

The Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Expressed Hope That the Country's Value of Annual Non-Oil Export Will Reach \$45b in the Present Iranian Calendar Year (Ends on March 20)

# IRAN NEWS

President of Iran's Wrestling Federation Alireza Dabir Announced the Cancellation of American-Iranian Free-Style Wrestling Completions In the U.S. After Visas for Him and Four Members of Team Were Dined

VOL. XXVII, No. 7430 TEHRAN Price 40,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 5, 2022 - BAHMAN 16, 1400

## 2 DOMESTIC

President Calls for Expansion Of Economic Cooperation With Kazakhstan



> SEE PAGE 2

## 2 DOMESTIC

Iran, Turkey Red Crescent Societies to Form Teams For Regional Cooperation



> SEE PAGE 2

## Tehran Ready to Reach Lasting, Reliable Agreement With P4+1

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has reiterated Tehran's readiness to reach a "lasting, reliable" agreement with the P4+1 group of countries during the negotiations in the Austrian capital of Vienna aimed at securing the revival of the 2015 deal.

In a phone call with his Japanese counterpart Hayashi Yoshimasa on Thursday, Amir-Abdollahian hailed Tokyo's efforts to help Iran and the five remaining parties to the deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), achieve progress in the Vienna talks.

See Page 7

## Leader Hails Hazrat Hamza For His Deep Insight



TEHRAN (IP) - Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution says deep insight and firm determination are two important qualities that constituted the personality of Hazrat Hamza, the brave uncle of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

There have been several brave and self-sacrificing officers and powerful champions in the army of Islam, but the bravery of Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib is

recorded in the pages of history and, in fact, constitutes the golden leaves of the history of the battles of Islam.

On January 25, 2022, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, met with the officials of Hazrat Hamza International Conference.

He said: "Your action and this commemoration of Hamza (greetings be upon him) is groundwork for future endeavors. The main work must be done by art, and the performing arts, linguistic and visual arts must be used in order to achieve the purpose of honoring and commemorating a personality like Hamza."

The Leader stressed using artistic work as the only way to create a culture and present role models; otherwise, it will remain incomplete.

Pointing to the characteristics of Hamza, Ayatollah Khamenei said: "He is really one of the lesser-known companions of the Messenger of God (greetings be upon him and his household) despite the role that he played when he announced his faith. The way that he announced his faith was really astonishing as well: He publicly shouted that he had become a Muslim after having heavily beaten Abu-Jahl, as cited by Ibn Athir.

"His role was also outstanding in the Battle of Badr, accompanied by the other two great personalities, and in the Battle of Uhud. Apparently, it was after the Battle of Badr when one of the captives asked, "Who was the person who fought bravely with a sign or insignia?" Whenever Hazrat Hamza fought, he had a sign or insignia on his uniform. They answered, "Hamza ibn Abdul-Muttalib". The captive replied, "He was the one who ruined us and whatever happened to us was because of him." He destroyed the army of the unbelievers in the Battle of Badr. He was such a personality," the Leader noted.

"Despite that, he is an unknown personality. He is not well-known and there are no good biographies about him and his qualities. He has not received due recognition," he added.

Referring to the portrayal of Hamza in the well-known movie "The Message," Ayatollah Khamenei noted: "May God show mercy on Mustafa Aqqad who portrayed that great personality in a magnificent work of art - it was really magnificent, especially the part about Hamza - named "The Message". Well, the actor playing Hamza was really well-known and important. We should thank him again for making such a film. It is really interesting. He managed to portray the life of that great personality, to some extent of course. Such work should be done more."

See Page 7

## 4 INTERNATIONAL

Biden Says ISIS Leader Quraishi Killed in Syria Raid



> SEE PAGE 4

## 8 SPORT

UEFA Estimates COVID Pandemic Cost Europe's Clubs €7b



> SEE PAGE 8

## World Needs Iran's Oil Supply to Cap Surging Prices

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Oil Minister Javad Owji has announced the country is ready to supply more oil to the global markets amid concerns that crude prices could rise as high as \$100 barrels.

Owji said that Iran will be ready to immediately increase its supply of oil to the global markets if American sanctions are lifted from the country.

Oil prices have rallied to up to around \$90 per barrel amid rising demand in major economies after the easing of coronavirus restrictions.

Speaking after a meeting of the OPEC+ alliance of oil producing nations, Owji said that if major economies are unhappy with the current price level and the amount of oil supply into the markets, they should move to have American sanctions on Iran removed.

"My suggestion to them is the immediate cancellation of the unilateral and oppressive American sanctions against Iran and to open up the space for the return of maximum Iranian (crude) output to the global markets," Owji was quoted by Oil Ministry's news service Shana.

See Page 7

## Russia to Invest 73m Euro In Iran's Sirik Power Plant

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation has accepted Iran's demand for investing 73 million euros in Sirik power plant, an Iranian official announced.

Director of (Thermal Power Plants Holding Company) TPPH Steam Power Plant Projects Behnam Khaefi-Nejad told IRNA on Thursday that the Sirik power plant needs 73 million euros to continue operation in 2022; so, following consultations with Russians, the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation has agreed to open letter of credit (LC).

The Sirik power station is a 1,400-megawatt (MW) gas-fired power plant in Sirik county, Hormozgan Province, southern Iran.

Construction of the power plant kicked off from June 2021, he said, noting that the Russian government accepted to invest 6.2 billion euros in the project. In accordance with pre-planned timeline, the first phase of the project will come into operation in spring 2025, he said.

The Russian Company Technopromexport has signed an agreement to invest up to 1.2 billion euros in the Sirik power plant.

See Page 7

**KASHMIR SOLIDARITY DAY**

5th FEB

Supreme leader of Iran Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei

The issue of Kashmir has been raised. My advice to the Muslim brothers and sisters is that we must be clear in the fundamental and vital issues of the Islamic world; if we are explicit we will create a flow in the world.

The governor of Kerman stated in the provincial crisis headquarters:

Goharzamin is the only company that has fulfilled its obligations

The governor of Kerman in the crisis headquarters of the province, announced helping the flood-stricken people as one of the duties of large mining and industrial companies and considered the implementation of the approvals of the crisis headquarters necessary and necessary. Zinivand in the provincial crisis management headquarters, referring to the performance of economic deputies in the province, said: "Everyone must do the approvals, and among the economic deputies, Goharzamin Company is the only company that has fulfilled its obligations." While appreciating the actions of this company, he added: "Goharzamin has taken appropriate measures in the discussion of social responsibilities, one of which is to help the flood victims in the south of the province." And fulfill their social obligations and responsibilities.





## Space Technology Huge Market for Knowledge-Based Firms

TEHRAN (IFP) - Vice President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari says the field of space technology has provided a huge market for knowledge-based companies.

During a ceremony on Thursday marking the National Space Technology Day, Sattari stressed that the field of space should be developed.

"We in the office of vice president for science and technology have good cooperation with the ministry of communications and the space agency in the development of knowledge-based companies in this field as well as in the development of basic research," Sattari added.

## President Calls for Expansion Of Economic Cooperation With Kazakhstan

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

**TEHRAN – President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi expressed dissatisfaction with the current level of economic and trade relations between Iran and Kazakhstan, hoping for a big step to enhance the level of bilateral economic ties.**

In a telephone conversation with Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President Raisi considered security, stability and tranquility of the friendly and brotherly country of the Republic of Kazakhstan as important for the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"We support peace and stability in the region," Raisi added.

Referring to his recent meeting with Tokayev on the sidelines of the last year's Shanghai Summit in Tajikistan, the Iranian President said, "As I emphasized during that meeting, the current level of bilateral economic and trade relations and cooperation does not correspond with the level of political relations and I hope with the arrival of the 30th year of the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations, the two countries can take a big step towards enhancement of the level of economic interaction."

President Ebrahim Raisi said that economic and trade cooperation between Iran and Kazakhstan are lagging behind political relations between the two countries,



expressing hope for upgrading economic cooperation.

Referring to his recent meeting with Tokayev on the sidelines of the Shanghai Summit in Tajikistan, Raisi expressed hope that in the thirtieth year of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Iran and Kazakhstan, a big step would be taken to improve the level of economic interaction.

"In the 30 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, the two countries have been able to establish a favorable level of close and friendly relations with each other," said Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, appreciating the Islamic Republic of Iran's support for the region's independence.

Tokayev also said that the growing development of relations with Iran is significant, especially in economic and trade cooperation, adding that holding the next meeting of the Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation and bilateral travel could create a considerable leap in relations between the two countries.

## Iran, Turkey Red Crescent Societies to Form Teams for Regional Cooperation



TEHRAN (IRNA) - In the virtual meeting with President of the Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRCS) Kerem Kinik, President of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) Pir Hossein Kolivand said that with the spirit of friendship and cooperation and forming a strong team in the presence of neighboring National Societies, we can do great things.

According to Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), at the beginning of the meeting, the Turkish side, Kinik, referred to the recent floods in the southern provinces of Iran, saying that the reports showed the high capability of the Iranian Red Crescent to respond to incidents congratulated Iran over the strong team for working with such strength to serve the people.

Referring to the climatic incidents in Iran during last month, the president of the Iranian Red Crescent said, «Fortunately, with the timely presence and efforts of rescuers, youth and volunteers, good services were provided to the people affected by floods, snow and blizzards.»

"Until there is peace in the affected areas, we are with the people. This increased their sense of satisfaction and promoted the social capital of the Iranian Red Crescent," Kolivand added.

Pointing out the commonalities of the two National Societies, the IRCS noted, «With the spirit of friendship and cooperation and forming strong team in the presence of neighboring National Societies, we can do great things.»

Praising the Iranian Red Crescent's humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan, Syria, and Yemen, Kinik said that the IRCS, "has a good status in the world and we want to cooperate more with this Society to do valuable work."

