

**Supreme Leader of The Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei Has Received the Third Dose of Vaccine For the Coronavirus, an Iranian Physician Said Yesterday**

**Health Ministry Announced on Monday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic In Iran Increased to 132,934 With 104 More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours**

**2 DOMESTIC**

**Iran Calls Sanctions Removal Its Red Line in Vienna**



> SEE PAGE 2

**3 DOMESTIC**

**Iran, Brazil Eye Long Term Broadening of Trade Ties**



> SEE PAGE 3

**4 INTERNATIONAL**

**Russia Buildup Reaches 70% Needed For Ukraine Invasion**



> SEE PAGE 4

**8 SPORTS**

**Kobayashi Ends 50-Year Normal Hill Drought for Japan**



> SEE PAGE 8

## 15th Iran Plast Exhibit Opens in Tehran

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The 15th Iran Plast exhibition, the largest specialized expo on polymers in the Middle East, has opened in the Iranian capital Tehran in a ceremony with the presence of Oil Minister Javad Owji.

"The production of petrochemical products early after the Islamic revolution was 1.5 million tons that mostly covered chemical fertilizers, urea and ammonia. But today, this figure has reached 99 million tons of a variety of products including polymer, aromatic, chemical products and the supply chain," Owji said at the opening ceremony.

He added that Iran holds more than 153 billion barrels of extractable oil and 33 billion cubic meters of extractable natural gas adding that the national petrochemical production will hit 140 million tons by March 2022.

Owji underlined the role of the petrochemical industry of the country in meeting its need for hard currency.

See Page 7

## Tehran-Helsinki Ties on Right Track



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Stating that parts of Iran's demands on sanctions lifting have not yet been met in talks, Amir-Abdollahian said that the Iranian team will continue its efforts to reach a good agreement with good faith and seriousness.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian made the remarks in a joint press conference with his Finnish counterpart Pekka Haavisto on Monday.

Answering a question about the continuation of the eighth round of talks in Vienna on Tuesday, he said, "We focused on the latest texts which were reached after Iran's negotiations with the P4+1. In reviewing the latest texts of the Vienna talks, parts of our demands in the field of lifting sanctions have not yet been met."

"In the coming days, Mr. Ali Bagheri and senior negotiating experts in Vienna will focus on the document to be agreed upon, in which the various parties will show their return to the commitments under the JCPOA," he added.

He also expressed hope that the final agreement will be reached at this stage, saying, "Whether we can reach a good agreement in the coming days depends on the initiative and the behavior of the three European countries and the United States."

Amir-Abdollahian also said that the Iranian team will continue its efforts to reach a good agreement with good faith and seriousness.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he also pointed to his meeting with Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto, saying that the two sides discussed various areas of bilateral relations. "Iran-Finland relations are stable and on the right track."

The Finnish Foreign Minister, for his part, called Iran's role in the region important. "Iran was one of the first countries to recognize Finland's independence 90 years ago and is one of the most important countries for Finland and one of the most important countries in the region."

He also expressed hope for the revival of the JCPOA, saying, "Finland supports the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and we know that Iran has good cooperation with the IAEA. The results of the Vienna talks can be an opportunity to increase exchanges between the two countries."

## German Chancellor Says Reaching a Deal Depends on Iran

BERLIN (Dispatches) - German Chancellor Olaf Scholz says making an agreement in Austria over Iran's nuclear program depends on Tehran. Germany is among the signatories to the Iran nuclear deal that did not live up to their commitments under the JCPOA.

"It depends on Iran. We gave them a clear message that now this is the time for decisions and for progress, and not for prolonging the process," Scholz stated in an interview with The Washington Post.

"We will not accept the ability of Iran of having a nuclear bomb that can be used. This is the decisive moment, and we hope that they will use the chance. We have not too much time left. Because we know about the progress of the nuclear program of Iran," he added.

Responding to a question over discussing with Iran over its defense program and ballistic missiles, the chancellor noted western powers have a lot of questions to tackle when looking at Tehran.

"I think we all know that we have a lot of questions to tackle when looking at Iran. We are now discussing how to deal with this [nuclear] agreement, and if there is a future which will have a good impact on peace and the situation over there. So it is absolutely critical that we now hear if Iran is willing to solve the problem," he continued.

Tehran has rejected calls for wider negotiations over its military activities and missile defense program, stressing it would only discuss over its nuclear program with world powers.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has said Tehran is decisively and explicitly after a good deal with the P4+1 group but it also insists on safeguarding its red lines and national interests with the same level of decisiveness and explicitness.

Amir Abdollahian made the comment in a telephone conversation with Josef Borrel, EU Foreign Policy Chief and lead coordinator of the Vienna negotiations, over the trend of the ongoing negotiations in the Austrian capital. He noted, the nuclear deal has unfortunately provided no economic benefits for Iran in recent years.



## Tehran-Muscat Trade Exchange to Hit \$1.2b

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Chairman of Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce said that the trade value exchanged between Iran and Oman will reach \$1.2 billion before the termination of the current year in 1400.

Mohsen Zarrabi Chairman of Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce put the trade value exchanged between Iran and Oman in the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (from March 21, 2021 to Jan. 22, 2022) at \$1 billion, expandable to \$1.2 billion by the yearend.

Turning to the objectives behind the visit of the Iranian Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade along with economic activists of the private sector to the Sultanate of Oman, Zarrabi stated this visit was cancelled due to the spread of COVID-19.

Oman is a lucrative target market for re-export of Iranian products, he emphasized.

See Page 7

## Sanctions Against Iran Sign of U.S.' Imprudence, Weakness

TEHRAN (MNA) - Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami said that U.S. sanctions against Iran and its peaceful nuclear program show its imprudence and weakness in foreign policy.

Eslami hailed Iranian scientist and their efforts for the development of Iran in a note posted on social media on Monday.

Referring to the Atomic Energy Organization's activities in the production of radiopharmaceuticals, he said, "One of the most important parts of the industry is the production of diagnostic and therapeutic radiopharmaceuticals."

Nuclear medicine is one of the main examples of the use of nuclear energy and nuclear knowledge, which, thanks to the efforts of Iranian experts, the country now does not need any imports in this field," he added.

With the production of more than fifty types of radiopharmaceutical products in line with the world's standards, Iran is ranked first in the region in the field of radiopharmaceuticals and nuclear medicine, the AEOI chief noted.

He also pointed to the oppressive sanctions from some countries around the world on Iran's peaceful nuclear energy, saying that the U.S. sanctions against Iran and its peaceful nuclear program show its imprudence and weakness in foreign policy.

## CBI Reports 38.7% Surge In Money Supply

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Central Bank of Iran (CBI) figures show that money supply in the country rose by 38.7% in the 12 months to late December last year to reach the equivalent of \$165.18 billion.

CBI figures published on Sunday on the bank's website showed that Iran's M3 money supply had reached 44,269.9 trillion rials, up 13.7% against figures reported in late September but down 0.6% against November.

