

**Tehran Province Coordination Council
On Islamic Propagation Announced
That the Public Demonstration
Celebrating the Anniversary of Islamic
Revolution Victory Would Be Held on
February 11 in Tehran**

IRAN NEWS

**Health Ministry Announced on
Tuesday That the Number of Deaths
From the Coronavirus Disease
In Iran Increased to 132,274 With
23 More Iranians Killed by the Virus
Over the Past 24 Hours**

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Tehran Rules Out Unnecessary Direct Negotiations With U.S.

TEHRAN (PressTV)- Iran's top security official has ruled out holding direct talks with the United States during the ongoing sanctions removal talks in Vienna, emphasizing that no face-to-face discussion has been or will be held between Iranian and American diplomats in the course of the talks.

"So far, [our] contacts with the US delegation in Vienna have been through exchanging non-papers. Neither has there been nor will there be a need for more," Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Shamkhani said in a post on his Twitter account.

However, Shamkhani said that such a communication method between Tehran and Washington could be replaced by other methods if a "good agreement" is within reach in the Austrian capital.

Meanwhile, U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price said on Monday that Washington remains open to meeting with Iranian officials directly to discuss the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the 2015 Iran deal, and other issues.

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Non-Oil Exports Rise 38% In 10 Months yr/yr

TEHRAN (MNA) - The value of Iran's non-oil exports rose 38 percent during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021-January 20, 2022), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Speaking to the press in a ceremony on the occasion of International Customs Day, Alireza Moghadasi said Iran exported over 100 million tons of non-oil products worth \$38.763 billion in the mentioned period, IRICA reported.

According to Moghadasi, the weight of exports in the mentioned period also grew by seven percent in comparison to the figure for the previous fiscal year's same 10 months.

He said major export destinations of the Iranian non-oil goods were China, Iraq, and Turkey during the said 10 months.

The IRICA head further announced that the Islamic Republic imported 33 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$41.473 billion in the mentioned period, with a 34-percent growth in value and a 17-percent rise in weight, year on year.

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Iran Prioritizing Close Ties With Neighbors



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The enhancement of relations with the neighbors constitutes a top priority in Iran's foreign policy agenda, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said yesterday in the closing ceremony of the First National Conference and Neighbors in Tehran.

Addressing the conference, Amir-Abdollahian said: "Promotion of relations with neighboring countries is a basic priority in Iran's (diplomatic) initiatives. This priority had not been realized up to now due to various reasons ... (but) increasing cooperation and interaction with neighbors has been one of the basic priorities since the inauguration of the new administration."

With the priority of interaction and dialog with the neighboring states, he added, the Iranian administration is making efforts to seriously pursue and achieve such a goal by maximizing the existing capacities and optimizing bilateral ties.

The foreign minister also noted that the conference raised the expectation that the great capacities of neighbors should be used to obtain the maximum benefits to achieve sustainable development of the region and settle some of the existing crises.

"The most important task for Iran is to pursue a policy focusing on (promotion of ties with) neighbors without the destabilizing presence of extra-regional countries," Amir-Abdollahian said, emphasizing that such a policy which seeks to promote security can tackle this challenge in the medium and long run.

Elsewhere in his address, the Iranian foreign minister cited the Yemeni issue as another challenge for the Islamic Republic, saying, "Currently, there is an issue going on between Yemen and another neighbor. What is happening between Yemen and some of the neighbors as well as those countries that are participating in the military operation against Yemen is a Yemeni business."

He once again voiced Tehran's concern about the ongoing war in Yemen and said, "Since the beginning of the Yemeni crisis and the war against the country, Iran has openly presented a four-point political plan and has always supported the realization and pursuit of the plan."

The top Iranian diplomat called on Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to pursue a political and constructive approach to end the humanitarian siege and war in Yemen and promote intra-Yemeni talks as the continuation of the crisis in the impoverished country would not be beneficial to the region.

Amir-Abdollahian further said the door is open to Riyadh to restore ties with Tehran, adding, "Whenever Saudi Arabia decides to restore its diplomatic relations with Iran, we welcome the reopening of embassies, restoration of ties and even the expansion of relations with Saudi Arabia."

He added that it is up to Riyadh to make a decision about the time of the embassies' reopening, saying Tehran welcomes a new round of talks.

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U.S. Delinks Prisoners' Release From JCPOA Revival Talks

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States says the release of American prisoners by Iran is not a precondition for its return to full compliance with the 2015 nuclear agreement, just a day after US special envoy for Iran Robert Malley said an agreement in Vienna would be unlikely unless Iran releases the prisoners.

In an interview, Malley reiterated Washington's long-held position that the issue of the four American citizens imprisoned in Iran is separate from the negotiations in the Austrian capital to restore the US-abandoned pact. But at the same time, he suggested that their release was a precondition for an agreement in Vienna.

"They're separate and we're pursuing both of them. But I will say it is very hard for us to imagine getting back into the nuclear deal while four innocent Americans are being held hostage by Iran," he said.

Talks have been underway for almost ten months in Vienna to revive the Iran deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), following the U.S. withdrawal from the multilateral agreement in 2018 in pursuit of a confrontational policy against Tehran. Pushed to clarify Malley's remarks, U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price made clear that there is no "direct or explicit linkage" between the two cases.

"The special envoy also made the point that these issues are operating on separate tracks, and they're operating on separate tracks for a very simple reason: A mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA is at best an uncertain proposition," Price said during a press briefing on Monday.

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ViewPoint By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

The U.S., Leader of Economic Terrorism

Terrorism is a phenomena which threatens nations and governments and through the decades it has occurred in different forms and recently some version of it, economic terrorism, is dominating the world and makes the people in the world suffer of it.

If we have a look back at the history and meaning of terrorism, we see the word, in its broadest sense, is the use of intentional violence to achieve political aims. The term is used in this regard primarily to refer to violence during peacetime or in the context of war against non-combatants (mostly civilians and neutral military personnel). The terms "terrorist" and "terrorism" originated during the French Revolution of the late 18th century but became widely used internationally and gained worldwide attention in the 1970s during the Northern Ireland conflict, the Basque conflict, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The increased use of suicide attacks from the 1980s onwards was typified by the 2001 September 11 attacks in the United States.

Gradually terrorism was used by the government and state terrorism emerged which was different from the terrorism which was committed by the individuals and groups. State terrorism refers to acts of terrorism conducted by a state against its own citizens or against another state. Some countries by resorting to this type of terrorism have tried to silence and eliminate their rivals and opponents.

Democracy and domestic terrorism and religious terrorism are of the other types of terrorism which are seen in the world which threaten the lives of the people worldwide, no matter it is developed or under developed countries.

But in recent decades, economic terrorism has emerged that Western countries and especially their leaders the U.S. have used it as a tool to dictate their wills on the nations. These countries, after any political development, punish their opponents with sanctions to put pressures on the governments and people in the countries to obey them blindly.

The Islamic Republic of Iran since its first day of establishment has been the victim of different types of terrorism and experienced types of terrorism and currently it is challenging with the economic terrorism that the U.S. is leader of this sort of terrorism and has imposed sanctions to bring down the Islamic system and the people in the country.

Some other countries and independence loving states are also suffering from the Western economic terrorism, better known sanctions, like North Korea, Syria and Yemen, just because they do not want follow the U.S. footstep.

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UN Urged to Hold Perpetrators of Yemen Massacre to Account

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's top human rights official has deplored the loss of scores of lives in a Saudi-led aerial raid against Yemen, calling on the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to use all available means to hold to account the perpetrators and sponsors of the criminal act.

"On January 21 and as many people around the world were overwhelmed with joy and happiness, the international community witnessed a criminal, cruel, inhuman and unjust act that contravened all principles and fundamentals of international law, especially international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL)," Kazem Gharibabadi, secretary general of Iran's High Council for Human Rights, wrote in a letter addressed to Michelle Bachelet.

He added that more than 100 people were killed and over 260 others wounded when the US-backed and Saudi-led war coalition launched an airstrike against a detention center in Yemen's northwestern city of Sa'ada, noting that three children were among the fatalities.

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Iran's Policy to Develop Relations With Neighbors

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Bagheri said that Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan have many commonalities and the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is to develop relations with its neighbors while opposing any form of occupation.

Major General Bagheri met and held talks with Minister of Defense of the Republic of Azerbaijan Colonel General Zakir Hasanov on Tuesday in Tehran.

During the meeting, Major General Bagheri expressed hope that Hasanov's visit to Iran can be a good opportunity to develop and strengthen relations between the two states, especially on defense, technical, and military issues.

Raisi's Trip To Moscow, Fruitful

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – The government spokesman said that President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi's trip to Russia, like his visit to Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, is another successful step towards realizing a strong Iran.

In his weekly press conference yesterday, Ali Bahadori Jahromi said the visit of President Raisi to Russia was in line with the 13th administration's policy of balanced development of international relations with the countries of the world.