During this virtual meeting, Kolivand proposed that the areas of cooperation between the two National Societies be prepared in the form of an MoU to be signed by the parties next May, coinciding with the 100th anniversary of the Iranian Red Crescent Society in Tehran. The suggestion was welcomed by his Turkish counterpart.

## OIC Chief Welcomes Reopening of Iran Representative Office in OIC

TEHRAN (MNA) – Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Hussein Ibrahim Taha welcomed reopening of Iran's Representative Office in the Organization.

Speaking in a telephone conversation with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian on Thursday, Ibrahim Taha welcomed reopening of Representative Office of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Organization.

During the phone talk, the two sides exchanged their views on a wide range of issues plaguing the Islamic World and Islamic Ummah, process of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between Iran and OIC, reopening of Iran's Rep. Office in OIC as well as some other regional issues.

While expressing his thanks to the Secretary-General of OIC for welcoming the reopening Iran's Representative Office at the Organization in Jeddah, Amir-Abdollahian pointed to some problems facing the Islamic World and termed his role as Secretary-General of OIC in solving issues and problems facing the Islamic World 'constructive and effective'.

Emphasizing that Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia are two important countries in the region and Islamic World, Amir-Abdollahian expressed hope that interaction between Iran and Saudi Arabia will help solve problems facing region and the Islamic World.

Secretary-General of OIC, for his part, pointed to the key role of Iran as founding and active member in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation "important and effective" and emphasized that OIC will not be able to solve problems of the Islamic World without active participation and cooperation of all Islamic countries."

Hussein Ibrahim Taha called on all members to throw their weight behind the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to realize its objectives.

While announcing his support for the process of dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia, he stressed that emergence of problems between Islamic countries is a matter of regret.

He added that OIC invites Muslim countries to peace and dialogue.

## Oman-Iran Trade Exchanges Up 73%

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Mohsen Zarrabi, chairman of Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce, has announced that both countries' trade exchanges have increased 73 percent in 10 months of the current Iranian year (March 21, 2021 – January 20, 2022).

Zarrabi made the remarks in Thursday meeting aimed at coordinating a trip by Iranian Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade Reza Fatemi Amin to Muscat.

The chairman of joint chamber of commerce noted that Oman and Iran had one billion dollars of trade exchanges in 10 months of this year, expecting that the volume would reach 1.2 billion dollars until the end of the current year (March 20, 2022).

Referring to the fact that a roadmap for Iranian export to Oman has been compiled by both private sector and the Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce, he said that the roadmap focuses on six programs of the Omani government's five-year-plan for startups, nano-technology and knowledge-based companies.

The official also pointed to the volume of Oman's import from Iran, which stood at 24 billion dollars in 2020, adding that Iranian commodities have comparative export advantage.

He further referred to upcoming visit by Iranian minister of industry, mine and trade to Muscat, noting that first Iranian investment delegation of private sector will accompany the minister in this tour, expressing hope that such a trip would help develop economic and trade ties between the two states.

Zarrabi also noted that collaborations in mine, tourism and re-export are among the most important issues to be discussed in the visit, adding that two mining companies, three medicine and medical equipment firms, two energy corporations and five companies active in foodstuff and aquatics will accompany the Iranian minister.

As to Oman's free trade agreements (FTA) with 16 Arab-African countries, the US, Singapore and four European states (Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Sweden), he said that the fact shows Iran can export its goods from Oman based upon zero tariffs.

Iran's Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade Reza Fatemi is scheduled to visit Muscat in order to take part in a joint Iran-Oman commission to discuss cooperation in different economic fields, including investment in trade, industry, mine, air and sea transportation, energy, technical and engineering services, tourism and cultural affairs.

## Zionist Regime Threat to All Countries, Region

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran's Foreign Minister told his Emirati counterpart that the presence of the Zionist regime in the region is a threat to all countries, adding that the continuation of the Yemeni war would be in the interest of nobody.

The Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian held a phone talk with his Emirati counterpart, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan on bilateral ties and regional issues.

Describing the relations between Iran and the UAE as positive and progressing, Amir-Abdollahian said that good meetings and consultations have been established between the officials of the two countries.

Referring to the crisis in Yemen, Amir-Abdollahian said that the continuation of the war and the spread of conflicts would not be in the interest of either side or the region.

The Iranian foreign minister also described the Israeli regime as a threat to all countries and the entire region.

We must try to prevent perpetrators behind the crises in the region from gaining a chance to create more crises, the Iranian top diplomat added.

The Emirati Foreign Minister, for his part, said that his country is serious about expanding relations with Iran and considers it as necessary to continue bilateral talks in various fields.

Regarding the political crisis in Yemen, he said that the UAE, with the support of the United Nations, is trying to encourage all Yemeni parties to reach a political solution.

In a telephone conversation with his Emirati counterpart on November 29, Amir-Abdollahian invited him to visit Tehran and stressed the need for continuous consultation between the two countries.

## Iran, Pakistan Cooperate To Empower Women

TEHRAN (IP) - Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran for Women and Family Affairs and the Minister of Human Rights of Pakistan reviewed strategies for women's development, entrepreneurship, and exchange of experiences in women's empowerment.

The online meeting between Ensieh Khazali, Vice President for Women and Family Affairs of the President of Iran, and Shirin Mazari, Minister of Human Rights of Pakistan, was held on Wednesday.

The virtual meeting took place after the Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan, Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini, with the Minister of Human Rights in Islamabad.

In the virtual meeting with the Vice President of Iran for Women and Family Affairs, Shirin Mazari emphasized exchanging experiences between the two countries in women's empowerment.

The two sides also discussed creating opportunities for women's advancement and entrepreneurship, addressing common challenges in society, particularly tackling gender inequality caused by the effects of the Covid-19 epidemic.

## Iran, Iraq FMs Stress End to Yemen War

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian spoke with his Iraqi counterpart Fuad Mohammed Hussein on the telephone on Thursday about the latest developments in relations between the two countries, as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest and joint efforts.

According to the Ministry Of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Iran, at the beginning of the conversation, the top Iranian diplomat greeted his Iraqi counterpart and expressed satisfaction with his recovery from the coronavirus disease and wished him excellent health.

The foreign ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq briefly reviewed the excellent relations between the two neighboring and brotherly countries.

They also held consultations and exchanged views regarding the developments in the region, including Yemen, and the need to try to end the war in this country which causes insecurity and instability in the whole region.

In another part of the conversation, while discussing the Vienna talks, the Iraqi foreign minister stressed the importance of continuing the Tehran-Riyadh dialog and its positive effects on deepening and consolidating stability and security in the entire region.

Amir-Abdollahian and Hussein also emphasized the continuation of bilateral consultations in order to advance the interests of the two countries and all other regional countries and nations.

In the name of God

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT



**Brief Notice of International Tender No. 140001832**

It is hereby respectfully notified that Esfahan Steel Co. intends to assign the supply of the refractory materials for Casting Houses No. 1& 2 of Blast Furnace No.2 to one fully-competent supplier.

Prospective bidders specialized and experienced in the said area may visit ESCO's website to get the Tender documents not later than 19.02.2022 and submit their bids through "ESCO's Integrated Suppliers System" available at ESCO's website [www.esfahansteel.ir](http://www.esfahansteel.ir) not later than the official closing time (i.e.11:00 p.m.) on 19.02.2022.

Public Relation of Esfahan Steel Co.



Twelfth International conference on River Engineering, Bahman 1400 (January 2022)

# Closing Ceremony of the Twelfth International Conference on River Engineering in Ahvaz



Resolution of the Twelfth International Conference on River Engineering emphasized; Intensification of the effects of drought periods is a sign of disturbing the balance of resources and consumption in the country's catchments. The closing ceremony of the Twelfth International Conference on River Engineering was held in the Bustan Complex of Ahvaz with a group of provincial officials. Dr. Mohammad Mahmoudian Shoushtari, a retired professor at the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture of the Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, read this resolution. The text of the resolution of the 12th International Conference on River Engineering, which was hosted by the Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz and the Khuzestan Water and Electricity Organization, is as follows: Greetings to all thinkers and intellectuals in the field of knowledge and research, and greetings to the radiant spirit of Imam Khomeini (may God have mercy on him), the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and greetings to the good souls of the martyrs and peace and longing for health and longevity with dignity. His Holiness, the 12th International Conference on River Engineering, which for the first time with the participation of more than 400 university professors, researchers, students, specialists, and managers of the country's water industry and 11 prominent researchers abroad with the participation of Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Khuzestan Water and Electricity Organization, Iran Hydraulic Association, Iran River Engineering Association and the Union of Water Science Associations were held from the 4th to the 6th of Bahman 1400 in the International Conference Center of Khuzestan Water and Electricity Organization. During the three days of the conference, out of 219 papers received, 50 oral papers and 130 papers were accepted and presented as posters. At the same time, seven training and practical workshops, eight specialized meetings, seven key foreign lectures, and one key internal lecture in river engineering were held. The participation of many professors, students, specialists, managers, and staff of the executive and virtual consulting engineering agencies from all over the country in the conference programs provided a new experience for the organizers to better use this vast capacity in future events. At the end of the conference, the participants emphasized the implementation of the following 27 items by the following organizations:

1. The present group believes that incorrect policies applied on the water resources sector have brought the country to a critical situation and overloading and ignoring environmental issues have caused serious concerns, so it is necessary for the general management of the country's water resources. Serious revisions should be made by focusing on reducing pressure and optimizing surface and groundwater resources consumption.

2. Increasing the frequency and intensification of the effects of drought periods show that the balance of resources and consumption in the country's catchments is disturbed. This issue has become more prominent in Khuzestan province, with more than 90% dependence on surface water resources in recent years.

3. Development, quality improvement, and localization of standards and technical criteria related to river management and engineering, using national and international experiences and with experienced and experienced experts' involvement will play an undeniable role in economic optimization of projects and ensuring efficiency of river structures.