The figures indicated that M1 money supply, which includes cash in circulation and checkable deposits in banks, rose 42.3% in the year to December 21 to 8,779.00 trillion rials (\$32.75 billion) while near money or M2 money supply, which covers savings and time deposits, increased 41.2% year on year in December to 35,490.9 trillion rials (\$132.43 billion).

The bank said that nearly a tenth of the 27.4% growth in money supply in the three quarters to late December last year had been due to an acquisition that took place in Iran's largest lender Bank Sepah.

See Page 7

Sokhan Gostar Institute

# IRAN NEWS

PRIVATE ENGLISH NEWSPAPER IN IRAN



Advertisement Department  
021-44253335-39

www.irannewsdaily.com  
info@irannewsdaily.com

@irannewsdaily @irannewsdaily

## Good Deal Can't Be Reached Without Sanctions Lifting

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran's Secretary of Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) said that an agreement in which the sanctions that form the maximum pressure are not lifted cannot be the basis of a good deal.

"The agenda for the Iranian negotiators to continue the eighth round of Vienna Talks has been carefully defined. An agreement in which the sanctions that form the maximum pressure are not lifted will condition the country's economy and cannot be the basis of a good deal," wrote Ali Shamkhani in a Monday tweet. Earlier on Sunday, Iran's security chief said that political decisions in Washington require a balance of commitments to reach a good agreement. "Despite limited progress in the #ViennaTalks, we are still far from achieving the necessary balance in the commitments of the parties," he added.

## Iran Calls Sanctions Removal Its Red Line in Vienna

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran calls the complete removal of US sanctions its "red line" during the course of negotiations with the remaining signatories to the 2015 deal in the Austrian capital of Vienna, urging Washington to bring substance to the talks to immediately reach an agreement.

Speaking at a press conference on Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said Tehran expects the other sides at the talks, especially Washington, to make the necessary decisions before returning to Vienna on Tuesday to resume the talks.

"The issue of sanctions removal and benefits from the economic dimensions of the JCPOA is Iran's red line in the talks," Khatibzadeh said, using an acronym for the 2015 deal – the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – which the US has pulled out of.

He added, "We expect the delegations, including the United States, to return with clear instructions to fulfill their commitments under the JCPOA and remove the sanctions. We hope that what sounds like positive remarks would turn into practical commitments."

Khatibzadeh further said the ball is in the US court as "Iran and the JCPOA participants made tough decisions the same year they stayed in the JCPOA and allowed the agreement to survive," hinting at the U.S. withdrawal from the deal.

He stressed that an agreement can be quickly reached if the Americans do away with their behaviors which run counter to the 2015 agreement.

"U.S. officials must know that they cannot impose the cost of their destructive and



wrong decisions, including their unlawful withdrawal from the JCPOA, on the Iranian people. They need to gain the Iranian nation's trust and return from the path they have taken so far. We are waiting to see such a change in their behavior in Vienna," Khatibzadeh added.

Khatibzadeh also referred to Washington's maximum pressure policy against Iran, saying it must have become clear for everyone that "the path of intimidating nations has failed."

He lamented the fact that certain countries, the U.S. in particular, still continue with their pressures.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman also criticized European parties to the JCOPA, arguing that they have frequently failed to honor their obligations and must therefore remedy their shortcomings.

## Kish Air Activities To Be Expanded



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Vice-President and Secretary of the Supreme Council of Free Trade, Industrial and Special Economic Zones Mr. Saeed Mohammad during the introduction and farewell ceremony of the CEO of Kish Airlines Company said that Kish Air Airlines activities with the priority of serving on the free zones will be expanded.

The meeting was held in presence of deputy of the supreme council Hamid Boroumand, the CEO of Kish Free Zone Organization and some senior officials of the supreme council and Kish Airlines Company. In the meeting, head of administrative department of Kish Airlines Company read a report on the latest development in the company and said privatization of the company is of the main priorities and concerns of the company on course to development and expansion which needs a serious pursuit.

Then Mr. Mohammad hailed the efforts of the company under the outgoing CEO and said competitive advantages of Kish Air can have better and favorable place among the airlines. He emphasized the significance of a private airline for the free zones, adding that Kish Air should be the special airline of the free zones and all zones should participate in improving the range of operation of this company.

He then pointed to the capacity of investment and needs of the economic activities of the current eight free zones as well as the plans for the launch of new seven free zones and called for effective services of the airline in the free zones.

Mohammad added that Kish Air with expanding its fleet and precise operational program can continue its developmental trend in the national and regional level and then access to the international markets.

He noted that currently the main goals of the company are to increase its share of the domestic and international markets, increasing and expanding the fleet and launching the cargo fleet. He reiterated that the talks for privatization of the company have come to a halt but the procedure for privatization is pursued seriously, expressing hope the airline would be handed over to the council and it is expanded through the public participation.

Mohammad then hailed the outgoing CEO of the company Captain Ebrahim Siahjani and wished success for the new CEO Dr. Asnavandi and called for materialization of his economic plans for more profitability of the company.

## Baghdad to Host 3rd Round of Negotiations on Pursuing Gen. Soleimani Assassination

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Deputy Chief for International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi said on Sunday that the third round of negotiations between the joint committee of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Iraq regarding the investigation of the terrorist attack on Martyr Lieutenant General Qasem Soleimani will be held in Baghdad in the coming days.

Gharibabadi said that the third round of negotiations will begin on upcoming Tuesday (February 8, 2022) and will continue for two days in Baghdad, Iraq.

During the last meeting, high-ranking judicial delegations from Iran and Iraq reviewed the issues in the case of the assassination of Lieutenant General Qasem Soleimani along with eight other companions.

U.S. terrorists assassinated General Soleimani, the commander of the Qods Force of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the former commander of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), along with their companions by targeting their vehicles outside Baghdad International Airport on January 3 on a direct order from US President Donald Trump.

## Iran Ready to Continue Talks With Saudi Arabia

TEHRAN (IP) - In response to a reporter's question about the Iran-Saudi talks, the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman said that Tehran is ready to continue the negotiations within the framework of the previous talks in Baghdad.

Iran and Saudi Arabia have held four talks in Baghdad to improve relations and resolve differences. According to Iraj Masjedi, Iran's ambassador to Iraq, the fifth round of talks is scheduled to take place soon.

Iraj Masjedi said in a televised interview last week that in the past four rounds of talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the two sides had raised various issues and that he thought the Saudis had considered Iran's proposals and good decisions might be made at the fifth meeting.

Saeed Khatibzadeh, the spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, said about the talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia: "In talks with the Iraqi Prime Minister, the Iranian president welcomed the continuation of talks between Tehran and Riyadh."

Khatibzadeh welcomed and thanked the Iraqi government and people for their diplomatic efforts to spread the culture of dialogue.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman also announced Tehran's readiness to continue talks with Saudi Arabia in the framework of previous meetings in Baghdad.

Khatibzadeh said: "The date and time of the talks depend on the will of Riyadh, and when this decision is formed in Riyadh, we will see the holding of these talks."

After six years, three Iranian diplomats to resume activities in Saudi Arabia

## Iran Resolved to Cement Ties With Armenia

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian expressed the country's determination to broaden relations with Armenia in various fields.