"There was much more convergence and consensus on the supply of basic inputs and grains, as well as the purchase of locomotives and the related issues than initially seemed; and the future will confirm the maximum and strategic agreements between the two countries," Bahadori Jahromi explained about the results of the meeting.

In the visit, also good talks were held on expanding cooperation in security and defense, aerospace, trade, economy, and culture, said the spokesman.

Jahromi later said the President has called on the bank directors to form a work group supervised by the Minister of Finance in order to review the banking system of the country.

In response to a question about President Raisi's meeting with the bank directors, Jahromi said on Tuesday's press conference that the loaning process must be further facilitated, with bad accounts confronted with.



With regard to a meeting of President Raisi with the CEOs of private and state-owned banks also Jahromi said that the meeting was fruitful adding: "The meeting of the banks was held after a decade, while in this meeting Bad bank accounts, the development of Qarz al-Hasna loans, and public access to credit-based micro-loans without the need for collateral and guarantors were among the priorities of the Ministry of Economy, which was emphasized by the president."

"All bank CEOs stressed the urgent need to reform the banking system to offer better services to people, so an economic workgroup was formed being chaired by the Economy and Finance Minister to review and observe banking rules and regulations," said the spokesman.

He added that the president's promise to return the excess bank interest reached the operational and executive point, and if the interest rate on bank facilities was higher than the rate approved by the Monetary and Credit Council, banks are obliged to return the amount they received for this purpose."

FM Offers Warm Wishes To Indian People, Gov't

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian in a message offered warm wishes to people and government of India.

"Warm wishes to my colleague EAM @DrSJaisankar and the Government and People of Republic of India as they celebrate their Republic Day," Amirabdollahian wrote in his Twitter account on Tuesday.

"Will continue to work towards further expansion of all-out relations, bilaterally, regionally and at international fora," he added.

Republic Day is a national holiday in India, when the country marks and celebrates the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect on January 26, 1950, replacing the Government of India Act as the governing document of India and thus, turning the nation into a newly formed republic.

Development of Nuclear Reactors Iran's National Strategy

ABADAN (IRNA) - Vice President and Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami said here on Monday that the development of country's nuclear reactors to use clean energy is a national strategy and among priorities.

"The development of nuclear reactors is an important obligation, which is a priority in the national strategies, and special attention is paid to it in national development plans," said Eslami during his visit of the Darkhovin Nuclear Site of Shadegan city.

He said that in the world, too, the general approach is using renewable clean energies, and this important task is one of the priorities of the 13th government, as well.

"Today the nuclear economy has great added value and zero pollution, and is considered the cleanest way to produce electricity around the globe, which is why we need to take long strides ahead in nuclear sciences and technology," added Eslami.

He said that energy is an inseparable part of the human beings' lives in the modern and industrial societies, which affects the entire dimensions of the peoples' lives.

Eslami said that the Darkhovin Nuclear Site is one of the most important sites in Iran, for whose construction deep studies have been done and can provide the needed electricity in Iran's Khuzestan province which is faced with electricity shortage now.

Education; at Top of Finland, Iran Priorities

QAZVIN (IRNA) - Ambassador of Finland to Tehran in his meeting with Qazvin Governor said that there are new interests and fields of cooperation between Finland and the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially as Helsinki is interested in educational cooperation between the two countries."

He said that Finland wants to get help from the Iranian labor force because there is an important link between education, labor and technology, and strengthening this relationship is effective in achieving development."

Kerry Kahiloto added that Helsinki is interested in modern technologies and using the capacity of



new entrepreneurs in the field of startups.

That is why she is paying visits to industrial parks near Tehran Capital because big cities are crowded and investing in industrial parks near the capital will be attractive for investors, she added.

The Finnish Ambassador further noted that she will try to advance the recommendation of her country and try to develop ties between the two countries.

Describing the visit of the Finnish president to Iran as a turning point in bilateral ties, she said Finnish Foreign Minister will make a visit to Tehran.



Name of God

Khorram is the one who sometimes relieves memory in this tribulation Easy marriage and sympathy of Tehran's benefactors listen

The sound of the instrument comes Sernast Bang has announced the connection between the two lovers Give me your hands Your hands are familiar to me

Take stronger steps A loving step to help our compatriots everywhere in our vast land of Iran

The director of the deprivation camp, Ms. Fatemeh Choupani, said in an interview: The winter of 1400, with the warmth of interconnected hearts, promises a more colorful beginning than ever for the deprivation camp of the International Charity Foundation of the Waterfall of Emotions.

Providing dowry to new brides under the protection of Hazrat Zahra (PBUH) on the occasion of the birth of Hazrat Zahra (PBUH), this time we have the honor of serving the land of stone and water, a land with a history, Kermanshah province. Are life. Also, in order to promote the practical life of Amir Momenan (AS) with the aim of serving the vulnerable, as in the past, we have taken another step and by donating 150 series of dowries to newly supported brides in the amount of ten billion rials equivalent to one billion tomans, including gas, Carpets, blankets, heaters, Teflon and porcelain service, etc. can be taken in promoting easy marriage and the tradition of the Prophet of Mercy (PBUH) and it is necessary to mention that dear provinces received dowry from the deprivation camp during September and until now. Which include West Azerbaijan, Ardabil, Bushehr, Sistan and Baluchestan, Lorestan, Ilam, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Kerman, Khuzestan, Kermanshah, South Khorasan, North Khorasan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Khorasan Razavi. They attended the rehearsals and closely visited the faithful help of the province's benefactors. We would like to thank the dear benefactors who always support the deprived.

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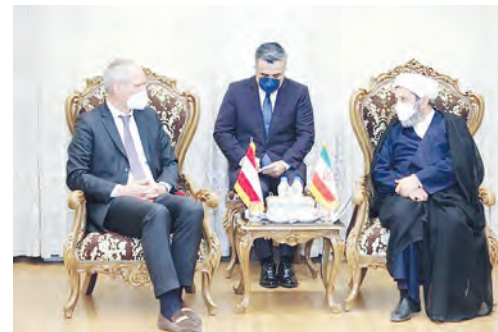
Austria Eager in Broadening Interaction With Iranian Scholars

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Austrian Ambassador in Tehran, Wolf Dietrich Heim, referring to the development of joint cultural cooperation between Iran and Austria, said that Vienna is so eager to expand interaction with Iranian scholars and academics."

In a meeting that was held at the Islamic Culture and Communication Organization (ICRO) in Tehran, Dietrich Heim met with the head of ICRO, Mohammad Mehdi Imanipour.

Austrian Ambassador in Tehran and the head of ICRO in the meeting, conferred on the ways of joint cultural cooperation between the two countries.

Dietrich Heim in the meeting, called for broadening joint cultural ties between the two countries, adding that Vienna is so interested in expanding interaction with Iranian scholars.



Calling for the development of religious talks between Iran and Austria, the Envoy said that "we hope to hold the next round of religious talks between Iran and Austria in 2022 hosted by Austria".

Austrian government welcomes expanding ties with the Islamic Culture and Communication Organization in all aspects, he added in the meeting.

The head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) Mohammad Mehdi Imanipour, for his part, said that Tehran is ready to provide the necessary opportunities and grounds to introduce a worthy image of Austria in Iran.

The activities of the Cultural Counseling of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Austria can be an important factor in the development of cultural activities of the two countries, Mehdiipour said, adding that Austria has a good view among Iranians, and bilateral ties between the two countries can facilitate the potentials.

Tokyo Favors Revival of JCPOA

AHVAZ (IRNA) - Japan's ambassador to Iran Kazutoshi Aikawa while referring to Trump administration's anti-Iranian sanctions said here on Monday that the sanctions have created obstacles in the way of implementing the new Iran-Japan projects, which is why "we hope the JCPOA will be revived soon".

The Japanese ambassador made the remarks in a meeting with the mayor of Ahvaz.

He reiterated that the development of relations with local organizations is of great significance in diplomacy, which is why visiting Khuzestan province and getting familiarized with this land was included in my work plans.

The Japanese ambassador said that during the previous years, too, he had visited Khuzestan province, adding that Ahvaz has been developed noticeably compared with the previous years.

He referred to Japan-Iran joint economic projects, including the Imam Khomeini Port Petrochemical Plant, as a prominent example, which was developed noticeably after the end of the Iran-Iraqi war.

"Khuzestan province has great potentials for economic investments, including in energy and agricultural fields, which have both been in the focus of attention for us," he added.

The Japanese ambassador also referred to his country's cooperation with Iran in management of COVID-19 disease, arguing that it was a very constructive and effective cooperation, including contributing more than 3 million doses of vaccines by Japan to Iran.