4. Exit from the current situation, including returning the balance between resources and consumption with the approach of meeting environmental needs, adaptation to water shortage, coexistence with floods, and creating high flexibility in agricultural water consumption with the participation and participation of all stakeholders and stakeholders in a The roadmap is clear, the implementation mechanisms are localized and appropriate to the conditions of catchments and provinces of the country.



5. The necessity of revitalization and naturalization of rivers, with emphasis on quality and environmental issues and preparation of relevant practical instructions and attention to environmental issues in future plans related to structural affairs and river organization should be considered.

6. Emphasizing the approval of the plan to form the Water Engineering System Organization by the Islamic Consultative Assembly based on the proposal of the Union of Water Science Associations for the participation of water industry experts, researchers, and professors of the country's universities.

7. Due to the high importance of issues related to rivers and water in general, it is necessary to place the water axis as a mission of talented universities in this country. Issues related to the country's rivers and water resources, the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology should take urgent action to review and establish comprehensive water universities. Khuzestan province, due to its high specialized capacities in the field of water and the fact that a significant percentage of surface water is located in this province, can be used as a pilot to establish a comprehensive water university in which other academic disciplines (such as technical and engineering faculties, basic sciences, Agriculture, humanities, law, management, etc.)

work together to solve water challenges.

8. Considering the different dimensions of water issues, especially river issues, and therefore the nature of the interdisciplinary nature of water science and engineering in the undergraduate and graduate courses, these majors must be included in the planning group. Transfer a string.

9. The necessity of preparing a birth certificate, reviving, and organizing seasonal drylands and rivers.

10. The necessity of paying attention to the interaction of aquatic animals, surface and underground flows, sediment, and polluting elements in the design criteria of river structures and the necessity of field and laboratory research to compile the environmental attachments of water projects.

11. The necessity of conducting an environmental assessment of dredging projects of rivers and estuaries.

12. The need to review the design principles of hydraulic structures in rivers due to the reduction of river runoff and intensification of instantaneous and destructive floods

13. The need to study the ecosystem of the country's rivers, especially rivers with the characteristics of Historical tourism structures located in the river and estuary

14. Considering the change in the structure of the country's water management (basin management) and the importance of quantitative and qualitative water issues, it is worthwhile to separate the protection and engineering of surface and groundwater from each other and the process of protecting the riverbed Integrated and in the whole catchment area and separate from groundwater. The positive experience of doing this project in the Zayandehrud catchment can be a positive model for other basins in the country.



15. Pathology and conducting comprehensive and up-to-date studies and compiling additional programs for the operation and protection of rivers and wetlands to create sustainable river conditions by observing all aspects of social, cultural, environmental, economic, engineering, and the effects of climate change. 16. Given the challenge of the increasing effects of floods in most parts of the country, the following important points are emphasized:

\* Carrying out watershed management operations in catchments to reduce flood risks

\* Use the knowledge and experience of local communities in flood risk management

\* Correct implementation of river bed boundaries and privacy

\* Pay serious attention to flood insurance

\* Preparation and publication of maps with appropriate scale zoning and flood risk

\* Amending the rules of the Building Engineering System Organization regarding urban development in flood-prone areas

\* Review infrastructure regulations and guidelines in flood-prone areas to reduce vulnerability and take into account the effects of climate change

16. Strengthening the role of stakeholders and non-governmental organizations in the field of management and protection of rivers and wetlands

17. Supervising the supply and allocation of environmental water needs of rivers and wetlands of the country.

18. Strengthening the role of stakeholders and non-governmental organizations in the field of management and protection of rivers and wetlands

19. Supervising the supply and allocation of environmental water needs of rivers and wetlands of the country

20. One of the main factors in the destruction of the structure and ecosystem of the country's rivers is the unregulated withdrawals and monitoring of riverbed materials, which inflict irreparable damage on the river body and infrastructure every year. Therefore, it is expected that while integrating the management of material harvesting in the country, more sensitivity in the relevant laws, regulations, and instructions to prevent illegal and illegal harvesting and to create strict and deterrent rules will become commonplace.

21. Implementation of river engineering and aquatic ecosystem engineering in postgraduate studies and the need to pay attention to this field - orientation as a field - orientation, interdisciplinary in the High Planning Council of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology.

22. Upgrading the Sediment Studies Center to the National Research Center for River Engineering and Management in the Khuzestan Water and Electricity Organization

23. The need to install a hydrometric and sedimentation station and water and sediment quality parameters in the country's rivers, estuaries, and wetlands, especially in critical catchments and floods.

24. The need for sediment management in rivers, estuaries, lakes, and wetlands of the country.

25. Easy public access to meteorological and hydrometric data and information, especially for students and researchers in the country.

26. Paying special attention to regional water diplomacy and activating national

capacities in the correct use of border rivers, with emphasis on preserving environmental needs and compiling the required instructions.

27. Holding the 13th International Conference on River Engineering in February 1403 with the main focus on University, Industry, and River Engineering

28. Considering the continuous holding of the International Conference on River Engineering in Ahvaz, it is necessary to select a specific location for the Secretariat and equip and supply the required manpower on a permanent basis.

In the end, the participants express their appreciation and gratitude to the organizers, sponsors, presenters of articles, specialized workshops and sessions, judges, and especially to the respected general, scientific, and executive secretaries of the seminar and all the dear ones who participated in the programs. Dr. Ali Mohammad Akhond Ali, the head of the university in this ritual, said: Groundwater resources in Khuzestan province are limited compared to surface water; Therefore, this seminar must gain 30 years of experience in the coming years while examining issues related to river engineering and addressing issues in the field of water resources management as one of the main topics. He stressed the need to manage water areas in the province and the country and said: in the management of water resources should be planned for all areas, including rivers, wetlands, and seas. Referring to the development of a relationship with society and industry at the Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, he said: "By discovering and reviving the existing capacities in Khuzestan province, many problems can be solved, and the specialists of Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz are ready to cooperate with any Provincial officials have for the development of Khuzestan.

He called for the focus of the 13th International Conference on River Engineering to be based on academia, industry, and river engineering and to include all industrial aspects of water resources. The head of the Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz pointed out: According to the statistics provided, more than three thousand people have participated online in the twelfth international seminar on flow engineering, and we hope that the scientific topics presented in this seminar will be used in the development of the province. Dr. Farhad Izadjo, CEO of Khuzestan Province Water and Electricity Organization, said at the end of the seminar: There are more than 4,000 square meters of permanent rivers and 11,000 kilometers of seasonal rivers in Khuzestan Province, and sedimentation, water quality, river self-purification, environmental issues and ... is one of the problems of the province's water basins. He stated: The problem of water retention in the time of fashion into freshwater rivers is another problem that needs to be solved and scientific solutions provided.

Khuzestan Governor's Deputy for Coordination of Civil Affairs also stated: The university's presence and the community and industry have always had positive results. Also, the university's distance from this field has repeatedly led to irreparable damages. Mohammad Khanchi added: "Today, rivers have created many problems for local communities, noting that rivers are capacities that should be used for development." He announced the existence of 35 very dangerous sections in the rivers of Khuzestan province. He said: the management of the province needs the help of the university complex to manage and solve the problem of these sections.

The Deputy Coordinator of Civil Affairs of Khuzestan Governorate stated: It is possible to be successful in advancing development programs in the field when the university is next to the officials in this field, and the decisions are based on studies and scientific support.

Then, Dr. Javad Ahdiyan, General-Secretary, Dr. Hakami, Scientific Secretary, and Dr. Baharlou, Executive Secretary of the Twelfth International Seminar on River Engineering, presented a report on the holding of this scientific event. In this regard, Massoud Hakami, Scientific Secretary of the Twelfth International Conference on River Engineering, referring to the conference from February 4 to 6 in Ahvaz, said: In



this conference, prominent researchers from eight countries have presented papers. He added: "Researchers from India, Canada, Italy, Singapore, the Philippines, the United States, Germany, and Canada presented their papers at the conference."

He continued: 216 articles have been received by the secretariat of this conference, of which 160 articles have been accepted, of which 60 articles will be presented orally, and 100 articles will be presented as posters. The scientific secretary of the conference added: "In addition to presenting papers, 20 workshops and meetings will be held on the sidelines of the conference, and important environmental issues and management aspects of rivers were scientifically studied." He continued: In this conference held in person and online in three days, 80% of the lectures were virtual and 20% in person. Hakami added: Shahid Chamran University is the scientific center of the country's water. The 70-year-old Khuzestan Water and Electricity Organization are one of the country's oldest water and electricity organizations, which has a long history in water management.

It is worth mentioning that this seminar was held from the 4th to the 6th of Bahman this year, hosted by the Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz and the Khuzestan Water and Electricity Organization.



# Sweden to Lift Pandemic Restrictions Next Week



STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) - Sweden will lift pandemic restrictions next week despite record levels of infections as it banks on booster shots and high rates of past COVID-19 infections to keep hospitalization rates manageable.

Current restrictions, which include bars and restaurants having to close early and a cap of 500 people inside larger indoor venues, were extended last month until Feb. 9.

"It's time to open Sweden up again," Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson told a news conference.

"Looking ahead, infection rates will remain high for a while longer, but as far as we can judge, the worst consequences of the contagion are now behind us," she said.

# Myanmar FM Barred From ASEAN Meet



PHNOM PENH (Dispatches) - Myanmar's junta suffered a fresh diplomatic blow today as regional bloc ASEAN barred its top diplomat from attending an upcoming meeting of foreign ministers.

Cambodia, which currently holds the bloc's rotating chairmanship, said there had been too little progress on a "five-point consensus" agreed by leaders last year to try to defuse the crisis gripping Myanmar.

The country has been in turmoil since the military ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government a year ago, with more than 1,500 civilians since killed in crackdowns on anti-junta protests, according to a local monitoring group.