In a message to his Armenian counterpart Ararat Mirzoyan on Sunday, the Iranian foreign minister offered congratulations on the 30th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Iran was one of the first countries to recognize Armenia's independence, Amirabdollahian noted, highlighting Tehran's resolve to promote mutual and regional cooperation with Yerevan.

After a meeting in Tehran in October 2021, the foreign ministers of Iran and Armenia unveiled plans for a new road map leading to the expansion of relations at the "strategic level".

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

شناسه آگهی: ۱۲۶۸۵۵۸

### TENDER NO.:

# 31-99101-53-005



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
01	LINE PIPE API 5L, GRADE X52, SEAMLESS 6 IN, WT 22 MM, 168.3 MM. OD WT. 12.70MM . WEIGHT 48.73 KG/M	100
02	LINE PIPE API 5L, GRADE X52, SEAMLESS 4 IN, 114.3 MM, .ODWT. 13.49MM .SCH 160 WEIGHT 33.54 KG/M	200

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tender 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.2, 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 5,711 EURO or 1,612,300,000 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>

## With Launch of 4 Mega Steel Projects HOSCO on Course to Development

IRAN NEW ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN The construction operation of four mega steel projects with the support of Mobarakeh Steel Company with investment around 10,000b tomans will start at Hormozgan Steel Company (HOSCO).

The CEO of Hormozgan Steel Company (HOSCO) Dr. Ataollah Maroufkhani in an interview announced the construction operation of the third module of iron sponge production of HOSCO, the second unit of industrial gas production, storage reservoirs for sponge iron and Hormoz Simin Star direct reduction mega module during the Ten-Day Dawn festivities marking the 43th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution.

Maroufkhani went on to say that the third module of sponge irons of HOSCO will be constructed with production capacity of 9,000 tons per year and with investment around 3400b tomans and will come on stream on 30 months. He added that this project will boost the capacity of the sponge iron in this company to 2.55m tons.

He added that a the same time, the project for construction of the third module of direct reduction and iron sponge storage reservoirs with capacity of 30,000 tons will be constructed. This project will cost 350b tomans and will come on stream in 24 months.

Maroufkhani then pointed to the third project and said it would be the second unit of industrial gas with capacity of 10,000 normal cubic meters per second of oxygen. He said this project will be launched with investment of 800m tomans and it will come on stream in 30 months.

He then pointed to the fourth project which is Hormoz Simin Star Steel which will produce 10m tons of steel and it will become the biggest steel plant of the country.





## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:18
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:57
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:32
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:57

100. There, sobbing will be their lot, nor will they there hear (ought else).

101. Those for whom the good (record) from Us has gone before, will be removed far therefrom.

102. Not the slightest sound will they hear of Hell: what their souls desired, in that will they dwell.

Surah 21. The Prophets (100 - 102)

## Iran, Brazil Eye Long Term Broadening of Trade Ties

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN - Brazilian Ambassador to Iran Laudemar Goncalves de Aguiar Neto during his visit to Markazi Province met with economic activists of this province at the Arak Chamber of Commerce and during the meeting explored ways for enhancing trade ties between Brazil and Iran especially with Markazi Province of Iran.**

In the meeting Brazilian Envoy Mr. Neto said that Iran is one the three major trade partners of Brazil in the Middle East and Asia, adding that without any doubts all countries do their best to improve their trade ties with countries and increasing the exports hinges on imports to grow proportionately.

He went on to say that according to the existing statistics, Brazil has increased its exports in the past three years, adding that according to the claims of a newspaper, Iran's trade exchanges with Latin American states were one billion dollars last year but official statistics bespeak this fact that the figure is around \$2.5b.

He added that Brazil's trade exchanges with Iran is mainly related to the agro products and in return it imports carpet and pistachio from Iran that last year urea led Iran's exports to Brazil.

He admitted that sanctions have affected the international relations of the two countries, adding that Brazil has currently focused on importing chemical goods from



Iran and in return it exports cotton, rice and medicines to Iran and it wants to add pomegranate to the list of imports from Iran.

Neto went on to say that Brazil is studying some mechanisms for legal banking transactions which eases trade between Brazil and other countries and it can also help Iranian traders. He went on to say that constructive competition is the key for achieving success in the trade adding that the price of goods can make it competitive with foreign likes and if Iran takes into consideration this factor it can expand its marketing and increase its customers through presence in the exhibitions in Brazil.

He added that Embassy of Brazil can pave the ground for presence of Iranians at the exhibitions in Brazil through presenting exhibition plans to Iranian producers who are keen to export and marketing their products.

He added that Brazilian exhibitions are mostly held in Sao Paulo and it has been decided an exhibition on halal products to be held in this country for the first time.

## Chadormalu Co. Suggests Forming Consortium for Exploration, Extraction

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The CEO of Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company Eng. Naser Taghizadeh called for the formation of a consortium, including major mining and steel companies to get out of the current problem of investment in the field of exploration and extraction as well as providing sustainable raw materials of the industrial units

Mr. Taghizadeh offered his suggestion during the ceremony for the start of 48 mega industrial and mineral projects which was held on Sunday and the proposal was welcomed by the activists in the fields of mining and steel.

Taghizadeh pointed to the high capacity for investment and equipping big mining and industrial companies in the country, stipulating that the goal for raising this suggestion is

to support and participate in the exploration and extraction operations of the new mines regardless of the monopoly and ownership of the mines for accelerating the process of resolving the problem of the raw material shortage either metal and non-metal elements.

He said Chadormalu Company has taken practical action to buy 8 drilling machines up to 2700 meters depth which are currently busy in some mining areas, adding that the company has also handed over one of the machines to one of the machine manufacturing companies for reverse engineering and indigenizing the machine.



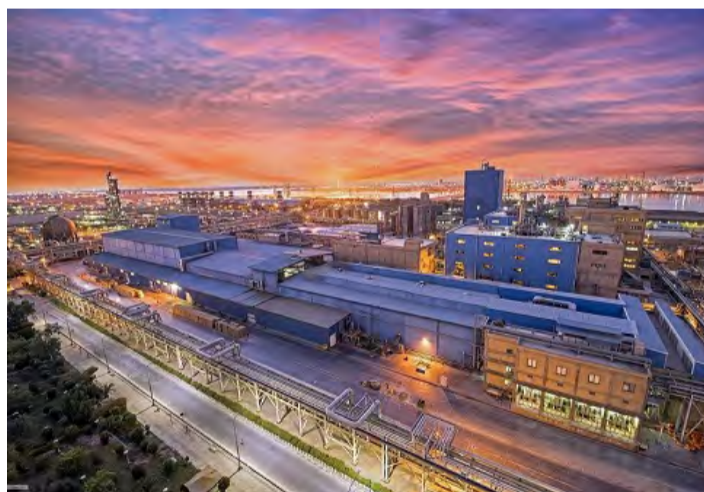
# Net Profit of Shahid Tondgooyan Petrochemical Co. Rises by 114%



Mohammad Sadegh Omidva says according to the reports and financial statements (unaudited) of the performance of Tondgooyan Petrochemical Company in 9 months this year, the net profit of this company has increased by 114 percent compared to the same period last year. Operating income and the final cost of the operating incomes of the company during in 9 months comparing to the same period in last fiscal year increased by 91 and 97 percent, respectively. A 50-percent increase in sales, administrative and general expenses and a 314-percent rise in other non-operating incomes were other notable points of the company's financial statements in the mentioned period.