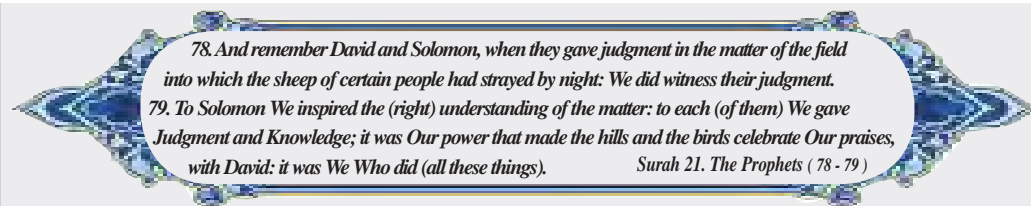
He also referred to the occurrence of numerous earthquakes both in Iran and in Japan, arguing that the two countries have jointly worked on fortifying buildings against quakes, and the results of such studies can also be applied in Khuzestan province.





PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:16
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:44
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:41
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	07:07



Iran Non-Oil Exports To Turkey Fivefold

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Secretary General of Iran-Turkey Joint Chamber of Commerce says that since the beginning of the current Iranian year (March 21, 2021), Iran's non-oil exports to Turkey have been valued at \$4.2b and at the same time imports from Turkey in this period have been around \$3.5b while Iran's non-oil exports to Turkey stood at \$800m last year.

Speaking to ILNA, Mehdi Mousai talked about the possible visit of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Tehran and their talks on economic issues and said this visit has not been fixed yet but it is imminent. He noted that there are some problems which should be raised and solved during Turkish President's visit to Tehran. He added that one of the problems is the extra tax that Turkey gets from Iranian traders which will be probably discussed in the meeting, adding that border problems is the other issue which is to be tackled in the meeting to ease the trade.

Mousavi noted that a proposal for bilateral free trade between the two countries will be also discussed in the meeting, stated that the chamber has offered its proposals and if they are accepted and implemented they will boost the trade between Ira and Turkey.



He said Turkey gets 6% extra tax from Iranian traders and it is claimed it is because of the banking problems and this tax is known as KDV.

Mousavi went on to say that many Turkish companies face problems in trade with Iran, adding that the foreign trade of Turkey is estimated at \$525b and it makes the condition hard for Turkish companies to work with a country which is under the sanctions. He added that he does not think a long term agreement between Iran and Turkey to be signed. He said the difference between Russia and China with Turkey is their independence as Turkey's foreign debts are around \$481b and it is mostly to the U.S.

Mousavi said that fortunately the trade between Iran and Turkey is getting better because the prices of Iranian goods are much better because energy and labor force are cheaper in Iran. He stated currently and for this reason the trade balance with Turkey is positive in favor of Iran adding that this year Iran's non-oil exports to Turkey have been fivefold comparing to the previous year.

24th Top 100 Iranian Companies Conference Held



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The 24th Top Iranian Companies (IMI-100) Conference was held in the presence of the deputy industry minister and head of Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) as well as 500 senior managers of the top companies of the country.

Addressing the conference, Deputy Industry Minister and Head of IDRO Mr. Mohsen Salehinia said that ranking of the top companies leads to transparency, tough competition and constant improvement in the evaluated units, adding that one of the important goals of the ranking of the top companies is to provide information about the economic enterprises of the company and creating transparency in the business climate.

He emphasized that 500 top companies of Iran are the locomotive of the national economy, noting that the other significance of the ranking is to help companies in promoting their national and international brands which can improve their credits and brands by slipping to the list of the top countries of the country.

Meanwhile Head of Iran Industrial Management Institute Mr. Abolfazl Kian Bakhtiari, for his part, pointed to the smart ruling and technologies as the main reasons for the sustainability of the world top companies. He also announced the entry of the knowledge-based companies to the ranking of the top companies for the first time and expressed hope the number of knowledge-based companies o the list would increase in the future.

Then executive secretary of the 24th IMI-100 Mr. Majid Darvish explained the procedure of choosing the top companies and said 500 companies have been divided in 5 groups of 100. He then announced the list of the top 10 companies in each group of the rankings.

The Industrial Management Institute holds this conference annually by naming the top companies in the country and IDRO is one of the major supporters and sponsors of this event.

ICC Holds Coordination Meeting for Exhibition in Algeria



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – A coordination meeting was held between Iran Embassy with Iran Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC) as the operator of Iran's pavilion in the upcoming international exhibition in Algeria.

According to the reports, ICC hosted this online coordination meeting with presence of deputy head of the ICC on international affairs as well as some of economic activists and participants in the exhibition which is to be held in Algeria.

The 53th international exhibition of Algeria which had postponed two years due to the pandemic will be held in June 2022 and the ICC has been chosen as the operator of the pavilion of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the exhibition.

In the meeting, deputy head of the ICC on international affairs Mr. Mohammad Ali Zeighami had a full explanation on the capacities and capabilities of the cooperatives sector of the company and economic activists in return announced their concerns regarding the presence in this event in Algeria.

Meanwhile Iran's Ambassador to Algeria Mr. Mashalchi Zadeh, for his part, briefed the participants of the current economic climate and condition of Algeria and said Algeria has a good market with high capacity for Iranian products.

So far several companies have announced readiness to attend the exhibition in the fields of technical and engineering services, food products, steel, steel products, pastry, chocolate, paint and resin, petrochemical material, carpet, nano products and pharmaceuticals and medical equipment.

In the meeting, expansion of trade ties with Algeria and presenting the latest information about the trade regulations of Algeria to Iranian traders were discussed.

The trade exchange between Iran and Algeria in the first 8 months of the current year has been around \$67m, mostly exports and with participation in this event in Algeria, Iran's exports to this African country can increase considerably as their trade volume stood at \$124m last year.

Auto Industry to Be Fully Reformed

TEHRAN (MNA) - Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Reza Fatemi-Amin has said the country's automotive industry is going to undergo a complete reform after the implementation of his ministry's two-year evolution program.

Stating that nine transformation projects have been prepared for the automobile industry, Fatemi-Amin said: "The general plan is that in [the Iranian calendar year] 1401 (begins on March 21) the structure of the automobile industry and the relations between parts manufacturers and automakers will be reformed and the overall promised production target will be achieved in [the Iranian calendar year] 1404 (begins in March 2025)."

The minister considered the current situation of the automotive industry very problematic and added: "We have done a lot of work in the automotive industry and we have had good successes and progress, but the result has not been satisfactory for the general public and the customers."

Referring to the complexities of the automotive industry, he noted: "A car has more than 2,000 parts and every day 4,000 cars are produced in the country; We do not have any other industries with such managerial, economic and technological complexities." In late December 2021, Fatemi-Amin had announced that his ministry prepared a nine-axis program for evolution in the automotive industry which would be published soon.

The mentioned program includes all challenges and solutions in this industry, the minister said.

"Our plan is to produce 1.6 million vehicles next year (begins in March 2022), which will increase to three million units in [the Iranian calendar year] 1404 (begins in March 2025), and 30 percent of the production, equivalent to about one million units, should be sent to export markets," the official added.

Italian Embassy Hosts Domus Design – Tehran 2022

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Italian Ambassador to Iran, Giuseppe Perrone, officially inaugurated on Monday a special preview of the exhibit "Domus Design - Tehran 2022", which will open in its full scale on Italian Design Day in mid-March.

Special guest at the Italian Ambassador's inauguration, which took place in one of the historical buildings of the Qajar complex that houses the residence of the Italian Envoy to Iran, was Walter Mariotti, Editorial Director of Domus magazine, who flew to Tehran for the occasion.

"The new design exhibition we are presenting in Tehran", Ambassador Perrone said during the inauguration event, "retraces the main stages of cooperation between Italy and Iran in the design sector, thereby highlighting the special bond between Italy and Iran which, from the 1950s onwards, has never ceased to produce design pieces of rare beauty".

The preview show follows the footprints of the video-series of 10 episodes produced last year by the Italian Embassy in Tehran by the title "Domus Eyes on Iran". The video series singled out 10 very significant stories published by Domus magazine throughout the years featuring architectural and design projects related to Iran. The content of the video series was also showcased in a special publication by Domus, distributed throughout the world together with the November issue of the magazine.

Among the most significant items included in the exhibit at the Italian Ambassador's residence are a few steel and glass items designed by Hans Hollein for the Museum of Glass and Ceramics in Tehran, featured in a 1980 Domus article; a few pieces designed by Gio' Ponti in the 1950s and 1960s for the villas he was building in those years, such as the exquisite Villa Namazee in Tehran; the striking and visionary drawings by Gaetano



Pesce for the Tehran National Library, as well as cutting-edge works by Iranian contemporary architects and designers such as Sara Kalantari's iron and mirrored glass "Pass" door or the staggering zoomorphic shaped dining suite by Kamran Ashraf Naderi.

"I am happy to take part in the making of this exhibition and its itinerary in Tehran in collaboration with Domus," Walter Mariotti said during the preview event. "This is a

valuable opportunity to reflect on the deeper meanings of design and its inner potential in terms of peace building, in the sense that design is the opposite of anything that generates conflict because in reality designers only declare war on commonplaces, which are in fact likelier to generate conflict, because they make different cultures and human destinies irreconcilable. Dealing with Italian and Iranian design in Tehran means first of all talking about brotherhood and human connection, which goes beyond design and touches upon what the Germans call "die letzten Dingen", the ultimate things", Mariotti concluded.

