-based fighter used takedowns and top control over the final three rounds to eke out a unanimous decision at Honda Center in Anaheim, California, and retain his belt.

Shapovalov Sends Zverev Crashing, Nadal Survives

MELBOURNE (Dispatches) - Denis Shapovalov upset an out-of-sorts Alexander Zverev 6-3 7-6(5) 6-3 in broiling heat to reach his first Australian Open quarter-final. The Canadian lefthander was magnificent against the German third seed, earning one of his biggest career victories at Margaret Court Arena. Shapovalov blew a match point with a wild forehand into the tramlines but wrapped up the match when Zverev netted under pressure. "Definitely happy with where the game is at," said the ecstatic 22-year-old, long tipped for success at the Grand Slams. "I think off the ground I was just really playing very well, really feeling my shots off both wings." The 14th seed will meet Rafa Nadal for a place in the semi-finals. "It's always an honour to go up against a guy like Rafa," Shapovalov said of the Spanish great, who is bidding for a record 21st Grand Slam title. "It's always going to be a battle against him. It's going to be a tough one but I'm going to enjoy it." It was a disappointing exit for Zverev, who was bundled out of the quarter-finals by Novak Djokovic last year. Late last year Zverev suggested he and Russian Daniil Medvedev might become part of a new 'Big Three' with world number one Djokovic in the 2022 season. Meanwhile Nadal remained on course for a men's record 21st Grand Slam title after winning a battle of left-handers against Adrian Mannarino 7-6(14) 6-2 6-2 to reach the quarter-finals.



The only former champion left in the men's draw, 2009 winner Nadal is tied on 20 majors with injured Roger Federer and nine-times Melbourne Park winner Novak Djokovic, who was deported from Australia before the tournament began. Mannarino had lost both his previous meetings against Nadal and came into the contest after a demanding third-round victory over Russian Aslan Karatsev in a match that lasted four hours and 39 minutes. And after an intense opening set, which included a 30-point tiebreaker and lasted 81 minutes, the 69th-ranked Frenchman wilted under the blazing afternoon sun at the Rod Laver Arena as Nadal sealed the win with an ace on his first match point. In women's event, French Open champion Barbora Krejickova shattered the dreams of two-time Australian Open winner Victoria Azarenka on Sunday to set up a quarter-final with big-serving Madison Keys. The fourth seed won the baseline battle to oust the veteran Belarusian Azarenka, who was struggling with a neck problem, 6-2, 6-2 on Rod Laver Arena. Victory set up a showdown with the unseeded Keys for a berth in the last four, after the American comfortably toppled eighth-seeded Spaniard Paula Badosa 6-3, 6-1. "It was really amazing today because she is a champion here and she likes this court, she's very experienced on this court," said the Czech Krejickova. "I really admire her because she's such a good player and I'm extremely happy that I won today. It was a dream to play in a court like this and against such a champion." Keys stunned eighth seed Badosa to power into an Australian Open quarter-finals for a third time in a clash between two of the season's most in-form players. The unseeded American had a forgettable year in 2021 but thrives in Australia and comfortably topped Badosa 6-3, 6-1 in sweltering heat on Rod Laver Arena. It set her up with a last eight clash against either French Open champion Barbora Krejickova or two-time Australian Open winner Victoria Azarenka.



Loeb Makes History With Monte Carlo Rally Win

MONTE CARLO (Dispatches) - Nine-time world champion Sebastien Loeb, 47, made history as the oldest winner of a WRC rally in the season opener in Monte Carlo on Sunday. Loeb, driving an M-Sport Ford, took the lead on the penultimate stage when French rival Sebastien Ogier, who was over 20 seconds ahead, suffered a puncture. The previous oldest WRC winner was Swede Bjorn Waldegard, who took the 1990 Safari Rally in Kenya at 46 years and five months old. Reigning champion Ogier in a Toyota Yaris, recovered to take second, 10.5secs behind Loeb who recorded his eighth win in Monte Carlo and his first since Catalunya in 2018. "I feel really happy! I didn't expect so much when I came here, but it was a great fight," said Loeb who was partnered by co-driver Isabelle Galmiche. "Ogier was really fast and I struggled a bit yesterday and even this morning." Irishman Craig Breen, in another M-Sport Ford, rounded out the podium. Neither Loeb nor Ogier, who have won 17 of the last 18 titles between them, is competing on a full-time basis in the 2022 championship which has seen the introduction of new hybrid cars. Ogier, 38, is only due to race in a small number of events while Loeb made a rapid return from finishing second in the Dakar Rally to take part in Monte Carlo.

Suns Down Pacers for Sixth Straight Win

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Mikal Bridges scored 23 points and Bismack Biyombo added 21 points with 13 rebounds as the Phoenix Suns extended their winning streak to six games with a 113-103 victory over the visiting Indiana Pacers. Chris Paul added 18 points with 16 assists as the Suns won for the ninth time in their last 10 games in their return home from a perfect five-game road trip. Phoenix won on an off-night for leading scorer Devin Booker, who finished with 11 points while shooting 5 of 23 from the field. Chris Duarte and Lance Stephenson each scored 17 points for the Pacers and Goga Bitadze added 16 with 11 rebounds, but the Pacers were not able to match the effort they delivered Thursday in a victory at Golden State. Indiana was without starters Caris LeVert (calf), Malcolm Brogdon (Achilles) and Domantas Sabonis (ankle) for the second consecutive game. Sabonis leads the Pacers with 19.0 points per game, while Brogdon is second (18.5) and LeVert is third (18.4).