### Slump in Share of Exports From Total Sales

According to the "World of Economy", in the first 9 months of this year, the domestic sales of Tondgooyan Petrochemical amounted to 437,501 tons, which has generated revenue equivalent to 121,690 billion rials for the company. Among the products sold in the country (bottle grade, fiber grade, pure terephthalic acid and POY yarn), the share of revenue from the two bottle grade and fiber grade products is much higher than the other two products, so that the total sales revenue of these two The product accounts for about 93% of the company's domestic sales revenue. Regarding the amount and volume of domestic sales of petrochemical Tondgooyan in the reported period compared to the amount and volume of domestic sales of the same period of the previous period, it should be noted that in the reported period the volume of domestic sales of the company amounted to 11 thousand 922 tons (2.8%) and The company's domestic sales revenues have increased by 60 thousand and 9936 billion rials (about 100%) compared to the same period last year. Export sales of Tondgooyan Petrochemical in the 9 months of this year were limited to the sale of only two products of fiber grade and POY yarn, while the export sales portfolio of the same period last year included fiber grade and bottle grade. One of the significant points about the performance of Tondgooyan Petrochemical in the reported period is the decrease in the volume of the company's exports in this period, so that in the reported period, the export volume was 3,425 tons compared to the same period of the year. In the past, it has decreased by about 16,000 tons (82%). Also, the revenue from export sales in the period of 9 months of this year was 785 billion rials, which has decreased by 75% compared to the same period last year (3



thousand and 245 billion rials). Finally, it should be noted that in the first 9 months of last year, export sales revenues accounted for about 5% of the company's total sales revenue, but in the reported period, export sales revenues accounted for only about 1% of total sales revenues. Includes this company. According to the mentioned cases, the operating revenues of Tondgooyan Petrochemical in the period of 9 months of this year amounted to 122 thousand and 475 billion Rials, which compared to the same period last year (63 thousand and 999 billion Rials) had a growth of 91% and the main reason for this The increase was a 93 percent increase in the average sales rate of all products.

### The cost of operating income has increased by 97%

The cost of operating revenues of Tondgooyan Petrochemical in the reported period was 86,136 billion rials, which is an increase of 97% compared to the same period last year (43,659 billion rials). The increase is mainly due to an increase in consumables (food) by 109 percent, an increase in indirect substances (chemicals) by 79 percent, an increase in staff salaries by 79 percent, an increase in utility by 38 percent and other costs by 74% compared to the same period last year. Also, in terms of the share of each of the components of the cost price, it should be noted that in the period of 9 months of this year, the main cost factors are related to the

consumption of raw materials equal to 79%, production overhead (utility, chemicals and catalysts, packaging and contracting services). ) Was equivalent to 10 percent, assets and facilities were equivalent to one percent, direct and indirect salaries were equal to 4 percent and other expenses were equal to 6 percent. Among the above, due to the significant share of raw materials, this title has had a significant impact on the 97% increase in the cost of operating income. The raw materials required for the production of Tondgooyan petrochemical products include paraxylene, acetic acid and monoethylene glycol hydrogen, which in the reported period, these materials were purchased from Nouri Petrochemical, Fanavaran, Maroon and Amir Kabir. Regarding the effect of currency fluctuations on the cost of operating income and, consequently, the impact on net profit, the company has stated that any increase in exchange rates and currency price fluctuations, except in the case of foreign spare parts, will not have a direct impact on cost. Indirectly through foreign exchange costs of foreign currency liabilities, non-operating costs will be increasingly affected by the increase in the exchange rate and will ultimately significantly reduce the expected net profit.

### 93% increase in operating income

Sales, administrative and general expenses of "Petrochemical" Tondgooyan in the 9-month period of this year amounted to 2 thousand and 438 billion rials, which compared to the same period last year has increased by 50%. In terms of other operating income, this title in the reported period with a decrease of 3% compared to the same period last year amounted to 1,595 billion rials, of which 52% of these revenues (835 billion rials) came from profits from the exchange of assets. And operating foreign currency liabilities, 36% (589 billion rials) from the sale of waste and 10

نسبت های مالی پتروشیمی تندگویان			
شش ماهه سال ۱۴۰۰	سال ۹۹	سال ۹۸	
۲۴/۲	۲۰/۹۹	۲۱/۶۶	نسبت سود خالص به فروش
۱/۰۸	۰/۹۵	۰/۸۵	نسبت آبی
۲۳/۱۷	۲۳/۴۲	۲۹/۴۳	دوره وصول مطالبات
۰/۵	۰/۴۴	۰/۳۱	نسبت بدهی

## Iraq Court Suspends Zebari From Presidential Race

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Iraq's Supreme Court said Sunday it had temporarily suspended Hoshyar Zebari, a frontrunner for the presidency, on the eve of parliament's vote on the position, citing years-old corruption charges against him.

It was the second blow in 48 hours to Zebari's presidential drive, and the latest chapter in the war-scarred country's divisive politics.

The court said it had received a complaint from lawmakers that Zebari's candidacy was "unconstitutional" because of the graft claims, adding that his suspension was "temporary" while the court considers the case.



## Costa Ricans Choose Among 25 Presidential Candidates

SAN JOSE (Dispatches) - Costa Ricans began trooping to the polls Sunday to choose a new president from a crowded field, with no clear favorite for tackling growing economic concerns in one of Latin America's stablest democracies.

Voting kicked off at 6:00 am (1200 GMT) and polls will remain open for 12 hours in this tourism-friendly nation of five million people.

The national election tribunal is expected to announce results some three hours after polls close, but a presidential runoff in April is anticipated.



## Russia Buildup Reaches 70% Needed for Ukraine Invasion



MARIUPOL (Dispatches) - Russia has established 70 percent of the military buildup it needs to launch a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, according to American officials cited anonymously in U.S. media.

During six hours of closed meetings last week, officials were warned by senior members of the administration of President Joe Biden that among the most aggressive of possibilities is a quick capture of the capital Kyiv, according to the Washington Post and New York Times.

Although the unnamed officials said intelligence analysts did not believe that Russia's President Vladimir Putin had made the final decision to invade, they did warn of as many as 50,000 civilian deaths and up to 25,000 Ukrainian soldiers killed if Russia does go ahead.

On Sunday, Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba questioned the US media reports.

"Do not believe the apocalyptic predictions. Different capitals have different scenarios, but Ukraine is ready for any development. Today, Ukraine has a strong army, unprecedented international support, and Ukrainians' faith in their country. This enemy should be afraid of us, not us," said Kuleba.