Chadormalu Co. Ranks First at IMI-100

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company ranked first at the 24th Top 100 Iranian Companies Conference (IMI-100) which was held at the Conference Hall of the IRIB.

According to reports, Chadormalu Company ranked first in the category of the exploration, extraction and related services of the conference.

The company ranked first after scoring the most points in three evaluation indicators of the conference like production and sales, observing social responsibilities, moving towards green economy, creating infrastructure for sustainable development, productivity in production and human resources, exports and job creation.



Chabahar Port, Third in Imports of Basic Goods

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Behrouz Aqaei, Director General of the Ports and Maritime Organization of Sistan-Baluchestan Province, says Chabahar Port ranks third in the country in terms of imports of the basic goods, adding that some one million tons of wheat has imported into the country since the beginning of the current year from Chabahar Port.

Aqaei noted that 11 percent of the imported basic goods this year have been via Chabahar and the port ranks third in the country in this regard.

He pointed to the existence of strategic equipment and transfer of some goods from the vessels and effective coordination with other related bodies as the major reasons for achieving this record. He went on to say that since the beginning of the year, some 2m tons of the basic goods have been imported via Chabahar Port and wheat accounts for 16 percent of the figure which is around 920,000 tons.

Aqaei went on to say that 11 percent of the basic goods like wheat, rice, barley, sugar and rice have been imported via Chabahar, reiterating that facilitating and accelerating the load and load process with full safety is of the major priorities of Chabahar Port.



Tunisian Police Arrest Man After Three Stabbed

TUNIS (Dispatches) - Tunisian police have arrested a man with apparent mental health issues after he stabbed and wounded three passengers on a tram in the capital, the interior ministry said.

A ministry official told AFP that the alleged assailant in Sunday's attack, who had been living in Italy before moving to Tunisia in 2020, "suffers from psychological problems according to his family".

The motive for the attack was under investigation.

Police sent to Bab Alioua tram station near central Tunis had found "passengers in panic shoving each other to get out", police said in a Facebook post.



Burkina Faso President Kabore Resigns

OUAGADOUGOU (Dispatches) - Burkina Faso President Roch Kabore has resigned, four security and political sources told Reuters.

Kabore has not appeared in public since heavy gunfire erupted at military camps on Sunday. The African Union and West African regional bloc ECOWAS have denounced what they described as an attempted coup in Burkina Faso.



NATO Strengthens East European Flank



BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - NATO said it was putting forces on standby and reinforcing eastern Europe with more ships and fighter jets, in what Russia denounced as an escalation of tensions over Ukraine.

Welcoming a series of deployments announced by alliance members in recent days, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said NATO would "continue to take all necessary measures to protect and defend all allies, including by reinforcing the eastern part of the alliance."

The move was a further sign that the West is bracing for Russia to attack its neighbour after massing an estimated 100,000 troops in reach of the Ukrainian border.

Russia denies planning an invasion. But, having engineered the crisis by surrounding Ukraine with forces from the north, east and south, Moscow is now citing the Western response as evidence to support its narrative that Russia is the target, not the instigator, of aggression.

Denmark, Spain, France and the Netherlands were all planning or considering sending troops, planes or ships to Eastern Europe, NATO said. Ukraine shares borders with four NATO countries: Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania.

"The United States has also made clear that it is considering increasing its military presence in the eastern part of the Alliance," it said.

U.S. officials said the Pentagon was finalizing efforts to identify specific units that could deploy.

The United States is considering sending thousands of additional troops to NATO's eastern flank, two U.S. officials told Reuters. One of the officials said up to 5,000 could be deployed.

A NATO diplomat told Reuters that Washington was considering gradually transferring some troops stationed in Western Europe to Eastern Europe in the coming weeks.

A Polish official said Warsaw would, however, draw the line at sending troops to Ukraine.

In a sign of concern about the situation, Britain said it was withdrawing some staff and dependents from its embassy in Ukraine, a day after the United States said it was ordering diplomats' family members to leave. U.S. diplomats were being allowed to leave voluntarily.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov accused the West of "hysteria" and putting out information "laced with lies".

"As for specific actions, we see statements by the North Atlantic Alliance about reinforcement, pulling forces and resources to the eastern flank. All this leads to the fact that tensions are growing," he said.

"This is not happening because of what we, Russia, are doing. This is all happening because of what NATO and the U.S. are doing and due to the information they are spreading."

Thousands of Sudanese Brave Tear Gas to Protest Military Rule

KHARTOUM (Dispatches) - Sudanese security forces fired tear gas Monday at crowds calling for civilian rule and demanding justice for the scores killed in crackdowns since a military coup nearly three months ago.

Thousands of protesters in the capital Khartoum chanting slogans against the army headed toward the presidential palace, an area which security forces had sealed off ahead of the march.

Police forces later fired tear gas to disperse the protesters, according to an AFP correspondent.

Protests were also held in cities including Wad Madani, south of the capital, the Red Sea city of Port Sudan, and the eastern state of Gedaref, according to witnesses.

"No, no to military rule," and "civilian (rule) is the people's choice" protesters shouted in Wad Madani, according to witness Emad Mohamed.

Sudan has been rocked by regular protests since the October 25 military power grab led by general Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

Hariri Suspends Role in Politics

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Lebanon's leading Sunni Muslim politician Saad al-Hariri said on Monday he was suspending his role in political life and would not run in a forthcoming parliamentary election, a bombshell announcement during a national financial collapse.

Hariri, three times prime minister, also called on his party not to run any candidates in the election, indicating several factors were behind his decision, including Iranian influence -- a reference to heavily armed Shiite group Hezbollah.

"I am convinced that there is no room for any positive opportunity for Lebanon in light of foreign influence, international disarray, national division, sectarianism, and the collapse of the state," he said.

"We will continue to serve our people, but our decision is to suspend any role in power, politics and parliament," Hariri said in a live televised address, his voice breaking with emotion as he spoke in front of a portrait of his father.

Hariri inherited the political mantle of his father, Rafik al-Hariri, after his assassination in 2005. But while he remains the leading Sunni, his political fortunes have waned in recent years, with his position weakened by the loss of Saudi support.

Hariri's announcement comes as Lebanon suffers an economic meltdown which the World Bank has described as one of the sharpest ever globally. The sectarian elite has failed to take steps to address the crisis even as the bulk of the population has fallen into poverty.

Reacting to the shock announcement, Lebanon's leading Druze politician said Hariri's decision not to quit politics "means a free hand for Hezbollah and the Iranians".

Walid Jumblatt said he was very saddened by the decision of Lebanon's leading Sunni Muslim politician. "We're losing a pillar of independence and moderation," said Jumblatt.

Several Wounded in German Lecture Hall Shooting, Gunman Dead

FRANKFURT (Dispatches) - A gunman injured several people in a shooting inside a lecture hall at Heidelberg University in southwestern Germany on Monday, police said, adding that the perpetrator was now dead.

"A lone perpetrator injured several people in a lecture hall with a long gun. The perpetrator is dead," Mannheim police said in a statement.

German media reported that the gunman had killed himself and that he appeared to have no religious or political motive.

A major police operation was under way at the university's Neuenheimer Feld campus, the police said on Twitter, urging people to steer clear of the area "so that rescue workers and emergency services can travel freely".

Police also said that they were "not aware of any letter claiming responsibility", as they called on the public to avoid speculating.

Heidelberg is a picturesque university town in the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, home to a population of around 160,000 people.

Heidelberg University, founded in 1386, is Germany's oldest university and one of the top-ranking in Europe.

The university's Neuenheimer Feld campus, on the northern bank of the Neckar river, hosts natural

sciences departments, part of the university clinic as well as a botanical garden.

Students were told not to come to the campus by an email from the university, local broadcaster SWR reported.

The university only resumed in-person classes in October after months of distance learning because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Students have to show they are vaccinated against Covid, recovered or in possession of a recent negative test if they want to enter university buildings.

Germany has been hit in recent years by a spate of attacks, mostly perpetrated by jihadists or far-right militants.

School shootings however are relatively rare in Germany, a country with some of the strictest gun laws in Europe.

In 2009, a former pupil killed nine students, three teachers and three passers-by in a school shooting at Winnenden, also in Baden-Wuerttemberg. The gunman then killed himself.

In 2002, a 19-year-old former student, apparently in revenge for having been expelled, gunned down 16 people including 12 teachers and two students at a school in the central German city of Erfurt. He too then killed himself.

Both massacres were carried out with legal weapons and spurred Germany to tighten its gun laws.



Assange Wins Right To Appeal Against U.S. Extradition



LONDON (Dispatches) - WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange was given permission to appeal a decision to extradite him to the United States where he could face a lifetime in prison.

Washington wants to put the 50-year-old Australian on trial in connection with the publication of 500,000 secret military files relating to the US-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The High Court in London in December overturned a lower court's ruling not to send him to the United States on the grounds he would be a suicide risk.