# Biden Says ISIS Leader Quraishi Killed in Syria Raid



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - A U.S. military raid in northwestern Syria overnight killed the leader of the Islamic State jihadist group, President Joe Biden said on Thursday, in an operation which he said showed Washington's determination to go after terrorist groups.

Abu Ibrahim al-Hashemi al-Quraishi, had led Islamic State since the death in 2019 of its founder Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who was also killed when he detonated explosives during a raid by U.S. commandos.

"Thanks to the bravery of our troops, this horrible terrorist leader is no more," Biden said in remarks at the White House, adding that U.S. forces took every possible precaution to minimize civilian casualties.

As U.S. troops approached the target, Quraishi blew himself up, also killing members of his own family, including women and children, according to Biden and U.S. officials.

Neither Biden nor U.S. officials briefing reporters provided a death toll, but Syrian rescue workers said at least 13 people were killed, including four women and six children.

Biden and U.S. officials described Quraishi as the "driving force" behind the 2014 genocide of minority Yazidis in northern Iraq, and said he oversaw a network of Islamic State branches from Africa to Afghanistan.

"Last night's operation took a major terrorist leader off the battlefield and has sent a strong message to terrorist around the world: We will come after you and find you," Biden said.

Residents in the town of Atmeh, near the Turkish border, said helicopters landed and heavy gunfire and explosions were heard during the raid that began around midnight. U.S. forces used loud speakers to warn women and children to leave the area, they said.

U.S. military procedures to guard against civilian casualties are under scrutiny following a high-profile mistaken drone strike in Afghanistan that the Pentagon initially hailed a success.

Since its defeat on the battlefield nearly three years ago, Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, also known as ISIS, has waged insurgent attacks in Iraq and Syria. The most recent was last month when its fighters stormed a prison in northeastern Syria housing Islamic State suspects.

Local leaders, security officials and residents in northern Iraq say it has been re-emerging as a deadly threat, aided by a lack of central control in many areas.

Quraishi, a 45-year-old Iraqi, had remained largely in the shadows since succeeding Baghdadi who led the group at the height of its self-declared caliphate, when it controlled swathes of Syria and Iraq and ruled over millions of people.

"Quraishi's killing is a huge deal and a huge blow to ISIS because ISIS never heard from this new leader," Syria analyst Hassan Hassan said. "I think ISIS will continue to be weak and under pressure as long as the Americans are on the ground in Iraq and Syria and involved, because the U.S. serves as feet on a spring: once you step off, it sort of bounces back."

Quraishi was hiding out in a region of Syria that is home to several militant groups including Hurras al-Din (Guardians of Religion), an al Qaeda-affiliated faction whose leaders include foreign fighters.

U.S. forces have for years used drones to target jihadists in the area, but Thursday's operation appeared to be the largest by U.S. forces in the northwest since the raid that killed al-Baghdadi, said Charles Lister, senior fellow with the Washington-based Middle East Institute.

# NATO Says Russia to Have 30,000 Troops On Drills in Belarus



KIEV (Dispatches) - NATO said Russia had stepped up deployments to Ukraine's northern neighbor Belarus in recent days and was expected to have 30,000 troops there for joint military exercises this month.

The Russia-Belarus exercises, running until Feb. 20, have provided Moscow with cover to further increase forces near Ukraine at a time when the United States and Britain have warned that Moscow may be gearing up for war.

Ukraine's defense minister said Russia had currently massed a total of 115,000 troops near Ukraine's borders. Russia denies planning to invade Ukraine and has described the Allied Resolve exercises with Belarus as a rehearsal in repelling external aggression. It has not disclosed the size of its forces there but says they will withdraw after the drills.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said: "Over the last days, we have seen a significant movement of Russian military forces into Belarus. "This is the biggest Russian deployment there since the Cold War,

with an expected 30,000 combat troops" as well as Spetsnaz special operations forces, SU-35 fighter jets, S-400 air defense systems and nuclear-capable Iskander missiles, he said.

Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu arrived in Belarus on Thursday to inspect Russian and Belarusian troops and was due to meet Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko, Interfax news agency said.

The United States and NATO have rejected Russian demands to bar Ukraine from joining NATO and withdraw allied forces and weapons systems from Eastern Europe, while expressing a willingness to talk about arms control and confidence-building measures.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday the West had ignored Russia's main concerns and accused the United States of trying to lure it into war, but he said Russia was still interested in dialogue.

On Thursday the Kremlin again accused Washington of inflaming tensions after the United States said it would send nearly 3,000 extra troops to Poland and Romania. The Pentagon said the aim was to send a "strong signal" to Putin and the world that "NATO matters to the United States and it matters to our allies".

# Taliban Closer to Int'l Recognition

KABUL (Dispatches) - The Taliban are inching closer towards international recognition but any concessions Afghanistan's new rulers make will be on their terms, the regime's foreign minister said in an interview with AFP.

In his first interview since returning from talks with Western powers in Oslo, Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi also urged Washington to unlock Afghanistan's assets to help ease a humanitarian crisis.

No country has formally recognised the government installed after the Taliban seized power in August as US-led forces withdrew following a 20-year occupation.

But Muttaqi told AFP late Wednesday that Afghanistan's new rulers were slowly gaining international acceptance.

"On the process of getting recognition... we have come closer to that goal," he said. "That is our right, the right of the Afghans. We will continue our political struggle and efforts until we get our right."

The talks in Norway last month were the first involving the Taliban held on Western soil in decades.

While Norway insisted the meeting was not intended to give the hardline Islamist group formal recognition, the Taliban have touted it as such.

Muttaqi said his government was actively engaged with the international community -- a clear indication, he insisted, of growing acceptance.

"The international community wants to have interaction with us," he said. "We have had good achievements in that."

Muttaqi said several countries were operating embassies in Kabul, with more expected to open soon.

"We expect that the embassies of some of the European and Arab countries will open too," he said.

But Muttaqi said any concessions the Taliban made in areas such as human rights would be on their terms and not as a result of international pressure.

"What we are doing in our country is not because we have to meet conditions, nor are we doing it under someone's pressure," he said.

"We are doing it as per our plan and policy."

The Taliban have promised a softer version of the harsh Islamic rule that characterised their first stint in power from 1996 until 2001.

But the new regime has been swift to bar women from most government jobs and close the majority of girls' secondary schools.

Still, despite clear evidence to the contrary, Muttaqi insisted the new regime had not sacked any employees of the previous US-backed government.

# Erdogan Slams Greece After Migrants Freeze to Death Near Border



ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan slammed Greece's stance on migrants after more than a dozen people were found frozen to death this week just inside Turkey's border.

Turkey accused Greece on Wednesday of sending the migrants back across the border without shoes or clothing, an accusation Athens dismissed as "false propaganda". The death toll from the incident rose to 19 on Thursday.

Turkey has long accused fellow NATO member Greece of pushing back migrants and sinking their boats, saying it has evidence of the incidents.

"Watching on [] as people freeze to death there is not something that can be accepted or stomach," Erdogan told reporters in Ankara.

"No matter which country's leader we meet with, we will put the images we have recorded and all in front of them," he added.

The United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) has said it has received a growing number of reports in recent months suggesting asylum-seekers may have been pushed back to Turkey at sea or immediately after reaching Greek soil, or left adrift at sea.

Greece says Turkey needs to do more to prevent migrants from crossing its territory towards Europe under the terms of a 2016 deal. Under that accord, Ankara agreed to stem the flow of refugees into the EU and to host Syrians fleeing the war in their country in return for billions of euros.

Erdogan also took a swipe at the EU's border agency Frontex, accusing it of inaction. "It serves no purpose. Aside from backing Greece, they have no role," he said.

Ankara has repeatedly accused Frontex of being involved in migrant pushbacks and the agency has come under scrutiny for its practices and for failing to meet transparency requirements.


The flow of migrants and refugees into the EU via Greece from Africa, the Middle East, and elsewhere has tapered off since 2015-2016, when more than one million people took this route in search of a better life in Europe.

Turkey hosts some 4 million Syrian refugees, the world's largest refugee population, in addition to some 300,000 Afghans. It has said it cannot accept any more migrants.

Last year Greece and Turkey agreed to resume bilateral talks on a range of disagreements but have continued to trade barbs over migration and maritime jurisdiction.

شناسه آگهی: ۱۲۷۰۹۶۶

**FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT**



**TENDER NO.: 01-31-9780015**

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY  
AHVAZ-IRAN

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
16	PARTS FOR "COOPER-BESSEMER" GAS TURBINE	174

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: [www.nisoc.ir](http://www.nisoc.ir), not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 24,757 EURO or 6,978,345,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: [www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab](http://www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab)

**ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P. NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN**

**PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D. SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL**

**NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID**

**FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**  
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex,  
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran  
Tel. No.: 061 34 12 35 89 Fax No.: 061 34 45 74 37

Public Relations  
[www.shana.ir](http://www.shana.ir)  
[www.nisoc.ir](http://www.nisoc.ir)  
<http://iets.mporg.ir>  
[www.setadiran.ir](http://www.setadiran.ir)



*Miss*  
**SHANON**  
Contract manager  
Shanon\_tari@yahoo.com  
+989121907875  
Tel : 88510081  
FAX : 88506474

**Zaferanieh Apt (\$2800)**  
250sq.m, 4bdrs  
S/pool, Sauna  
J, balcony  
marble fl  
Fully Furn

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

**Parsian**

**Farmanieh (\$2000) 200sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, pkg, & F.F**  
**Farmanieh (\$3500) 350sq.m, 4bdrs, S/p, S, J, pkg, & F.F**  
**Zaferanieh bldg (\$7000) 5storey, 20bdrs, S/p, S, J, & F.F**  
**Elahieh (\$2200) 220sq.m, 3bdrs, S/pool, S, J, balcony, & F.F**  
**Velenjak (\$2700) 300sq.m, 4bdrs, S/pool, S, J, balcony, & F.F**  
**Jordan (\$1800) 180sq.m, 3bdrs, S/pool, S, J, balcony, & F.F**