Rights groups Amnesty International and the Norwegian Refugee Council have cautioned in recent weeks a military escalation between Ukraine and Russia could result in a new refugee crisis, displacing millions of people from eastern Ukraine and the territories controlled by pro-Russian forces.

"The threat of the use of military force by Russia is already affecting the human rights of millions of people in Ukraine and beyond," said Agnes Callamard, Amnesty's secretary general.

"The consequences of actual military force are likely to be devastating."

The anonymous U.S. officials quoted by US media also said a major Russian naval force is positioned in the Black Sea, equipped with five amphibious vessels that could be used to land troops on Ukraine's southern coast.

Possible attacks on Ukraine on the lower end of the scale could take the form of sabotage, cyberattacks, and other destabilizing actions with the goal of removing the current government in Kyiv, they said.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's government is downplaying the current threat posed to Ukraine by the buildup of tens of thousands of Russian troops and military hardware at the border and in annexed Crimea.

The United States and United Kingdom have been accused of exaggerating the threat, something they have categorically denied.

Russian diplomat Dmitry Polyanskiy, a representative to the UN, called the latest American media reports citing unnamed officials "madness and scaremongering".

## Protest Against Vaccine Mandates Paralyzing Canada Capital

OTTAWA (Dispatches) - Protesters camped out in the Canadian capital outnumber the police and control the situation, the city's mayor said on Sunday, as a demonstration against vaccine mandates clogged parts of the city for a 10th day.

The "Freedom Convoy" began as a movement against a Canadian vaccine requirement for cross-border truckers but has turned into a rallying point against public health measures and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government.

Protesters have paralyzed downtown Ottawa for the past nine days, with some participants waving Confederate or Nazi flags and some saying they wanted to dissolve Canada's government.

"The situation at this point is completely out of control because the individuals with the protest are calling the shots," Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson said on a local radio station. "They have far more people than we have police officers."

Amid incessant horn blaring and occasional fireworks, a polished supply chain -- including portable saunas, a community kitchen and bouncy castles for children -- has sustained the protesters to the fury of residents who blame police for inaction.

Convoy organizers said they would refrain from using their horns on Sunday morning for four hours "as a gesture of goodwill".



## North Korea Grows Nuclear, Missiles Programs

UNITED NATIONS (Dispatches) - North Korea continued to develop its nuclear and ballistic missile programs during the past year and cyberattacks on cryptocurrency exchanges were an important revenue source for Pyongyang, according to an excerpt of a confidential United Nations report seen by Reuters.

The annual report by independent sanctions monitors was submitted on Friday evening to the U.N. Security Council North Korea sanctions committee.

"Although no nuclear tests or launches of ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles) were reported, DPRK continued to develop its capability for production of nuclear fissile materials," the experts wrote.

North Korea is formally known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). It has long been banned from conducting nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches by the U.N. Security Council.

"Maintenance and development of DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missile infrastructure continued, and DPRK continued to seek material, technology and know-how for these programs overseas, including through cyber means and joint scientific research," the report said.

Since 2006, North Korea has been subject to U.N. sanctions, which the Security Council has strengthened over the years in an effort to target funding for Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

The sanctions monitors noted that there had been a "marked acceleration" of missile testing by Pyongyang. The United States and others said on Friday that North Korea had carried out nine ballistic missile launches in January, adding it was the largest number in a single month in the history of the country's weapons of mass destruction and missile programs.

"DPRK demonstrated increased capabilities for rapid deployment, wide mobility (including at sea), and improved resilience of its missile forces," the sanctions monitors said.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

## Firing From Afghanistan Kills 5 Pakistan Troops

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - At least five Pakistan soldiers were killed by firing from neighboring Afghanistan, Islamabad said Sunday, in an attack claimed by the Pakistani Taliban.

It comes just days after Baloch separatists in the southwest killed nine Pakistan troops in a series of brazen attacks that officials said involved planners from Afghanistan as well as India.

After seizing power in August, Afghanistan's Taliban pledged terror groups would not be allowed to operate from the country, but Pakistan militant groups have long taken sanctuary across the porous border.

They include the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which on Sunday claimed responsibility for the attack in the Kurram district of rugged Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

The TTP has been emboldened by the return to power of the Taliban in Afghanistan and has stepped up attacks since a month-long truce with the Pakistan government ended last year.

The Taliban are separate groups in both countries, but share a common ideology and draw from people who live on either side of the border.

The TTP said it killed six Pakistani troops in Saturday night's attack, but the Pakistan military's public relations wing (ISPR) said five Frontier Corps members had died.

"Own troops responded in a befitting manner," it said, adding "terrorists suffered heavy casualties".

Pakistan "strongly condemns the use of Afghan soil by terrorists", ISPR said. The army "is determined to defend Pakistan's borders against the menace of terrorism, and such sacrifices of our brave men further strengthen our resolve".

It took four days until Saturday for Pakistani troops to put an end to assaults by separatists in Balochistan province, with the army putting the final death toll at 20 militants and nine soldiers.

## Tunisian President Dissolves Top Judicial Watchdog

TUNIS (Dispatches) - Tunisian President Kais Saied on Sunday dissolved a top independent judicial watchdog accusing it of bias, the latest controversial move since he sacked the government last year.

Saied has broadened his grip on power since July 25, when he sacked the government and froze parliament before moving to rule by decree in Tunisia -- the cradle of the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings that ousted a series of autocratic leaders.

Many Tunisians welcomed his moves against a political system described as corrupt and ineffective, in the only democracy to have emerged from the revolts. But political figures and rights groups have warned of a slide towards authoritarianism, and world leaders have expressed deep concern.

In a move expected to spark further unease, Saied early Sunday announced he was dissolving the Supreme Judicial Council (CSM) during a meeting with government ministers.

The council "is a thing of the past", he said according to video footage released by the Tunisian presidency. He accused the CSM, an independent constitutional body set up in 2016 to guarantee the good functioning and independence of the judiciary, of serving political interests.

"In this council, positions and appointments are sold and made according to affiliations," said the head of state.

"You cannot imagine the money that certain judges have been able to receive, billions and billions," he added.

Observers say the government is seeking to clamp down on the Islamist-inspired Ennahdha party, which has controlled parliament and the various governments since the 2011 revolution toppled veteran leader Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

The president accused the CSM of corruption and of delaying politically sensitive investigations into the 2013 assassinations of left-wing opposition figures Chokri Belaid and Mohamed Brahmi. The Islamic State group claimed both killings, while Ennahdha, which has denounced Saied's power grab as a "coup", has been accused by many of blocking the investigations.