But lawyers for Assange then challenged the decision, arguing that the country's highest court should rule on "points of law of general public importance".

"The respondent's application to certify a point of law is granted," said judges Ian Burnett and Timothy Holroyde in a written ruling.

The judges stated that they themselves were not granting him a right of appeal at the Supreme Court but Assange had the right to do so himself.

It is now for the Supreme Court to decide whether to take the case.

Assange's fiancée and the mother of his two young children, Stella Morris, emerged from the court smiling and visibly relieved.

"What happened in court today is precisely what we wanted to happen," she said.

"The situation now is that the Supreme Court has to decide whether it will hear the appeal. But make no mistake, we won today in court.

"If there were justice, the crimes that Julian exposed -- war crimes, the killing of innocent civilians -- would not be impugned.

"Our fight goes on. We will fight this until Julian's free."

Crowds gathered outside the Royal Courts of Justice in central London and welcomed the decision.

"I'm relieved beyond words," said Sue Barnett, 61, from Nottingham, central England, holding a placard stating: "10 years enough. Free Assange now."

"We were all fearing the worst."

Assange could be jailed for up to 175 years in the United States, although the exact sentence is difficult to estimate.

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5bdrs, S/p
S, J, & pkg
green yard
Fully Furn

Parsian

(\$2500)
Farmanieh
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S/pool, S, J, pkg
balcony, & F.F

Vanak (\$1600)
180sq.m, 3bdrs, F.F

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Embraer Wins Order for 20 Aircraft From Azorra

SAO PAULO (Dispatches) - Brazilian planemaker Embraer SA announced on Monday that U.S. lessor Azorra has placed an order for 20 new E2 aircraft and has signed a deal for purchase rights on an additional 30 aircraft.

The transaction was valued at \$3.9 billion, Embraer said in a securities filing. "Deliveries will begin in 2023, adding (a) further 20 Embraer aircraft to the 21 already in Azorra's existing and committed portfolio," it added.



Euro-Zone Recovery Stumbled in January as Omicron Hit Services

LONDON (Dispatches) - The euro zone economic recovery weakened this month, despite an upturn in Germany where factories benefited from an easing in supply chain bottlenecks, as renewed restrictions put a dent in the bloc's dominant services industry, a survey showed.

With the Omicron coronavirus variant sweeping across Europe governments have been encouraging citizens to stay home and avoid socializing while soaring prices have discouraged consumers from spending.

IHS Markit's Flash Composite Purchasing Managers' Index, seen as good gauge of overall economic health, dropped to 52.4 in January from 53.3 in December, its lowest since February and below the 52.6 predicted in a Reuters poll.

That headline number was affected by the services PMI, which dropped to a nine-month low, although it remained in growth territory.

With customers staying home, growth in demand for services almost dried up. The new business index sank to its lowest reading since April last year just before parts of the economy reopened after a stricter lockdown.

"The small decline in the flash Composite PMI in January shows that Omicron has taken a toll on the services sector, although the German economy performed surprisingly well," said Bert Colijn at ING.

Businesses in Germany, Europe's largest economy, expanded at their fastest pace in four months, earlier data showed, as factories enjoyed an easing in supply chain bottlenecks.

But in France, the only other euro zone country to report preliminary numbers, business growth dipped more than forecast as the impact of COVID-19 and inflationary pressures weighed on activity. That suggests the bloc would have stumbled further without Germany's strength.

In Britain, outside the euro zone and the European Union, activity cooled unexpectedly to an 11-month low but cost pressures stayed high, leaving the Bank of England on track to raise interest rates next week.

Further afield, factory activity in Japan grew at the fastest pace in four years although activity in the private sector as a whole slipped into contraction for the first time in four months as the services industry suffered amid a surge in coronavirus cases.

Consumers were also hit by rocketing prices. The euro zone composite output prices index matched November's survey high, and comes after inflation hit a record last month, likely adding pressure on the European Central Bank to tighten policy.

Factories, however, are less affected by restrictions and have largely remained open. The bloc's manufacturing PMI rose to a five-month high of 59.0 from 58.0, well ahead of the 57.5 Reuters poll estimate.

An index measuring output jumped to 55.8 from 53.8. The output measure feeds into the composite PMI and its big increase shows how much impact the services decline had on overall activity.

"The major news out of the release is that manufacturers are again noticing some abatement in supply chain problems. After cautious signs of improvements in December, things have materially improved in January," Colijn said.

Jakarta to Remain Economic Hub After Capital Transfer

JAKARTA (Dispatches) - Although Indonesia's capital will move to East Kalimantan, the nation's economy will still continue to rely on Jakarta, Head of the Jakarta Chamber of Commerce and Industry Diana Dewi has said.

"I believe Jakarta still holds an imminent role in the national economy," she remarked during a public discussion on the impact of the national capital relocation here on Monday.

Jakarta and its surrounding areas still contribute about 28-34 percent to the national gross domestic product (GDP), and the city remains the center of economic activities and services in the country, she pointed out.

According to data from the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas), in 2019, Jakarta contributed 20 percent to the trade-sector GDP with its financial services center contributing 45 percent, she noted.

Meanwhile, government administrative and defense centers contributed 49 percent, educational services 27 percent, and process industry 10 percent, she added.

Household consumption in Jakarta has also affected the economic performance of other regions, such as Java by 21 percent, Bali and Nusa Tenggara by 7 percent, Kalimantan by 6 percent, Sumatra by 5 percent, and Sulawesi-Papua by 4 percent, Dewi informed.



However, when the capital moves, household and government consumption in Jakarta will decline, as the centers of industry, civil servants, Indonesian Defense Forces (TNI), and National Police will also be relocated, she said.

"The market share of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) will also lessen, so resolution is necessary for this condition," Dewi stressed.

Jakarta must transform into a business city since business distribution in Jakarta is dominated by large-scale trade and retail businesses (46.7 percent), accommodation and food & beverage (16.72 percent), and the process industry (16.53 percent), she added.

According to Dewi, support for the MSME sector is also needed because it accounts for about 93.46 percent of businesses in Jakarta.

South Korean Economy Faces Downside Risks

SEOUL (Dispatches) - The nation's economy is heading toward uncertain territory due to a variety of factors at home and abroad which could restrict its growth, said Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Hong Nam-ki.

In a meeting for economic policies at the Government Complex Seoul, Hong cited three main factors—quarantine, external factors and fiscal situation—that may weigh on the growth of gross domestic product.

He clarified that the government would push for main policies—including supporting microbusiness owners, stabilizing consumer prices and supporting economic recovery—during the first half of 2022. The incumbent administration is to finish its tenure on May 9. For the economic reinvigoration sector, the minister said exports should continue to play a crucial part in leading the recovery, as it did last year.

To boost outbound shipments, the government is moving to take countermeasures against the rising cost of logistics among export-oriented enterprises, he said. The minister's remarks came amid growing concerns over a discord in fiscal policies between the government and the central bank. The government plans to propose an extra budget of some 14 trillion won (\$11.8 billion) to support small businesses hit by the pandemic while the central bank has been seeking to curb inflation with a series of rate hikes.

The Bank of Korea raised the benchmark interest rate by a quarter percentage point to 1.25 per cent, in its third rate hike since August, amid the fastest growth in consumer prices in the last 10 years.

Meanwhile, an analysis from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development suggested that Korea's economic growth could slow down in the coming months.

Sri Lanka Does Not Need IMF Relief Amid Inflation Concerns

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Sri Lanka's central bank governor told CNBC that the South Asian nation doesn't need an economic lifeline from the International Monetary Fund.

"Well, we don't need relief if we have an alternative strategy," Ajith Nivard Cabraal said on CNBC's "Squawk Box Asia" on Monday.

He claimed Sri Lanka is able to finance its outstanding debt, especially international sovereign bonds, "without causing any pain to our creditors."

Credit agencies have recently warned Sri Lanka may need support to cushion the blow from inflation and foreign exchange headwinds, but Cabraal disagreed with that assessment.

He argued the government does not need to approach the IMF, especially if it is successful in finding government-to-government as well as central bank solutions in the short term.

"And we have a strategy to change that into something a lot more sustainable in the next one year or two," Cabraal said.

Earlier this month, S&P Global Ratings downgraded Sri Lanka from CCC+ to CCC with a negative outlook, indicating the country's increasing financial vulnerability.

"Sri Lanka's foreign exchange-denominated debt is vulnerable given the government's declining foreign exchange reserves and high repayments. The government faces international sovereign bond maturities of US\$500 million in January 2022 and US\$1 billion in July 2022," S&P said in a note.

This followed a similar move by Fitch Ratings in December to downgrade Sri Lanka from CCC to CC, suggesting imminent default.

"We believe it will be difficult for the government to meet its external debt obligations in 2022 and 2023 in the absence of new external financing sources," said the report.

India has recently offered credit and foreign exchange support, saying the measures illustrate its commitment to Sri Lanka and its economic growth. That includes a \$500 million line of credit to help Sri Lanka purchase fuel as the country grapples with surging inflation.