ADVERTISING

44253401

**Don't Waste Your Time**

Visit our website to choose your desired rental Properties

**www.DeltaHOME.ir**

The Most Specialized Website for Foreigners

**HOME**

Real Estate  
Member of **DELTA** Real Estate Group  
(021) 88888865

IRAN

NEWS

PUBLISHER OF NEWSPAPERS

ADVERTISING

TEL: 44253448-50  
FAX: 44253234  
ADIRANNEWS@GMAIL.COM



## Belarus Bans Transit of Oil Products, Fertilizers From Lithuania

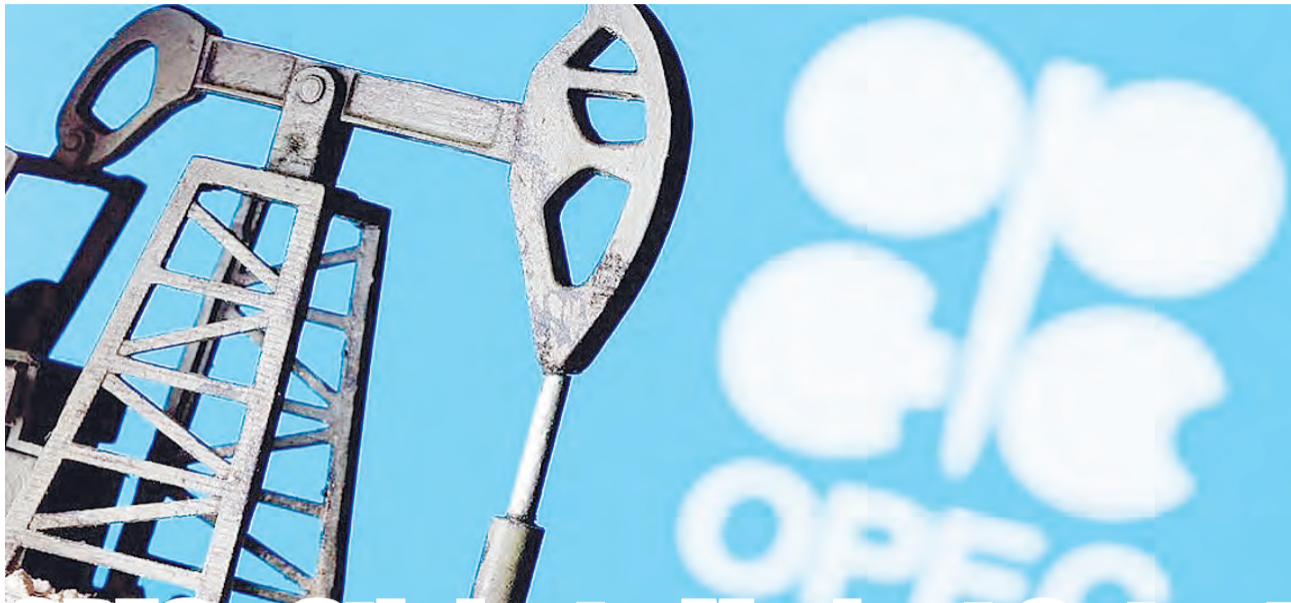
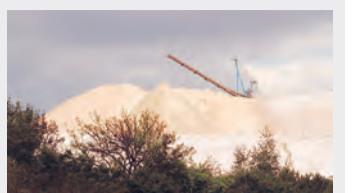
MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Belarus will ban oil and chemical products from crossing its territory from Lithuania, including fertilizers, in response to Lithuania's decision to stop the transit of potash fertilizer from Belarus, the Belarusian foreign ministry said.

The ban comes into effect on Feb. 7, the ministry said, adding that the products in question amounted to

1.6 million tons a year, and were worth more than \$1 billion.

Lithuania ceased transporting the potash, a major cash earner for Belarus, after the Vilnius government decided the transit goes against its national security interests.

The fit-for-tat measures highlight the ongoing standoff between Belarus, which is backed by its neighbor Russia, and the West.



## OPEC+ Sticks to Modest Output Rise Despite Surging Oil Prices

VIENNA (Dispatches) - OPEC+ agreed to stick to moderate rises in its oil output with the group already struggling to meet existing targets and wary of responding to calls on its strained capacity for more crude from top consumers to cap surging prices.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies led by Russia, a group known as OPEC+ which produces more than 40% of global oil supply, has faced calls from the United States, India and others to pump more oil as economies recover from the pandemic.

But OPEC+ has stuck to its target of monthly increases of 400,000 barrels per day (bpd) and blamed surging prices on the failure of consuming nations to ensure adequate investment in fossil fuels as they shift to greener energy.

Several OPEC+ sources also said prices had been pushed up by Russia-US tensions. Washington has accused Moscow of planning to invade Ukraine, which Russia denies.

"We are living the Olympic spirit and therefore we broke the record for the meeting concluding it in 16 minutes," Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman told the meeting, according to a source who heard him during the shorter than usual online gathering.

OPEC+ oil output increases are complicated by the fact that several OPEC members have struggled to meet even current monthly targets and lack spare capacity to boost production any further.

Only a handful of states, notably Saudi Arabia, have some spare capacity that could help boost the overall output level of OPEC+. But starting that up might drive oil prices higher still, as it would remove a safety cushion in case of any global shock.

Many OPEC watchers and analysts compared today's situation to the 2007-2008 crisis when oil rallied to an all-time high of \$147 a barrel when OPEC lacked extra oil supplies to meet soaring Chinese demand.

Brent crude was trading up 1% above \$90 a barrel on Wednesday and touched a seven-year high of \$91.70 last week, amid tensions in Europe and the Middle East.

A report prepared for the meeting by OPEC+ experts and seen by Reuters kept the 2022 forecast for world oil demand growth unchanged at 4.2 million bpd, and said demand would hit pre-pandemic levels in the second half of the year.

Oil demand was slightly above 100 million bpd in 2019 but was hammered by the pandemic in 2020, when OPEC+ cut its production by a record 10 million bpd or 10% of global supply.

The remaining cuts stand at 2.6 million bpd and OPEC+ hopes to wind them down before the end of the year.

## Why 5th February Matters



By: Farukh Amil, Former Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva

For many 5th February is just another day going about ones daily business. For others, not a thousand miles from Islamabad, it is yet another day of enduring relentless oppression - a day of sorrow and resistance, two very powerful human emotions that greater Empires before have misjudged.

When the cruelties in Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir began to take root, particularly since the late 1980s, few could have imagined the downward spiral in subsequent years. The fall from decency and the norms of a civilized society has been exceptionally rapid in recent years.

If the Kashmiris were to be cowed down it would have happened a long time ago. Media blackouts, suspension of normal political activities, arrests of journalists, abductions and disappearances, sexual violence, exiling of Kashmiris to India, even denying those murdered the human decency of a proper burial do not make a people weaker. It has the reverse effect. It makes people stronger. It inspires a new generation to resist. Do they not realise that with every step, every measure, every daily indignity inflicted on the Kashmiris, it only strengthens their resistance.

Such is the banality of State-sanctioned cruelty against the Kashmiris that even teenage cricket fans have been charged under the draconian anti-terror laws for supporting the 'wrong' side. Seriously? Can one imagine for one minute anyone in Britain for example being arrested under anti-terrorism laws for cheering on a European football team?

It is simply ludicrous.

Not content with just oppressing the Kashmiris, the Modi Government has taken that model of brutality and intolerance, a kind of petri-dish for cruel experiments and applied it with religious fervor on Muslims living peacefully in India, their dreams of safety and equality in a professed secular society mercilessly crushed. For them it is now akin to looking in a shattered mirror and wondering what happens next.

For the Hindutva chauvinists the Kashmiris' crime is not just that they want self-determination with Human Dignity, but they are Muslim too. As the new age of extremism has seeped into Indian society, what is happening to the Kashmiris living under occupation serves as a chilling reminder of what is increasingly likely for India's Muslims.

What hope for the Kashmiris when horrors are being visited on other Muslims across India? Well, it is the sheer determination and resilience of the Kashmiri people to resist that could well be the spark that eventually turns the tide against the total rise of fascism in India.

IIOJK much like the Warsaw Ghetto could be the place that ignites the struggle against fascism and racism. That is why the Kashmiri struggle has now taken on an entirely new complexion. However, if IIOJK is swallowed by the Hindutva Leviathan, it will not be able to digest it. This brutal repression, confident in its own rightness, can and will misstep.

Many a normal Indian, and there must be many, will be worried with the downward path their country has gone and what the future holds. Much like many Germans in the interwar years, the easier option is to stay quiet and roll with the wagon. They could not imagine the price that Germany would eventually have to pay. History also will not judge too kindly those foreign partners who look the other way, or worse, embrace a fascist polity in the name of economic and strategic interests.

It is a travesty that India sits on the Human Rights Council and has a temporary seat at the world's top table, the UN Security Council given its appalling Human Rights record in Kashmir. Glibly claiming to be the world's largest democracy, it is anything but that given the level of abuse that it has inflicted on a very people it continues to claim as Indians. Which country would make its own citizens (as India insists, they are) suffer like this for decades? Why would India want to kill children it claims as its own? Deep down it is obvious that the Kashmiris have never been seen as Indians by New Delhi and therefore the treatment meted out to them is that of a cruel occupying power.

Clearly a sustainable military solution is and was never possible. Instead, inspired by a shameless but ultimately flawed settler policy, India has embarked on a borrowed strategy to dilute Kashmiri identity. No one will be safe from the likely communal horrors that will ensue. It will not bring happiness, peace and security. True development would elude such a place. One may remember that it did not end particularly well for Apartheid South Africa either.

One can create illusions of development, prosperity and even democracy and human rights. But none of these can truly mean anything if Human Dignity is ignored. Human Dignity lies at the core of Self-Determination of the Kashmiri people: that one has the right to decide one's own destiny. And that is the human flame of hope that India, whatever it tries, will never be able to extinguish. And that is why 5th February continues to matter. A day of remembrance, of courage, of sacrifice and of resilience.