**Zaferanieh Apt (\$3000)**  
280sq.m, 3bdrs  
S/pool, S, J  
L.balcony  
marbel fl  
Fully Furn

**Shanon (adviser)**

**Jordan Villa (\$5000)**  
1000sq.m  
5bdrs, S/p  
S, J, balcony  
marble floor  
Fully Furn

**Parsian**

**Elahieh Apt (\$2300)**  
200sq.m, 3bdrs  
S/p, S, J, pkg  
Fully Furn

**Farmanieh Apts**  
(\$1600) 2bdrs, & F.F  
(\$2000) 3bdrs, & F.F  
(\$2800) 4bdrs, & F.F  
All with S/p, S, & J

**Velenjak bldg (\$10000)**  
5storey, 20bdrs  
S/p, S, J, pkgs  
Brand new

Sa'adat abad (\$1300) 2bdrs, F.F  
Sa'adat abad (\$1700) 3bdrs, F.F  
Both with yard, & pkg

Cell: +989121907875  
Shanon\_tari@yahoo.com  
Tel : 88510081  
Fax : 88506474

**Commercial offices**  
Jordan bldg (\$30 per sq.m)  
4storey, 10bdrs, & pkgs

**IRAN NEWS 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

## IMF to Examine Finance Sectors of 7 Economies

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) will keep financial sectors of seven countries, including Turkey, under spotlight this year, the global crisis lender said in a blog post. "Many countries entered the pandemic with strong bank capital and supervisory frameworks. Nonetheless, as economies recover from the pandemic, uncertainties remain regarding the underlying state of banks and other intermediaries," it said. This year's assessments will address seven economies with systemically important financial sectors: Germany, United Kingdom, Mexico, Russia, Turkey and Ireland, which are reviewed every five years, and South Africa, which is assessed once every 10 years.



## Turkish Auto Sector Records \$2.2b Exports in January

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey's automotive industry exports, which have been the export champion of the Turkish economy for 16 consecutive years, decreased by 1.6% to \$2.2 billion (TL 29.85 billion) in January, according to the data of the Uludağ Automotive Industry Exporters' Association (OIB).

Despite the decline, the share of the sector, which still ranks first in the country's exports, in total exports was 12.7%, data showed. OIB Chairperson Baran Çelik said that in the first month of 2022, the world continued to face a wide array of problems such as the semiconductor chip crisis, raw material supply problems and increasing costs, and that "the largest product group was again the supply industry." He said while a decrease was experienced in the passenger car, bus, minibus and midibus exports, an increase was seen in auto supply industry sales.

"We recorded high increases of up to 40% in countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States and Egypt," he said.

Based on product group, supply industry exports increased by 7% to \$951 million in January, while passenger car exports decreased by 21% to \$654 million, and the exports of motor vehicles for transporting goods increased by 3% to \$440 million and bus-minibus-midibus exports increased by 39% to \$65 million.

While exports to Germany, the country to which the most exports are made in the auto supply industry, increased by 3% in January, a 12% increase was seen in exports to the U.S.

The auto supply industry raised its foreign sales to Russia, Poland, Slovenia and the Netherlands, which are also important markets, by 32%, 21%, 26% and 29%, respectively.

The product group's exports to Morocco and Hungary, however, decreased 12% and 13%, respectively.

In January, passenger car exports decreased by 66% to France, which is one of the most important markets for this product group. Decreases were also experienced in sales to Italy by 53%, Sweden by 55% and Belgium by 41%.

Exports of passenger cars increased to the U.K. by 53%, Egypt by 30% and the U.S. by 259% in the same month.

While exports of motor vehicles for the transportation of goods increased by 30% to the U.K., which is the country to which the most exports are made in the product group, 45% of increase experienced in sales to Slovenia, 16% to Belgium, 19% to the U.S., 28% to France and 25% to Italy, a 22% decrease was seen in exports to Spain.

In the bus-minibus-midibus product group, there was a 9% increase in exports to France and a 48% rise to Italy. Total exports of \$325 million were recorded to Germany, which took the lion's share, with an increase of 1% in January.

While \$268 million worth of products were exported to the U.K., which is the second-largest market, with an increase of 34%, exports to France decreased by 40% to \$182 million. Last month, exports increased by 25% to Slovenia, 41% to the U.S., 40% to Egypt, 37% to Russia, 26.5% to Romania, 23% to Italy and 23% to Sweden. Exports to the European Union countries, the largest market based on the country group, dropped by 11% in January and became \$1.39 billion. EU countries received a 62% share of exports.

## Indonesia Braces Itself for Higher Inflation

JAKARTA (Dispatches) - Indonesia is expecting higher inflation after long periods of relatively stable prices under President Joko Widodo. Signs of an uptrend were confirmed by the country's statistics agency on Wednesday (Feb 2), when it announced that the annualised inflation rate in January was 2.18 per cent, the highest since May 2020, with food, housing and household equipment being the main drivers. In 2021, inflation was 1.87 per cent.

"Rises in the price of commodities and various food due to wetter weather (that affected harvests) contributed to the higher inflation," Mr Febrio Kacaribu, head of the fiscal policy office at the finance ministry, said when he commented on the January figure.

He also underlined that recovering consumer demand following the easing of Covid-19 restrictions had pushed prices up. Mr Febrio said the government was trying to keep the situation under control by, among other things, making domestic energy prices, including petrol, affordable at home.

Crude oil prices have jumped, but the Indonesian government has partially absorbed the increase in prices to ensure petrol remains affordable at home. Critics said this ran counter to Mr Widodo's pledge early in his tenure that such prices would be left to the international market so as not to put pressure on state coffers.

Mr Widodo's administration, which took office in 2014, has thus far been credited for curbing inflation, primarily by intervening in the market and addressing inefficiencies in logistics in the sprawling archipelago.

Indonesia's average annual inflation was 4.6 per cent between 2009 and 2020, a sharp improvement from the 9.5 per cent between 2001 and 2008.

Mr Widodo's administration has issued no fewer than 12 regulations stipulating price caps on food, which is a sensitive issue. Many in the country of 270 million people spend more than half of their expendable income on food, and runaway prices, if not addressed properly, could lead to political instability.

The government under Mr Widodo has also worked to improve distribution in the country, building a total of 1,298km of toll roads in his first five-year term through to 2019, data from the public works ministry showed. In 2020, about 250km was built, and in 2021, about 300km. Between 1978 and 2014, only 795km was built.

On Friday, Mr Widodo inaugurated a new toll road in North Sumatra and, in a live broadcast, said that it would allow orange growers in a village nearby to slash their transportation costs by 75 per cent, making it easier for their products to compete with imports.



## Cuba Slaps New Tax on Food Sales as Economic Woes Hit Hard

HAVANA (Dispatches) - Cuba announced a new 10 per cent tax on retail food sales, as the country endures economic woes marked by rampant inflation.

The levy taking effect tomorrow will target self-employed people and small- and medium-sized companies in the retail food sector, said the decree published in the official government gazette. These sales were only allowed starting in August of last year as part of reforms in the communist run island.

Cuban economist Pedro Monreal wrote on Twitter that the new tax will probably have two effects: higher food prices and more inequality among the Cuban people.

Monreal said it will hurt "lower income households that spend a relatively higher percentage of their resources on food."

Monetary reforms applied last year caused prices of goods and services to shoot up in Cuba, mainly those of food. Inflation last year came in at 70 per cent.

People have to wait in long lines for scarce supplies of food and medicine.

Cuba imports 80 per cent of the food it consumes. Its purchases have declined drastically due to a shortage of hard currency and because of international transport problems stemming from the Covid pandemic.