Analysts are increasingly concerned about Sri Lanka's inflationary problems, which they said could be amplified by foreign exchange issues.

"We think this foreign exchange scarcity will continue to fuel inflationary expectations, which can be only temporarily mitigated by Sri Lanka's access to credit facilities from India, if a \$1.5bn deal can be finalized. Moreover, elevated energy prices and risks from further administered adjustments to curtail losses in the electricity sector still loom," Citi analysts said in a recent note.

Palm Prices Seen Lower In 2022 on Output Rise

KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Palm oil prices are set for another year of volatility and tight supply as Malaysia makes slow progress in tackling a labor crunch and government policies on green energy and food security spur demand, a Reuters poll showed.



Benchmark palm prices will average 4,000 ringgit a ton in 2022, down 3.4% from last year's average of 4,142 ringgit, according to the median estimate of a poll of 18 analysts and those in the industry.

Prices, which already hit a record high of 5,380 ringgit a ton this week, are expected to stay firm during the first half of the year.

"As we move into the low production period, supply is tight, reflecting sustained demand and the structural weakness in palm oil output," said Julian McGill, regional head at LMC International.

Top producers Indonesia and Malaysia are both expected to see production growth for the first time in three years in 2022, according to the poll.

Indonesia's 2022 production is pegged at 48.5 million tons, up 3.4% from an estimated 46.89 million last year.

Malaysia's production is forecast at 18.8 million tons, up 3.9% from 18.1 million in 2021.

Respondents expect production to build in the second half of the year, especially in Malaysia, when an army of migrant workers is expected to alleviate a labor shortage.

However, La Nina weather conditions and reduced fertilizer applications over the past three years could cap supply gains.

New policies to curb fossil fuel consumption in countries such as Brazil, China and the United States, may lift palm oil demand for use in renewable diesel and biofuel production this year, sources said.

Elsewhere, worries about food inflation could lead to demand rationing or reductions of biofuel usage mandates, which in turn could hurt palm prices, UOB's Kay Hian said in a note.

To tame domestic cooking oil prices, Indonesia imposed rules last week for exporters to seek approval for palm oil shipments, and is said to be drafting a plan to limit exports.

This could spur leading importer India to substitute palm oil with soy and sunflower oils as Malaysia's supply is unlikely to bridge the shortfall in shipments from Indonesia.

Singapore Reviews Inflation Forecasts



SINGAPORE (Reuters) - Singapore is reviewing its official inflation forecasts, authorities said, after data showed its key price gauge climbed in December by the fastest pace in nearly eight years, driven by a steep increase in air fares.

The core inflation rate—the central bank's favored price measure—rose to 2.1% in December on a year-on-year basis, the highest since July 2014 and topping economist forecasts. A Reuters poll of economists had forecast a 1.7% increase.

Singapore's central bank tightened its monetary policy in October, delivering its first such move in three years, amid mounting cost pressures. Its next policy review is scheduled for April when it is widely expected by economists to tighten further.

Monday's data showed headline inflation rose by 4%, a near nine-year high, beating economists' forecast of 3.75%.

Steep increases in air fares and COVID-19 testing costs under Singapore's quarantine-free travel schemes were a major factor in December's price jump.

There remains significant uncertainty surrounding the outlook for inflation in the near term, including from the costs of air travel and commodity prices such as food and oil, the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) said in a statement.

"Given the recent stronger-than-projected inflation outturns, including the sharp uptick in air fares, MAS and MTI are reviewing the current forecast ranges for CPI-All Items inflation and MAS Core Inflation in 2022," they said.

The government had a previous forecast for 2022 headline prices to average 1.5-2.5% and core inflation to increase to 1-2%. For 2021, core inflation came in at 0.9% and headline prices rose to 2.3%.

Inflation is surging around the world as economies recover from the pandemic, creating demand as a time when bottlenecks in transportation are causing shortages in various commodities and goods.

Aliyev Calls Iran to Participate in Reconstruction Projects of Azerbaijan

BAKU (Dispatches) - President of Azerbaijan has called for the active participation of Iranian companies in the development and reconstruction of the liberated areas of the country.

"I am sure that Iranian companies will start active work on the liberated lands soon," President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev said receiving in a video format a

delegation led by Minister of Road and Urban Development of the Islamic Republic of Iran, co-chair of Azerbaijan-Iran Joint Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation Rostam Ghasemi.

Aliyev also stressed the need to cooperate between the two countries in various fields, including industry and technology.



Majority of Brits Not to Be Able to Save in 2022

LONDON (Dispatches) - The rise in the cost of living is adding pressure to households with less than half of British families thinking they will be able to save money this year, the latest official figures reveal.

In December, only 46% believed they would be able grow their savings, with two-thirds of families saying their cost of living had already increased, according to the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

This increased to 76% among those aged over 70, and to 74% among self-employed people.

Inflation has jumped to the highest level in 30 years, reaching 5.4%.

Households are already facing a significant pressure with the cost of other utilities also set to increase. Energy customers risk the prospect of a 50% increase in their gas bills from April as the energy price cap comes to an end.

Prices of food and non-alcoholic drinks grew strongly during the year, as well as restaurants and hotels, furniture and household, goods and clothing and footwear.

When looking at food costs, bread and cereals, meat, and vegetables such as potatoes went up in price.

The cost of transport and motor fuels also increased, adding more than 1 percentage point to the annual rate of inflation.

"The rampant rise in the cost of living has squeezed the life out of budding savings habits. Soaring energy bills, petrol prices and food costs are swallowing an ever-increasing slice of our cash every month. It's enough of a struggle to make ends meet, let alone have anything left over to save," Sarah Coles, senior personal finance analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown, said.

"The fact that the price of essentials has risen so far and so fast means that those on lower incomes are facing a horrible struggle to pay the bills. For those who spend more time at home, keeping their homes warm has become eye-wateringly



expensive. Overall, two thirds of people said their bills had risen, but for older people this rose to three quarters."

Between April and June 2020, during the start of the COVID pandemic, UK households' saving ratio reached a record high of 24%. By July to September 2020, this had decreased to 13% and by July to September 2021 this further fell to 9%, though remained above pre-pandemic levels.

Looking forward, more than a third of people — ranging between 35% and 39% — said they felt it would be more than a year before life returned to normal.

Adding Peanuts to Young Children's Diet Can Help Avoid Allergy: study

LONDON (Dispatches) - Including peanuts in children's diets early in life could help stave off allergies against the legume, which can be fatal and affect swathes of youngsters globally, according to a new study.

Researchers found that introducing peanut products to babies and infants, and gradually increasing exposure, led to greater tolerance for the common allergen.

The peer-reviewed study, published in The Lancet, involved 146 peanut-allergic children aged between zero and three over two-and-a-half years.

Of the group, 96 were given peanut protein powder every day, with the dose increasing progressively to the equivalent of six peanuts. The other children received a placebo of oat flour.

Twenty of the children who received peanut powder showed allergy remission, meaning no allergic reaction occurred six months after the therapy ended.

Iran, Iraq Sign MoU on Expansion of Humanitarian Affairs Cooperation

TEHRAN (MNA) — The Iranian and Iraqi Red Crescent societies signed an MoU on expanding cooperation in humanitarian affairs.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Iranian Red Crescent Society and the Iraqi Red Crescent Society was signed in the presence of the heads of the two national societies.

According to the Iranian Red Crescent Society, the main purpose of the MoU is to establish a framework for joint cooperation and bilateral coordination between the two societies of Iran and Iraq regarding activities in education and exchange of experiences in the fields of relief, rehabilitation, health, and treatment.

Training the human resources of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society at various levels, camp establishment, water and sanitation, treatment, logistics and warehousing based on available facilities is among the obligations of the Iranian Red Crescent. The Iraqi Red Crescent Society will also cooperate with the Iranian society at the highest level to finalize several related issues.

Close cooperation between the two International societies, as well as providing the necessary conditions for transferring Iraqi patients to Iran with the aim of further strengthening the medical tourism industry are also among the commitments of the Iraqi Red Crescent in this memorandum.

Macron Touts French Fashion Industry

PARIS (Dispatches) - President Emmanuel Macron praised the fashion industry as France's top export sector on Friday, ahead of an election he wants to make about his economic record, as he inaugurated a complex of ateliers specializing in luxury craft-making.

French voters go to the polls in April to pick a new president, with Macron expected to run. He has been keen to shift the debate away from immigration and law-and-order and focus on the economy, which has been recovering strongly from the pandemic.

"Today, when I look at figures from 2021, it (fashion) is the leading export sector of our country," Macron told an audience of apprentices gathered at a new Chanel-sponsored site that brings luxury craft houses together.

"Your crafts are artistic crafts ... Your crafts are



important for the economy," he said, adding that the sector accounted for 600,000 direct jobs in France.

The president and his wife Brigitte, who wore a Chanel haute couture jacket, spent two hours visiting the ateliers, examining elaborate embroideries work and

speaking with craftspeople.