## Fresh Inflation Record Creates Headache for ECB

FRANKFURT (Dispatches) - Record eurozone inflation will feed a tense debate within European Central Bank over whether to raise interest rates when its policy-setting governing council meets today, with the bloc under pressure from supply disruptions and high energy prices.

Inflation unexpectedly rose to 5.1 per cent in the euro area in January, figures from Eurostat showed, the highest value since records for the currency club began in 1997.

While its counterparts in the United States and Britain are laying the ground for rate hikes in the near future, the ECB has so far expressed little interest in raising borrowing costs this year.

ECB President Christine Lagarde has repeatedly said that a tightening of monetary policy in 2022 was "very unlikely", but the surge in inflation will embolden critics who say action should come sooner.

Any change of course was unlikely "for the time being", said Fritzi Koehler-Geib, chief economist at the German public lender KfW.

But the pressure would increase on the ECB "in the course of the year to consider interest rate steps earlier than previously announced".

Markets are betting that the Frankfurt-based institution will hike rates before the year is out and will be scouring Lagarde's planned remarks at 2.30pm (1330 GMT) for any indication of a change in thinking within the ECB.

The ECB must tread a fine line between the "falling necessity to continue stimulating the economy and actually bringing higher inflation down", said Carsten Brzeski, head of macro at the ING bank.

## Venezuela's Oil Exports Fall to Lowest Since September

HOUSTON (Dispatches) - Venezuela's oil exports plummeted in January to the lowest level since September amid loading bottlenecks caused by returned and rescheduled crude cargoes, according to internal documents from state-run PDVSA and tanker tracking data.

Even as the company and its joint ventures are receiving a stable supply of diluents from Iran that has allow it to increase production, they have struggled to export those volumes

because of crude quality issues and the poor condition of storage tanks and port berths.

An average of 416,387 barrels per day (bpd) of crude and refined products were shipped from Venezuela last month, a 34% decline from December, according to the documents and data. Over three quarters of the cargoes set sail for Asia.

The OPEC member's shipments of crude and refined products lost terrain in January amid loading bottlenecks caused by returned and rescheduled crude cargoes.

PDVSA also is trying to deal with mounting inventories of its less popular crude grades, which have forced it to resort to floating storage, tying up tankers needed for export.

"There are 4 million barrels of diluted crude oil (DCO) stored with high content of sulfur and water (over 3%). Total volume of DCO in stock (including floating storage) is 8.5 million barrels," said a PDVSA internal report dated Jan. 29.

PDVSA did not reply to a request for comment. The cash-strapped company, which is under U.S. trading sanctions since 2019, last month scheduled its first export of DCO in nine months. But the vessel has remained in Venezuelan waters since, the documents showed.

Another cargo, on a very large crude carrier (VLCC) bound for Malaysia, this week is being returned to the Jose terminal's onshore tanks due to "financial problems" by the customer, the document showed.

A third supertanker scheduled to carry oil exports last month had to give its loading slot at Jose to an Iranian vessel bringing condensate needed to dilute Venezuela's extra heavy oil for processing, according to the documents.

PDVSA in January increased exports to political ally Cuba to some 80,000 bpd of crude, gasoline and jet fuel from 53,000 bpd in December and an average of 56,000 bpd last year.

شناسه آگهی: ۱۲۷۱۳۰۹

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

**TENDER NO.: 01-31-9150034**

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY  
N.I.S.O.C.  
NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY  
AHVAZ-IRAN

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
10	PARTS FOR "AIR PACK " RECIPROCATING AIR COMPRESSOR TYPE HA-550-LT SERIAL NO.,T-1995-00449-1 TO 00449/3	122 NO

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: [www.nisoc.ir](http://www.nisoc.ir), not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 10,348 EURO or 2,916,930,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

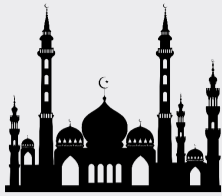
Tender documents including the materials through technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: [www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab](http://www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab).

**ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN**  
**PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL**  
**NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID**

**FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**  
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex,  
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran  
Tel. No.: 061 34 12 3772 Fax No.: 061 34 45 74 37

Public Relations  
[www.shana.ir](http://www.shana.ir)  
[www.nisoc.ir](http://www.nisoc.ir)  
<http://iets.mporg.ir>





## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:18
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:54
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:34
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	07:00

94. Whoever works any act of righteousness and has faith, - His endeavour will not be rejected: We shall record it in his favour.

95. But there is a ban on any population which We have destroyed: that they shall not return, Surah 21, The Prophets (94 - 95)

## Enhancement of Russia-Iran Banking Interactions Emphasized

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Russia and Iran enjoy enormous capacities to expand trade ties, which requires more serious banking interactions, an Iranian official said.

Mohsen Kusheshtabar, caretaker of economic coordination department of the Ministry of Interior of the Islamic Republic of Iran, said in the fourth meeting of Iran-Russia economic and trade working group, which was held online on Thursday, that given vast geographies and populated areas, both countries possess eye-catching capacity in terms of expanding trade and economic cooperation; so, banking sectors in these countries should increase coordination to help boost exchanges in mutual ties.

Kusheshtabar referred to President Ebrahim Raisi's recent visit to Moscow, noting that the trip is a turning-point and ground for expansion of interactions in different economic and trade cooperation.

According to the official, representatives from provinces of both states should coordinate actively in a bid to pave the way for developing economic and trade relations.

One of the main strategies of the current administration in Tehran is expansion of ties with neighboring states, he said, adding that President Raisi's trip to Russia has helped strengthen serious relationship with the friendly country at production, investment and entrepreneurship levels.

Russia-Iran financial transactions fluctuated between 1.7 billion dollars to 2.2 billion dollars in 2020, but the volume increased in 2021, but the numbers are not satisfactory yet, he argued.

In 2019, Iran exported commodities to Russia worth 394 million dollars, he said, adding that the volume increased

105 percent in 2020, reaching 805 million dollars, and the figure reached one billion dollars in 2021.

As to impact of West-imposed sanctions on Moscow and Tehran, he noted that as a result of the current situation, both countries can enter serious atmosphere of banking interactions to facilitate trade exchanges between the two nations.

Development of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) seems to be very important

for Russia and Iran, because as the shortest transit route between Asia and Europe, it can play the role of a substitute path for the Suez Canal.

Kazem Jalali, Iran's Ambassador to Russia, said in the webinar that there are abundant capacities for cooperation between Iranian and Russian provinces such as the North Ossetia-Alania Republic, which is a Russian republic; so, expansion of collaborations should be given more importance.

## Gov't Orders Immediate Imports of Rice, Potato

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The government has ordered immediate imports of rice and potato into the country to tackle rising prices in the domestic market.

Iran's Food Security Headquarters, a government department controlled by the ministry of agriculture (MAJ), ordered the imports of 100,000 metric tons of potato and 200,000 tons of rice into the country following an emergency meeting held on Thursday.

MAJ's spokesman Alireza Rezazadeh said that the imports had been ordered to comply with a decree by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to fight hoarding and overpricing of food in the domestic market.

Rezazadeh would not elaborate on the name of countries from where Iran will import potato but he said that rice shipments will gradually arrive from India, Pakistan and Thailand within the next two months.

This is a first time in years that Iran decides to import potato, a crop which is produced in the country on a massive scale of around 5.2 million tons per year.

However, reports on Thursday suggested that the MAJ had issued a decree with immediate effect to halt potato exports from Iran. The reports said that the government will impose a heavy duty on exports of potato from the country in the upcoming weeks.

Rezazadeh said that the government will start distributing Iranian rice on a large scale later this week to contain surging prices that he attributed to hoarding practices. The decisions come as price of some premium varieties of Iranian rice hit record highs of 1.15 million rials (\$4.2) per kilogram on Wednesday.

That comes as Pakistani or Indian rice varieties were selling for around \$1 per kilogram in the market on the same day.

## Islamic-Iranian Model of Progress to Be Presented to Leader for Final Approval

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The head of the Center for the Islamic-Iranian Model of Progress says the center has prepared a draft of its model of progress, which will be presented to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei for final approval after the Expediency Council gives its comments on it.

Sadeq Vaez-Zadeh made the remarks during a virtual conference of think tanks working on the Islamic-Iranian model of progress, IRNA reported on Friday.

"Now, after 10 years of study and design, we are nearing the time of materializing the Islamic-Iranian model of progress. On the other hand, we are at the beginning of designing the seventh development plan of the country," Vaez-Zadeh said.

"The draft of this model is ready to be submitted to the Leader for approval and notification after receiving the latest opinions of the Expediency Council," he added.

Back in October 2018, Ayatollah Khamenei ordered the Center for the Islamic-Iranian Model of Progress to offer a promoted version of the model of progress so that it would be enforced and implemented within a few years.

The Leader called on the organizations, academic centers, elites, and intellectual leaders to deeply review various aspects of the prepared document and propose their opinions in order to complete and promote it.

He also ordered the center to seek consultations to come up with a promoted

version of the model, so that it would be ready for implementation for the 15th century in the Iranian calendar.

The Leader had earlier called for applying all existing capacities in the country in developing the model, saying the Islamic-Iranian model of progress should set the objectives while its strategies should be subject to modifications in the course of time, pointing to an element of flexibility within the texture of the prospective model of progress.

"This is a major and difficult, but plausible and sweet task, and when realized, the country will follow the path of progress, and the auspicious advent of the new Islamic-Iranian civilization will take place in the land of Iran, God willing," the Leader said.

"Experience has shown that misunderstandings and consequent deviations in implementation have been among problems of the country's planning documents," Vaez-Zadeh said.