## U.S. Readies New Asia-Pacific Economic Strategy to Counter China

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The Biden administration is preparing to unveil its first broad economic strategy for the Asia-Pacific region, a move awaited by U.S. allies and American business groups that are uneasy about China's expanding influence in the region.

With the new Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, the U.S. aims to work more closely with friendly nations on issues including digital trade, supply chains and green technology. The framework is aimed at filling

the hole in US Asia strategy left by its 2017 departure from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a robust trade agreement the U.S. had helped to design as a counterweight to China.

While details of the plan have yet to be released, the framework isn't expected to try to return the U.S. to the TPP. A cross-section of economists, diplomats and trade experts say the administration faces a battle in creating an effective pact that brings together many of Asia's economies to set the rules of engagement for commerce and new technology.

President Biden isn't expected to offer tariff cuts and other traditional market-opening tools to trading partners, which are opposed by U.S. labor groups and their Democratic allies as well as some Republicans on grounds that they come at the expense of U.S. jobs and manufacturing.

At the same time, these so-called market-access measures are considered essential to building stronger U.S. relations in the region, particularly with less-developed nations in South and Southeast Asia seeking to sell more agricultural and manufacturing products in the U.S. market.

"Market access could be one of the important returns that the countries in the region would expect from the U.S. leadership," South Korean Trade Minister Yeo Han-koo said after a meeting with U.S. officials in Washington last month.

Without market-access measures, the framework could become simply another club for the U.S. and its rich allies such as Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore, which already operate on similar values and rules, some diplomats and economists say.

"The real question is, 'How do we get countries like Vietnam and Indonesia into this?'" said Bill Reinsch, a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "I think these are the countries that are going to be cautious, that are going to take a wait-and-see approach to see how it evolves entering into these kinds of commitments."

## Europe's Gas Storage Levels Fall to 37.5% In January

LONDON (Dispatches) - Europe's natural gas reserve at storage facilities across the continent fell to 37.5% in January 2022 from 52% in January 2021, according to data from Gas Infrastructure Europe.

In January 2021, approximately 60 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas was stored across Europe, with facilities at 52% capacity.

In the same period of this year, the reserve decreased by 18 bcm to 42 bcm, causing the overall rate to fall to 37.5%.

Italy has the most natural gas in Europe with 10 bcm, with its stores at 47% capacity. Germany follows Italy with 8.7 bcm at 35% capacity. France is next with 4.4 bcm, accounting for 33%.

In terms of natural gas storage rates, Portugal led Europe with its reserves at 80%, equating to 200 million cubic meters (mcm). The United Kingdom followed with 75%, with 750 mcm in reserves.

Currently, Europe's storage facilities are at 36.6% capacity.

The colder-than-expected winter season and the subsequent spike in energy demand have led to the increased use of natural gas reserves. The decrease in the amount of natural gas sent by Russia to Europe via Ukraine and the drop in production from hydroelectric power plants also contributed to decreasing gas levels in the stores.

Experts also say that there may be problems in the supply of natural gas due to the tensions between Russia and Ukraine. European and U.S. officials are worried that if a war breaks out between the two countries, Russia, which supplies 40% of Europe's gas, will respond to the sanctions by closing the valves.



Russia supplies natural gas to Europe through its energy giant, Gazprom, either through long-term contracts or on one-off trading agreements on the spot market.

Experts argue that Russia is using the contentious Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline, completed despite many obstacles and the disapproval of many European countries, to gain leverage in Europe, flexing its importance in transmitting much-needed energy to Europe.

## IMF Asks Pakistan to Ink More FTAs, Rationalize Import Tariffs



ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - International Monetary Fund (IMF) has urged Pakistan to ink Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with large, important trading partners to secure market access and further rationalize import tariffs.

According to IMF's Sixth Review Under the Extended Arrangement Under the Extended Fund Facility, Pakistan's exporters are facing higher tariffs in Pakistan's major export markets as compared to the exporters of competing economies, which restricts Pakistani exporters' competitiveness.

While Pakistan has signed FTAs with China, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia, has preferential trade agreements with Iran, Indonesia, and Mauritius, and is part of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), a number of FTAs remain under negotiation or consultation. However, most of Pakistan's exports are to countries with whom Pakistan does not currently have a FTA. For example, in FY 2021 trade with the United States, United Kingdom, Afghanistan, and Germany (Pakistan's first, second, fourth, and fifth most important export destinations, respectively) comprised about 37 percent of total merchandise exports, while exports to Pakistan's 3 FTA markets were about 10 percent.

IMF has observed that absence of permanent FTAs with the major export market destinations hurts Pakistani exporters' competitiveness as they face higher tariffs than other exporters.

The Fund says that Pakistan remains a very closed economy as compared to other Emerging and Developing Economies (EMDEs), with openness quasi stagnating since the 1990s and net exports often acting as a drag on growth. Only a small number of firms export (primarily low value-added textile products) and fiscal revenues continue to rely on import tariffs, undermining trade integration and further weakening export competitiveness.

Pakistan's exports, which peaked at about 15 percent of GDP in 2003, have been on a declining trend since 2011 and currently stand at about 11 percent of GDP, which is much lower than peer countries. At the same time, export volume growth has stagnated since FY 2007 amid de-industrialization, resulting in a widening export volume growth gap compared to EMDEs. This has contributed to Pakistan's share of global exports declining by almost 40 percent since the early-1990s to only 0.13 percent of world exports in 2020.

## Iran Planning Major Steps for Developing Int'l Railway Corridors

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iran is planning to implement major railway projects for completing North-South and East-West international transport corridors which pass through the country, the deputy head of the country's Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company (CDTIC) has announced. According to Abbas Khatibi, the Iranian Transport and Urban Development Ministry's main priorities in the railway transportation

sector are the development of the North-South corridor, the development of the East-West corridor, and the development of transit infrastructure in the country, Mehr News Agency reported.

Khatibi noted that the Chabahar-Zahedan railway is the major project underway in the East-West corridor, while Rasht-Caspian and Rasht-Astara railways are the major projects underway in the North-South corridor in Iran.



## In-Person Berlin Film Festival Stands Up to Pandemic, Streaming

BERLIN (Dispatches) - The 72nd Berlin film festival opens Thursday, bucking a trend of pandemic on-the-couch streaming with a packed program of live premieres featuring a stable of European screen legends.

Just as the coronavirus outbreak roars toward its peak in Germany, Berlinale organizers have opted for an 11-day, in-person celebration of new movies and a gala ceremony to award its Golden Bear top prize.

The festival said it was crucial to give cinemas a boost when Covid-19 fears had fuelled home viewing on small screens, and the German government called the "courageous" step of holding the event "a sign of hope".

"It says: we won't let corona beat us. We need cinema and culture," government spokesman Wolfgang Buechner said.

Artistic director Carlo Chatrian said the Berlinale aimed to give weary audiences a break and some inspiration.

"Never before we have seen and welcomed so many love stories as this year -- crazy, improbable, unexpected and intoxicating love, which is after all what all encounters are about deep down."