Pent-up demand from international buyers eager after months of lockdown to splash out on fine clothes and accessories from the birthplace of haute couture - or at least stamped with the logo of one of France's famous fashion houses - has helped fuel growth.

With an eye towards harnessing this growth spurt by fostering collaborative work, Chanel has grouped around 600 artisans together over seven floors, at the site on the edge of the capital's 19th arrondissement, known as 19M.

UN Urged to...

FROM PAGE 1

Gharibabadi highlighted that the Riyadh-led military alliance has carried out more than 839 air raids against ordinary Yemeni people, residential buildings, and public infrastructure so far this month.

"Attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure are prohibited under the international humanitarian law. The principles of segregation, proportion, and necessity are not observed at all during such barbaric attacks," the rights official said, emphasizing that a failure to comply with the principles will lead to war crimes and subsequent referral to relevant international authorities.

Gharibabadi underscored that more than 70% of the Yemeni people need support, and more than 90% of the population is dependent on medicine and food imported through humanitarian aid.

"As a result of obstacles created by the coalition of aggression, the dispatch of such aids [to Yemen] is facing serious difficulties. If we take into account the death of 370,000 innocent Yemenis, most of them women and children, genocide will be added to the list of crimes perpetrated by the coalition as well," he said.

Gharibabadi went on to say that the Yemeni people have been sacrificing their lives over the past six years simply to exercise their rights to self-determination and independence.

Ansarullah rebukes 'bankrupt' Riyadh-led coalition, says Saudis still under illusion of winning war

"At a time when [so-called] human rights advocates deliberately turn a blind eye to all crimes being committed against the Yemeni nation, international organizations must expose the criminal acts, condemn them, take necessary measures to prevent their recurrence, and hold the perpetrators to account," he stressed.

The United Nations must prevent the ongoing crimes against the Yemeni people, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to the besieged nation, and hold the Saudi-led coalition and its supporters accountable for their criminal acts, Gharibabadi said.

Non-Oil Exports...

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The United Arab Emirates was the top exporter to Iran in the said period, followed by China, Turkey, Germany, and Switzerland, he stated.

According to the official, out of the total non-oil goods imported into the country in the first 10 months of this year, 25 million tons worth \$15 billion were basic goods, which indicates an increase of 26 percent in weight and 56 percent in value, year on year.

Moghadasi noted that currently about five million tons of commodities are stored at the country's customs for which the clearance procedures will be carried out soon.

"There are 160 customs active in the country, and this number is increasing with the creation of new free zones and economic areas," he added.

IRICA has previously announced that the value of Iran's non-oil trade stood at \$73 billion in the past Iranian calendar year.

IRICA former Head Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi had put the weight of non-oil trade at 146.4 million tons and said that the figure showed a 25-million-ton annual decline,

which is the result of sanctions and coronavirus pandemic.

Iran's non-oil export was 112 million tons valued at \$34.5 billion, and that of import was 34.4 million tons worth \$38.5 billion in the past year, the official added.

Among the country's non-oil export destinations, China was the first, with importing \$8.9 billion worth of products, Iraq was the second with importing \$7.3 billion, the United Arab Emirates the third with importing \$4.6 billion, Turkey the fourth with importing \$2.5 billion, and Afghanistan the fifth with importing \$2.2 billion, Mir-Ashrafi announced, and named gasoline, natural gas, polyethylene, propane, and pistachio as Iran's major exported products during the past year.

He further named Iran's top sources of non-oil imports in the said time, as China with exporting \$9.7 billion worth of products to the Islamic Republic, the UAE with \$9.6 billion, Turkey with \$4.3 billion, India with \$2.1 billion, and Germany with \$1.8 billion, respectively, and mentioned corn, cellphone, rice, oil meal, and oilseeds, wheat, and raw oil as the major imported items.

The U.S., Leader of...

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On Monday Syria's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Bashar al-Jaafari lambasted U.S.-led sanctions against his country, saying the bans amount to economic terrorism and have catastrophic impacts on Syria's human rights situation.

Jaafari said in an address to the United Nations Human Rights Council that the coercive economic measures by the US target Syrian people's livelihood and their right to life and welfare.

Jaafari also said the terrorist war against Syria, foreign occupation of its territory and the external support for terrorism have caused catastrophic impacts on the human rights situation in Syria.

"The U.S., western coercive economic measures have also escalated the catastrophic impacts which targeted the Syrian citizen's livelihood and his/ her right in life and welfare," the senior Syrian diplomat said in a statement.

He added that the Western coercive measures have turned into economic terrorism targeting the Syrian citizens in their right to life, health, education, and development in all of its forms.

On the same day, Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations Majid Takht-Ravanchi stressed that the U.S. sanctions have not only affected the supply of medicine, medical equipment, and humanitarian items but have also disrupted the work of the UN.

The United States re-imposed its draconian sanctions against Iran after the administration of former President Donald Trump unilaterally pulled out of a 2015 international nuclear agreement.

Earlier in the month, Takht-Ravanchi blamed the cruel and unilateral sanctions imposed by the US for Iran's failure to make the payment on its arrears to the world body, but expressed hope that the suspension of the country's voting right would end soon.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly urged the world to take a serious action against this type of sanctions but unfortunately the international bodies have dealt this issue with a deaf ear and it seems for them only physical and conventional terrorism is just considered as terrorism and it is not important for them millions of people in the countries to suffer from hunger and lack of medicines due to sanctions and economic terrorism.

It is time for the world to rise against this type of terrorism which is worse than traditional one because this type of terrorism threatens the lives of millions in countries and it should be stopped. Unfortunately even the United Nations sometimes rides the same horse that Western and arrogant countries do, and slap the governments and the countries with sanctions and intentionally or unintentionally cooperate with economic terrorists in the world.

Nations should work hard to be real independent countries in order to thwart the effects of modern style of terrorism which is used as an effective weapon by some certain countries because as long as they want to be independent, they will suffer this type of sophisticated and civilized form of terrorism which is even supported by the so called pro human-rights defending countries.

Tehran Rules...

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"We are prepared to meet directly. We have consistently held the position that it would be much more productive to engage with Iran directly on both JCPOA negotiations and on other issues," he told reporters.

Russia's Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna, Mikhail Ulyanov, also tweeted that direct Iran-U.S. dialogue "at advanced stage of the Vienna talks might be useful."

Iran and the remaining participants to the JCPOA have been holding talks in Vienna since April last year with the aim of reviving the deal by bringing the US into full compliance.

U.S. Delinks...

FROM PAGE 1

"It would not serve our purposes, it would not serve their interests, to tie their fates to a proposition that I said before is uncertain at best," he said.

Further pressed on whether what he and Malley said amounted to setting a precondition for the talks, Price said, "Again, it is not the case that there is any direct or explicit linkage precisely because a mutual return to compliance with the JCPOA is at best an uncertain proposition. We want the return of these Americans to be a certain proposition, and so we are keeping these issues separate."

Price's comments came hours after his Iranian counterpart asserted that the Islamic Republic has not accepted any preconditions from the onset of the Vienna talks.



Brentford Boss Frank Signs New Deal Until 2025

LONDON (Dispatches) - Brentford boss Thomas Frank Lhas signed a new contract running until 2025, the Premier League club announced on Monday.

The 48-year-old Dane, who was previously assistant head coach under Dean Smith, took charge at the London club in October 2018.

He guided them to promotion last season via the Championship play-offs and they are currently 14th in the Premier League table.

Frank said in a video message on Brentford's official Twitter feed that he felt privileged to "continue this fantastic journey".

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Bernal Taken to Hospital After Training Crash

BOGOTA (Dispatches) - Colombian rider Egan Bernal suffered a crash in training and was taken to hospital on Monday, his Ineos Grenadiers team said.

The 25-year-old, winner of the 2019 Tour de France and last year's Giro d'Italia, was at a team training camp in Colombia.

"He was accompanied to hospital by team medical staff and was conscious upon arrival," a statement from the British team said. "He is stable and undergoing further assessment."

No other details of the crash were available.

Tsitsipas Outlasts Fritz

MELBOURNE (Dispatches) - Fourth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas survived an attritional fourth-round battle with American Taylor Fritz on Monday, twice coming from a set behind to win 4-6 6-4 4-6 6-3 6-4 and reach the Australian Open quarter-finals.

At just past midnight on Rod Laver Arena the Greek ended Fritz's resistance to set up a clash with Italian Jannik Sinner when he will be seeking to reach the semi-finals here for the third time in his career.

Tsitsipas looked out of sorts and edgy at times but his greater experience on the big stage eventually told as he got the decisive break in the fifth set before claiming victory.

Fritz, playing in his first Grand Slam fourth round, converted only two of his 15 break points and will rue a missed opportunity to become the first American male to reach a Grand Slam quarter-final for two years.

"It was an epic match that's all I can say, I gave everything out there on the court today," the 23-year-old said. "I'm proud of the way I fought."

"I'm overwhelmed. It's too good to be true. I knew it was going to be physical, and I knew I had to be patient and in the end it paid off."