"The Islamic-Iranian model of progress has been developed in an extensive, collective process with the participation of professors and experts," he added.

He also expressed satisfaction that the people involved in preparing the model are capable of presenting a new, up-to-date model.

## Iranian Gas Flows to Turkey at 50% of Daily Guaranteed Levels

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Iranian natural gas flows to Turkey are currently at around 50% of the daily guaranteed levels, Turkish sector sources said on Wednesday, adding that repairs to the pipeline on the Iranian side of the border have been postponed until the spring.

They said the current gas volumes and pressure were not in line with contract conditions. Iran cut gas flows to Turkey in late January for some 10 days due to a technical failure, prompting Ankara to order gas-fueled power plants to cut gas use temporarily.

Last Friday, Petroleum Pipeline Corporation (BOTAŞ) stated that Iran, which is a major supplier to Turkey, will start testing supplying gas to the country in limited quantities after the halt due to technical failures. BOTAŞ also said the reduction of natural gas supply to industrial facilities would amount to 20% from the start of this week, compared with a previous 40%.

Turkey is almost completely reliant on energy imports from Russia, Azerbaijan and Iran, with the latter providing 16% of Turkey's natural gas needs in the first 10 months of 2021, according to the latest official data.

Some Turkish manufacturing companies, including car parts maker Ege Endüstri, cardboard manufacturer Kartonsan and defense automotive parts maker Katmerciler, halted production due to the cuts.

Regarding allegations on social media that Turkey ran out of gas when prices rose in the summer, BOTAŞ said on Jan. 25 that Turkey's summer natural gas demand is provided via pipeline gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply sources connected to the country's long-term natural gas purchase and sale agreements.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on Jan. 27 strongly denied allegations that the stoppage resulted from Turkey's debt to Iran.

Energy prices have recently risen sharply in Turkey, driven by global increases and a 44% decline in the lira's value against the dollar last year.

Electricity prices were raised as much as 125% for high-demand commercial users last month and by around 50% for lower-demand households.

## Tehran, Baku Agree to Facilitate Border Transit in Astara Customs

ASTARA (IRNA) - Head of General Administration Customs of Astara and Azeri officials in their meeting agreed to facilitate and increase border transit between the two countries.

In a meeting between Iran's Saeed Naderi and the officials of the Republic of Azerbaijan customs office, Naderi criticized the low speed of admission of cargo trucks by the Customs of the Republic of Azerbaijan Customs.

Referring to the agreements of the ministers of roads and urban development of the two countries, Naderi

called for facilitation of the process to increase the number of trucks to enter Azerbaijan to 400 per day.

The Azeri side for his part promised to solve transportation problems and increase interaction and cooperation with Iran's Astara Customs. According to General Administration Customs of Astara, it was decided that until the completion of Gilan-Astara Customs landscaping project, the number of Iranian trucks be increased to 300 per day.

Thousands of Foreign Students Study In Iranian Universities

TEHRAN (IP) - Deputy Minister of Science, Research, and Technology announced that ninety thousand foreign students study in Iranian universities.

Hashem Dadashpour, Deputy Minister of Science, Research and Technology of Iran, said: "Increasing the education of foreign students in Iran shows that the Islamic Republic has good scientific capacities and can accept elite students around the world."

Referring to the migration of Iranian students abroad, Dadashpour said: "In the last 10 years, the process of student migration has been neither intensifying nor slow, and Iran is ranked 94th among countries in this regard."

## World Needs Iran's Oil...

FROM PAGE 1

The minister said that the current energy crisis in Europe and other parts of the world will not be eased unless major producers like Iran increase their supplies to the markets.

Iran's oil exports declined in 2019 after the United States toughened its bans on the country's crude sales. That came one year after Washington pulled out of an international agreement on Iran's nuclear program and imposed a series of unilateral sanctions on the country.

Iran's crude sales started to recover in the second half of 2020 in defiance of the sanctions although supplies have remained at around 1 million barrels per day (bpd), much lower than the 2.5 million bpd figure reported before the sanctions were imposed.

## Russia to...

FROM PAGE 1

The power plant is scheduled to consist of four units with the capacity of 350 MW in each unit. The total capacity of the Sirik power plant would be 1,400 MW. The first round of negotiations to construct the power plant started in 2017, but the construction operation began concurrent with opening of LC in June 2021.

Some seven Iranian companies are working in the project, employing 250 manpower directly and indirectly. In recent meeting between Russian and Iranian

economic ministers in Moscow, both sides reviewed current condition of joint projects, including Russia's five billion dollars investment in Iran that is expected to expand bilateral economic exchanges.

Iran's Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Ehsan Khandouzi emphasized on the need for speeding up construction of Sirik power plant, Gamsar-Inche Borun railway as well as three projects that were signed by former Iranian economic minister and his Russian counterpart.

## Leader Hails...

FROM PAGE 1

"It should be done on the other companions of the Holy Prophet as well. It should be done on Ammar and Salman as well. As for Meghdad, who knows him? Who knows what he did?" said the Leader, adding that these personalities are very important and they should be revived.

He further gave the example of Ja'far ibn Abi-Talib, as a character with great potential for artistic and dramatic work. "His trip to Habashah, the things that happened there and his return are great materials for artistic work."

He quoted a narration of Imam Baqir (greetings be upon him), saying that Imam Ali (PBUH) made a covenant with his uncle, his brother and his cousin over a matter that was naturally "Jihad until martyrdom". "It means that they would continue that path until they were martyred. Afterwards, the Commander of the Faithful says, "And we fulfilled it for God and His Messenger (God's greetings be upon him and his household), but those three overtook me." Those three comrades preceded me in being martyred: "I was left behind until God Almighty wanted me."

"From the first moment when he was martyred, the Holy Prophet decided to portray him as a role model. The Holy Prophet described him as 'The Master of Martyrs'," he added.

"The Holy Prophet encouraged the whole Madina to cry for him. This is an act of creating a role model. That did not only concern the people living at that time, rather it concerns the whole history and all Muslims," the Leader stressed.

Addressing the officials of Hazrat Hamza International Conference, he said: "A great task is to clarify the qualities that gave him such greatness. In my opinion, this is one of the tasks. These qualities should turn into a model for us and for others so that we can learn from them. In my opinion, there are two important qualities that constituted his personality: one is his firm determination and another is his insight. We must promote these qualities as much as we can."

"We must build personalities who can be a manifestation of the divine and Islamic teachings and rules. If such personalities are built, then the formation of the Islamic civilization will be definite. If it is done, there will be no doubts about its formation," Ayatollah Khamenei concluded.

## Tehran Ready to Reach...

FROM PAGE 1

The Islamic Republic, he said, is ready to achieve a "good, lasting and reliable deal."

Former U.S. president Donald Trump unilaterally left the JCPOA in May 2018 and re-imposed the anti-Iran sanctions that the deal had lifted. He also placed additional sanctions on Iran under other pretexts not related to the nuclear case as part of his "maximum pressure" campaign.

Following a year of strategic patience, Iran decided to let go of some of the restrictions on its nuclear energy program, resorting to its legal rights under the JCPOA, which grants a party the right to suspend its contractual commitments in case of a non-performance by the other side.

The U.S. administration of President Joe Biden had voiced a willingness to compensate for Trump's mistake and rejoin the deal, but it has retained the sanctions as leverage.

Envoys from Iran and the P4+1 group of countries — Britain, France, Russia, and China plus Germany — have been holding negotiations in the Austrian capital for roughly 10 months in a bid to resurrect the JCPOA.

Elsewhere in the conversation, the Iranian foreign minister welcomed the deepening of cooperation with Japan in various fields.

The top Iranian diplomat expressed hope that he would pay a visit to Tokyo at the earliest to hold talks with Japanese authorities on the promotion of all-out ties.

The Japanese foreign minister, for his part, said his country supports the Vienna talks to remove the sanctions that the United States has imposed on Tehran.

He urged all parties to the Vienna negotiations to take serious measures to fulfill their commitments as per the JCPOA and seize the existing opportunity to reach a final agreement.

Pointing to historical and very important relations between Tehran and Tokyo, he said the two sides have appropriate capacities to strengthen economic cooperation after the removal of the existing obstacles.

The top Japanese diplomat invited his Iranian counterpart to travel to Tokyo.

The two ministers also exchanged views on issues of common interest in regional and international arena as well as ways to promote peace and stability in the region and agreed to continue close communication.

In a phone call in December, the Iranian and Japanese foreign ministers discussed the Vienna talks, various issues of mutual interest as well as regional and international developments.



**Switchboard:**  
(+98) (21) 44253448  
**Public Relations Tel:**  
(+98)(21) 44253450  
Editorial Board: 44253449  
**Public Relations Fax:**  
(+98)(21) 44253395  
**Advertising Department:**  
Tel/Fax:(+98) (21) 44253335-9/44253234  
**Website:**  
http://www.irannewsdaily.com

**E-Mail Address:**  
info@irannewsdaily.com  
**ISSN 1024-6053**  
**P.O. Box:** 15875-8551  
**Address:** No 13, Pajouhesh St.,  
Golestan II St, Golestan St.Marzadaran  
Blvd., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Printed by:**Honar Sarzmin Sabz  
**Distributed by:**  
Cities of Iran Cultural and  
Artistic Institute  
**Managing Director:** Fereydoon Taherpour Asl

## Yoshika Suffers Crash In Slopestyle Training

ZHANGJIAKOU (Dispatches) - Japanese snowboarder Rina Yoshika suffered a heavy fall in training on the slopestyle course at the Genting Snow Park and was taken away in an ambulance, a Team Japan spokesperson said. Yoshika crash-landed from one of the jumps and lay motionless. A medical team rushed to help and she cried out in pain when they tried to move her. It took almost 20 minutes for Yoshika, wearing training bib number 24, to be moved from the course on a stretcher.