Bucks 133, Kings 127

Khris Middleton scored 34 points and Jrue Holiday added 26 as host Milwaukee capped a flawless three-game homestand by beating Sacramento. The All-Star duo kept the Bucks' win streak alive with Giannis Antetokounmpo sidelined due to a sore knee. Middleton finished 12-of-20 shooting and Holiday went 10-for-20. Donte DiVincenzo chipped in 20 points off the bench. Milwaukee hit 21-of-42 (50 percent) on 3-pointers. Harrison Barnes paced the Kings with 29 points and six rebounds on 11-of-18 shooting. Tyrese Haliburton poured in 24 points to go with six rebounds and 12 assists, and Terence Davis notched 22 points. De'Aaron Fox was a late scratch due to a left ankle injury.

Cavaliers 94, Thunder 87

Darius Garland had 23 points and 11 assists to lead host Cleveland to a win over Oklahoma City. Garland has finished with at least 20 points and 10 assists in four straight games. Rookie Evan Mobley added 15 points and a season-high 17 rebounds as Cleveland won for the sixth time in seven games. Jarrett Allen contributed 14 points and 13 rebounds. The Thunder lost their fifth straight game and their 12th in their last 14.

Curtoni Wins First Ever Super-G



ROME (Dispatches) - Elena Curtoni won her first ever World Cup Super-G event on Sunday after topping the times at Cortina D'Ampezzo, as worries grew over Sofia Goggia's Winter Olympics prospects following a second hard crash in as many weeks. Italian Curtoni claimed her second World Cup win after the Bansko downhill in 2020 with a time of one minute, 20.98 seconds, 0.09sec ahead of Austria's Tamara Tipper, to move second in the super-G rankings. Michelle Gisin of Switzerland completed the podium, 0.24sec off the pace. However Olympic downhill champion Goggia's thumping fall -- which comes a week after she crashed out in Zauchensee -- has caused concern that she might not make the Winter Games in China, which start on February 4.

The Italian Winter Sports Federation (FISI) said that the 29-year-old had suffered a "suspected sprain of her left knee" and will be taken to Milan for more checks. An announcement on her condition will be made in the evening, the FISI said. Goggia, who won Saturday's downhill with another wild run, came flying down the piste in typically aggressive fashion and after losing her footing in an early turn tried to correct her trajectory and wiped out. Curtoni turned away in horror as Goggia almost did the full splits before bouncing down an icy track like a rag doll, with worried looks on the home fans' faces until the 29-year-old got back up and gingerly skied the rest of the course. She was later pictured hobbling away following a medical check, being helped along by members of the Italian team staff. Her fall also means she loses the lead in the super-G rankings, dropping down the third as compatriot Federico Brignone moves top. Overall World Cup leader Mikaela Shiffrin finished just over a second off the pace but extended her lead on Petra Vlhova, who did not race on Sunday.

Guardiola Not to Betray Man City in Decision on Future

MANCHESTER (Dispatches) - Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola said he may make a decision on his future at the end of the season but made it clear he would never "betray" the club. Guardiola, who took over in 2016, has a contract until the end of the 2022-23 season. "I'm not good enough to think far away," Guardiola told reporters. "My future always depends on results. So, play Southampton, rest a little bit then and at the end of the season we'll see what happens. "They gave me everything, so I cannot betray them or do anything wrong to them." Guardiola is aiming to lead City to their fourth league title in five years, having also won four League Cups and the FA Cup in his time in charge. They are 11 points clear in the Premier League after 22 games. "Together we took decisions to come here and to extend the contract two times and it will be the same now," he added. "It depends how they feel about me and how I feel myself in the club. "I feel good and comfortable. When I'm not energetic and feel a little bit drained or tired, I'm pretty sure I will quit. But right now, I feel good."



Feuz Powers to Third Kitzbuehel Downhill Victory

KITZBUHEL (Dispatches) - Beat Feuz led a Swiss 1-2 as he notched up his third downhill victory in Kitzbuehel on Sunday to send out a reminder to in-form Norwegian Aleksander Aamodt Kilde that competition will be keen come the Beijing Olympics. Feuz, who previously won twice last year after notching up six podium finishes in various disciplines, clocked 1min 56.68sec to net 100,000 euros (\$113,400) in prize money, part of a 1m-euro pot on offer for three days of racing in the upmarket Tyrolean resort. Feuz's teammate Marco Odermatt extended his lead atop the overall World Cup standings with his second place, at 0.21sec, while Austrian Daniel Hemersberger ensured some home cheer with third (+0.90). "I'm happy that I got through without any mistakes from top to bottom," said Feuz. "Of course we Swiss wanted to hit back after Vincent (Kreichmayr) won in Wengen. It worked well with Marco and me. "We had the forecast that it would get warm after all and that we should attack. We had a good plan and it worked."