Meanwhile Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime praised the impact of compatriot Denis Shapovalov on his own career after sealing his place in the quarter-finals.

Shapovalov reached the last eight after beating Germany's Alexander Zverev a day earlier, while Auger-Aliassime's 2-6 7-6(7) 6-2 7-6(4) win over Marin Cilic ensured Canada has two men in a Grand Slam quarter-finals for the first time.

"We're motivating each other," Auger-Aliassime told reporters at Melbourne Park. "Not directly, but just knowing that he's doing great and I back it up and win a match myself."

"I think it's better for us than if, let's say, one of us was not there. I think it also spreads the pressure a little bit to have the two of us."

Meanwhile in the women's event, Estonia's Kaia Kanepi rallied from a set down to topple world number two Aryna Sabalenka 5-7 6-2 7-6(10) on Margaret Court Arena in a tight contest to reach the quarter-finals for the first time.



Having surrendered the opening set for three matches in a row, Sabalenka took a one-set lead for the first time in Melbourne but was unable to build on it as her serving issues resurfaced once again.

The Belarusian committed 15 double faults in another error-strewn performance, five more than she had in her third-round win over Marketa Vondrousova.

Kanepi was gifted a double break early in the second set with back-to-back double faults from her 23-year-old opponent and did not waste the opportunity as she cruised to a 4-0 lead before taking the set. The 36-year-old carried that momentum into the decider and looked set to go 5-3 up but Sabalenka saved four break points to hold for 3-4 and level it, before suffering a service meltdown again and hitting three double faults in four points.

Meanwhile an emotional Iga Swiatek battled into her third Grand Slam quarter-final and first at the Australian Open as she ground past resurgent Romanian Sorana Cirstea.

The seventh-seeded former French Open champion encountered stiff resistance from the world number 38 before coming through 5-7, 6-3, 6-3 on Margaret Court Arena.

She will play Kanepi for a place in the semi-finals.

Still just 20, Swiatek has been remarkably consistent in the majors. The match against Cirstea was a sixth consecutive appearance in the second week of a Grand Slam, going back to her 2020 title run at the French Open.



Chiesa out for Seven Months

ROME (Dispatches) - Federico Chiesa will be out of action for around seven months Juventus said after the Italy forward underwent surgery on his left knee.

Juve said in a statement released just before kick-off in their Serie A match at AC Milan that Chiesa was operated on in Innsbruck "to reconstruct the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee".

"The operation... proved to be a perfect success. The expected recovery time is approximately seven months," Juventus said.

Chiesa limped off the Stadio Olimpico pitch in the first half of Juve's 4-3 win at Roma a fortnight ago, not long after returning to action after weeks on the sidelines with a muscle injury.

The 23-year-old will miss Italy's bid to qualify for the 2022 World Cup via the playoffs, which begin against North Macedonia in late March.

His absence will be a big blow to Italy coach Roberto Mancini as he was one of the stars of the Azzurri's triumph at Euro 2020 last summer.

Chiesa scored four times for Juve this season in all competitions.

Benzema's House Broken Into

MADRID (Dispatches) - Karim Benzema's house was broken into yesterday while the French striker was playing for Real Madrid against Elche, police sources told AFP.

Benzema, who missed a penalty and then went off injured at the Santiago Bernabeu, returned to find his house "in a complete mess", although it is not yet known what has been stolen.

"The player realized what happened when he got home after the match and found the whole house in a complete mess," sources said.

Benzema lives in the town of San Sebastian de los Reyes, just north of Madrid.

The intruders are believed to have jumped the fence outside the house before entering after breaking a window.

The 34-year-old is the latest footballer in Spain to have his house broken into while playing a match, despite police efforts to clamp down on the problem in recent years.

Police in Spain announced in 2019 they had successfully uncovered a network of burglars that specifically planned operations on footballers playing for Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid. Real Madrid midfielder Casemiro and Atletico's Thomas Partey, now of Arsenal, were among those targeted.

Benzema had to be substituted in the second half of Real Madrid's 2-2 draw against Elche, with what appeared to be a hamstring injury. He will undergo further tests today, the club have said.

Kimmich Revels on Return To Bayern's Midfield

BERLIN (Dispatches) - Germany star Joshua Kimmich revelled on his return to Bayern Munich's midfield after being sidelined by Covid, then played out of position when the virus had depleted the squad of the Bundesliga leaders.

Kimmich produced a superb display Sunday on his long-awaited return to Bayern's midfield in a 4-1 romp away at Hertha Berlin having played their two previous league games of 2022 at right back.

He had had to return to his old position in defence when Bayern had nine players sidelined by positive Covid tests ahead of their 2-1 home defeat by Moenchengladbach in early January.



Dortmund Concerned by Haaland's Latest Injury

BERLIN (Dispatches) - Borussia Dortmund revealed they are concerned about the extent of the injury to star striker Erling Haaland as they await the results of further medical examinations.

The 21-year-old Norway star has scored 23 goals in 21 games for Dortmund this season.

However, after scoring the opening goal in Saturday's 3-2 win at Hoffenheim, Haaland crashed to the turf after a sprint and was left clutching his groin before being substituted.

On Monday, the exact nature of the injury and the length of his absence were still unknown.

"On Sunday and Monday Haaland underwent comprehensive examinations," the Bundesliga club said in a statement.

"According to the medical report, Haaland is suffering from muscular problems, which require treatment and further examinations in the coming days."

Haaland has already missed ten games in all competitions this season and Dortmund were knocked out of the Champions League last autumn when he was sidelined by a hip injury.

The Bundesliga has just started a two-week break and Dortmund want their star forward back as quickly as possible.

"We wish that Erling will be free of symptoms as soon as possible and do what he loves to do most: score goals for Borussia Dortmund," the statement added.

Overtime Rules Come Under Fire After Chiefs Win Playoff Thriller

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - The National Football League's (NFL) overtime rules have again come under fire after the Buffalo Bills' high-powered offense never got a chance to touch the ball in the extra period of their crushing playoff loss to the Kansas City Chiefs.

The game on Sunday was an instant classic between two of the most gifted NFL quarterbacks and included three lead changes in the final two minutes of regulation before Patrick Mahomes's Chiefs prevailed 42-36 over Josh Allen's Bills.

Unlike most other sports that give challengers from both sides an equal shot at winning in overtime, the NFL uses a coin toss to determine which team gets the ball first.

Under the current overtime format, a team can win on the opening possession only if they score a touchdown. Otherwise each team gets at least one possession.

After Allen made the wrong call on the coin toss, the Chiefs received the ball and Mahomes needed just eight plays to drive his team 75 yards down the field for the winning touchdown.

"If you are still arguing, in a game like that, it's not in best interest of EVERYONE that both Mahomes and Allen get the ball in OT I don't know what to tell you," former NFL tight end Greg Olsen wrote on Twitter. "In a game where neither team could stop the other at the end, a literal coin flip determined the ending."

If a team gets a field goal on the opening possession of overtime, their opponent gets a possession and can win the game with a touchdown or tie it with a field goal. If both teams get field goals, the next team to score wins.

The NFL's overtime format, which critics argue gives too much value to something as random as a coin toss, has come under scrutiny before, including on the game's biggest stage.

Five years ago the New England Patriots beat the Atlanta Falcons when they scored on the opening drive of the only Super Bowl to go to overtime. In 2019, the Chiefs could only sit and watch as the Patriots advanced to the Super Bowl with a game-winning 75-yard touchdown drive to begin overtime.



Afridi Named ICC Cricketer of The Year

DUBAI (Dispatches) - Pakistan's rising pace star Shaheen Afridi won Monday the International Cricket Council (ICC) men's Cricketer of the Year award, which was this year dominated by his country.

England captain Joe Root won the Test Player of the Year honors to prevent a sweep of the men's awards by Pakistan.

Pakistan captain Babar Azam was adjudged One-Day Cricketer of the Year while his deputy Mohammad Rizwan grabbed the T20 award.

A fourth Pakistan cricketer, Fatima Sana, won the Emerging Women's Cricketer of the year award.

Known for his sizzling yorkers and an ability to swing the ball, Afridi claimed 78 wickets in 36 internationals in 2021 and was at his best at the Twenty20 World Cup even though Pakistan went out in the semifinals.

"I got five-fors in tests but my most memorable performance was during our victory against India in the World Cup," the 21-year-old left-armers said.

Root was rewarded for his sublime form in 2021 when he became only the third player – after Mohammad Yousuf of Pakistan and West Indies great Viv Richards – to score over 1700 runs in test cricket in a calendar year.

"If there was one hundred that really sticks out it would probably be in Chennai against India," Root said referring to his stellar 218 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium.

"With it being my 100th game it is something that will live long in the memory."

In the women's category, India opener Smriti Mandhana won the Cricketer of the Year award.

South Africa's Lizelle Lee took the one-day honors, while England's Tammy Beaumont bagged the T20 award.

South African Marais Erasmus was named the Umpire of the Year.