## Barcelona Disappointed By Dembele Situation

MADRID (Dispatches) - Barcelona are disappointed by the situation with forward Ousmane Dembele, who might not play for the club again this season, president Joan Laporta said. The France international was told to leave before the January transfer window closed after contract negotiations broke down, but he was unable to find another club and will stay at Barca until the end of the campaign. "We are disappointed," Laporta told a news conference called for the unveiling of new Barcelona signing Adama Traore.

# UEFA Estimates Pandemic Cost Europe's Clubs €7b

PARIS (Dispatches) - The Covid-19 pandemic has left Europe's clubs with a massive €7 billion crater in their bank accounts, a UEFA report concluded on Thursday.

The virus-disrupted past two seasons, with many games played to empty terraces, ended an uninterrupted rise in revenue over the previous 20 years.

With gate receipts decimated, sponsorship down and television rights receipts hit, clubs suffered a €4 billion hit in 2019-2020, and three billion in 2020-2021.

Lockdowns imposed to curb the spread of the virus that has killed nearly two million in Europe and 5.69 million worldwide cut off the clubs' financial lifeblood — the fans.

Ticket sales dived by €4.4 billion, while the report forecast a 1.7 billion drop in sponsorship, and 0.9 billion reduction in television rights.

These figures correspond with the forecast losses contained in UEFA's report in May 2021 which put at €7.2 billion the loss for Europe's 711 top flight sides.

The latest UEFA study includes the consolidated results of these same 711 clubs for the year 2020, as well as the anticipated financial statements of 95 major teams for the year 2021, particularly marked by games played behind closed doors.

These long months of empty stadiums have caused a drastic decrease in ticketing revenues, plummeting by 88 per cent in 2021 compared to 2019.

UEFA also analyzed the impact of COVID on the transfer market.

"Revenues due to transfers decreased by 40 per cent during the summer 2020, January 2021 and summer 2021 transfer windows" compared to their original level, the European body pointed out.

European clubs spent €3.8 billion in the summer of 2021, compared to 6.5 billion in the summer transfer window of 2019.



But UEFA also stressed signs of recovery have been observed in recent months as "fans seem to have more appetite than ever to return to the stadium".

It also noted a rebound in the January transfer window which closed on Monday with an estimated €950 million spent last month in Europe, according to UEFA.

A total down only 10 per cent compared to the average winter transfer window between 2017 and 2019.

The activity of French Ligue 1 clubs on the market halved between the summer of 2019 and the summer of 2021, with a negative balance — €400 million spent against 372 million received.

Victims of the withdrawal of their broadcaster Mediapro, the starting point for a fall in their television revenues, Ligue 1 clubs have been among the hardest hit in Europe, with overall revenues down 29 percent since March 2020, compared with around 20 per cent for England, Germany and Spain, and 26 per cent for Italy.

Between 2019 and 2020, Paris Saint-Germain saw its income drop by 15 per cent, to €560 million.

The Qatar-bankrolled French giants are among the Top 5 highest earners in Europe, behind Barcelona, Real Madrid, Bayern Munich and Manchester United.

## Jackie Chan Carries Olympic Torch Atop Great Wall

BEIJING (Dispatches) - The Olympic torch relay began its second day on Thursday atop the Great Wall, with Hong Kong actor Jackie Chan and Chinese Olympic medallists among those taking turns carrying the flame along a route shortened to three days because of Covid-19.

The relay for the torch that was to open the Feb. 4-20 Winter Games is much more modest than the globe-spanning relay for Beijing's 2008 Summer Games, a tour that was disrupted by protests.

Table tennis Olympic gold medallist Ma Long and Wu Jingyu, a two-time gold medallist in taekwondo, were among those carrying the red-and-silver spiral torch along the Badaling section of the Great Wall, where the Thursday morning temperature was a bracing -11 Celsius (12 Fahrenheit).

Chan, 67, a Hong Kong action and comedy film star known for his support of the Beijing government, was identified in the official press release by his Chinese name Chen Gangsheng.

"I woke up at 4am. This is my fourth Olympics. I'm very happy. I'm also cold!" Chan told reporters after his run along the wall.

## IOC Members Fume Over Plans for Biennial Soccer World Cup

BEIJING (Dispatches) - Members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Thursday vented their frustration over plans for a biennial football World Cup instead of the current four-year cycle, saying it would have a major negative impact on other sports.

On the first day of the IOC session before the opening of the Beijing Winter Olympics on Friday, IOC members called on Gianni Infantino, the president of world football's governing body and who is also an IOC member, to drop his plans.

Infantino, who has cancelled his trip to China, has said changing the World Cup cycle from four years to two would generate an extra US\$4.4 billion (RM18.4 billion) in revenues for the world body.

FIFA said the additional funds would help reduce the gap in revenues between developed and less developed football markets.

But international sports federations as well as the IOC, which organizes the Olympics — Summer or Winter Games — every two years, have opposed Infantino's plans.

A biennial World Cup would clash with the Summer Olympics while also denting the Games' commercial appeal. Currently the World Cup is held two years apart from the Summer Olympics.

The World Cup is the biggest international single sports event, commanding sponsorship and broadcasting deals far greater than any other international federation's event. A tournament every two years would overshadow all other competitions.

"We would like to discuss together with the FIFA President and IOC member but this is not possible now against the expectation, because he cancelled his visit to Beijing the day before yesterday," IOC chief Thomas Bach told the IOC session.

"We should not discuss now on a wider scale this issue in his absence in respect for our colleague and IOC member. If you agree we will try to make contact with him and will forward these comments which have been made," Bach was responding to sharp criticism directed at FIFA by several IOC members, including National Olympic Committees of Africa President Mustapha Berraf.



# Federer to Know His Future by April-May

"I want to come back strong and give it everything that I have," the Swiss star said. "To give you a little bit of an update. I have a very interesting and important next few months ahead of me. I think I will know a lot more by April-May. "The drive is still there. I am motivated to do my work."

PARIS (Dispatches) - Roger Federer believes he will know by "April-May" whether or not he will be able to return to tennis.

The 40-year-old winner of 20 Grand Slam titles has not played since a Wimbledon quarter-final exit at the hands of Poland's Hubert Hurkacz in July last year before having to undergo knee surgery.

Federer played just 13 matches in 2021. He also underwent two knee surgeries in 2020 when he played only six times.

His absence has seen the former world number one slip to 30 in the rankings.

"I'm back in the gym again tomorrow. I'm working as hard as I'm allowed to so it's still good times even though it's a little bit slow," Federer told one of his sponsors, Credit Suisse in a video conference. "I would love to do way more but the doctors and everybody's holding me back a little bit."

Federer also hailed his friend and rival Rafael Nadal who captured a record-setting 21st Grand Slam title at the Australian Open last weekend.

"It was nice to see his emotions after such a hard-fought victory," he said of the 35-year-old Spaniard who has battled his own injury problems over the years.

"Rafa told me that he hadn't been feeling well with his body — now he's holding up the Australian Open trophy. He's a great example, a great role model."

Federer's 20th and most recent Grand Slam title came at the 2018 Australian Open.

## Wizards Upset 76ers to End Skid

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Kyle Kuzma scored 24 points, Montrezl Harrell added 14 and the Washington Wizards defeated the host Philadelphia 76ers 106-103 to snap a six-game losing streak.

The Wizards' Spencer Dinwiddie added 14 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists for his first career triple-double.

Harrell's clutch runner in the lane with 52.5 seconds remaining gave the Wizards a 102-98 lead. After the 76ers trimmed the margin to a single point, Dinwiddie hit two free throws in the final second to seal it.

Washington played without three-time All-Star Bradley Beal (wrist) and Thomas Bryant (ankle). Joel Embiid had 27 points, 14 rebounds and six assists for the Sixers, whose five-game winning streak was snapped.

Meanwhile Franz Wagner's three-point play with 1:17 remaining put Orlando Magic ahead for good as the Magic posted their largest comeback of the season, overcoming a 17-point, second-half deficit to win 119-118 at Indianapolis Pacers.

Gary Harris' sixth trey of the game tied the score at 108 with 1:51 remaining, part of an 11-0 Orlando run. Wagner's three-point play made it 113-110, and the Magic stayed ahead as Cole Anthony sank four free throws inside the final 10.9 seconds.

Harris finished with a team-high 22 points off the bench. Indiana got 26 points from Caris LeVert, 24 points and 16 rebounds from Terry Taylor (both career highs) and 22 from Torrey Craig.



## Nadal Says 21 Grand Slam Titles Not Enough

MADRID (Dispatches) - Rafael Nadal said he is still not satisfied with his 21 Grand Slam titles following his historic triumph at the Australian Open.

Nadal clinched his latest major win in Melbourne after pulling off an incredible comeback from two sets down to defeat Russia's Daniil Medvedev in the final.

The 35-year-old's momentous victory took him to the top of the all-time men's list and one clear of the 20 Grand Slam titles won by Roger Federer, who is injured, and Novak Djokovic, who was controversially deported from Australia before the tournament began.

The Spaniard could now make it 22 at the French Open in June, where he has been crowned champion a record 13 times already.

"I have no idea what number of Grand Slams I will have," Nadal said at a press conference at his academy in Mallorca.

"Not long ago I would have signed for just being able to play tennis again.

"I want to be the one with the most majors out of the three of us, I would love that, but I'm not obsessed, absolutely not. Whatever comes is welcome and I don't think 21 is enough to be honest. But you never know what will happen in the future."

Nadal's comeback against Medvedev had a wider context too, given he had doubts about even returning to professional tennis when struggling with a foot injury last year.

The injury restricted Nadal to playing only one tournament in the last seven months of 2021. Nadal said he will decide if he is ready to play at Acapulco in Mexico later this month but he is keen to compete at Indian Wells in March.

"It still hurts when I play," Nadal said. "But I'm playing at a higher level now than I was more than four weeks ago and this has given me a huge boost of confidence to move forward."

"On a personal level it's been an unforgettable experience," Nadal added.