In competition are 18 films from around the world from hot young auteurs and cinema veterans -- including seven directed by women. More than 200 other pictures are showing in sidebar sections.

A jury led by Indian-born American director M. Night Shyamalan ("The Sixth Sense") will pick the winners.

The line-up includes new movies from French directors Francois Ozon and Claire Denis, "Carol" screenwriter Phyllis Nagy and Italy's Paolo Taviani, a previous winner and at 90 the oldest award contender.

Italian horror master Dario Argento will show his first new picture in a decade -- "Dark Glasses", starring his daughter Asia Argento.

Autograph seekers will be banned from the red carpet but stars including Emma Thompson, Sigourney Weaver, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Juliette Binoche, Isabelle Huppert and Mark Rylance have been invited to present their latest films.

Huppert will also pick up a Golden Bear for lifetime achievement.

South Korean festival favorite Hong Sang-soo will unveil "The Novelist's Film" and Li Ruijun, part of a new generation of Chinese arthouse directors, will show his village romance "Return to Dust".

In keeping with its tradition as the most politically minded of the big festivals, the Berlinale will turn the spotlight on conflict zones including South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Myanmar and eastern Ukraine, with a slew of new documentaries.

Plus "This Much I Know To Be True" will show how Australian rocker Nick Cave stayed creative under lockdown.



The Berlinale ranks among Europe's top festivals alongside Cannes and Venice, which also went live last year but during ebbs in the pandemic. The recent Sundance and Rotterdam festivals were forced by Covid to go entirely virtual and many expected Berlin to follow suit.

But after an all-online festival last March, followed by outdoor screenings in the summer, the Berlinale worked with authorities to develop crowd safety measures.

The decision has caused controversy, with local media asking how organisers could justify it while the virus has closed hundreds of creches and hospitals strain under the outbreak.

The B.Z. tabloid said the festival seemed to be getting "extra sausage" -- German for special treatment -- while public broadcaster RBB called it "delusional" and newspaper Tagesspiegel warned: "The virus will be pleased".

Industry insiders noted that the festival's requirements on vaccination, daily testing and reduced capacity marked a valiant effort but wondered if it was all worth it.

"Berlin is quite well organised. The safety measures are top notch so if anyone could pull it off successfully and safely, they can," Scott Roxborough, Europe bureau chief for The Hollywood Reporter, told AFP.

"But it's a question as to whether it was necessary or sensible to do it."

He said Berlin, as the first major global cinema showcase of the year, was trying to live up to a responsibility to promote daring new movies against the odds.

"There's been a massive success of the latest 'Spiderman' -- one of the most successful films of all time now -- despite the pandemic," he said.

He said independent films, by contrast, had suffered.

"I think that's making the industry very concerned about the future," Roxborough said.

## German Industry Warns Exodus From Russia Over Medical Tests

BERLIN (Dispatches) - German industry representatives have warned against a "massive exodus" of companies from Russia in light of compulsory medical examinations for managers and other foreigners.

According to the German-Russian Chamber of Commerce (AHK), the number of German companies in Russia has declined by 8% in 2021 compared to the year before.

In addition to the introduction of mandatory medical tests for foreigners, the experts trace this trend back to the threat of new sanctions by the West against Russia in the Ukraine crisis and the fear of war.

According to the AHK, 3,651 companies with German capital are currently still active in Russia. This is down from 6,300 in 2011, meaning some 42% of firms left in the past 10 years.

Under a new law signed by Russian President Vladimir Putin, foreigners with long-term residency must undergo elaborate medical examinations in order to work in the country, including regular testing for drug use and infectious diseases such as HIV, syphilis, tuberculosis and COVID-19.

In addition to blood and urine tests, children over the age of 6 and spouses also have to undergo X-ray tests every three months.

According to the AHK, outrage over the new rules has been growing among German expats, with some reporting "conditions like in movies from Gulag times." For instance, the expat community reported long-waiting hours and lack of compliance with COVID-19 regulations at an overcrowded test center not far from Moscow, in letters to the AHK.

Other foreign business associations have also criticized the new law as harmful to investment. The United States Embassy in Moscow has called the new rule "xenophobic."

## Tem Lake Registered As National Heritage

DEZFUL (IRNA)- The head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department of Dezful County said that Tem Lake, southwestern Iran, as an eye-catching national heritage was registered in Iran's national heritage list.

Abbas Cheragh Cheshm said here on Monday that national registration of this tourist attraction and national heritage reveals rich resources of this region, Shahyun District, and especially Dezful County.

He added that with beautiful landscape, this lake is located in Shahyun District on the border of Khuzestan, Chaharmahal-and-Bakhtiari provinces in the south of Oshtrankoo and Qali Kooh mountain ranges.

## Lata Mangeshkar "Nightingale of India" Dies Aged 92

MUMBAI (Dispatches) - Bollywood superstar Lata Mangeshkar, known to millions as the "Nightingale of India" and a regular fixture of the country's airwaves for decades, died Sunday morning at the age of 92.

Mangeshkar was born in 1929 and started her musical training early under the tutelage of her father Deenanath, singing in his theatrical productions when she was just five.

Her father's death when she was only 13 forced her to take on the role of breadwinner to support four younger siblings, and the family eventually moved to Mumbai in 1945.

There she pursued a career as a playback singer, recording tracks to be mimed by actors, and her high-pitched voice soon became a staple of Bollywood blockbusters.

In a move reflecting her huge following, she was invited by the government to sing a patriotic tribute to the soldiers killed in the 1962 Indo-China war at India's Republic Day commemorations in January 1963.

Her rendition of "Oh the People of my Country" reportedly moved then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to tears.

In the following decades, composers and film producers alike vied to sign the prolific Mangeshkar for their movies.

"I composed keeping Lata Mangeshkar's range and voice quality in mind," composer Anil Biswas said of her in an interview published in the "Encyclopedia of



Hindi Cinema".

"She had a wide range, and one could think of more complicated melodies than with the earlier untrained singers," he added.

Together with her younger sister Asha Bhonsle -- a superstar in her own right -- Mangeshkar dominated Bollywood music for more than half a century, and is considered by many to be the

Indian film industry's greatest-ever playback singer.

Mangeshkar was not shy about taking a stand when it came to raising her prices or asking for a share of the royalties earned on her songs. Her longevity and discipline saw her lend her voice to teenage actresses who were 50 years her junior.

Critics complained that her dominance left little room for newer singers to thrive but her audience remained loyal, ensuring that her songs ruled the charts.

She was also known for her quirks, such as never singing with her shoes on and always writing out each song by hand before recording it.

Mangeshkar was in 2001 awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honor, and received France's Legion d'Honneur in 2009 in recognition of her contribution to Indian music and cinema. "Coming generations will remember her as a stalwart of Indian culture, whose melodious voice had an unparalleled ability to mesmerize people," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said.

## Tehran-Muscat...

FROM PAGE 1

Elsewhere in his remarks, Zarrabi pointed to the salient advantages of re-export of Iranian products from Oman and stated, "Oman has concluded a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with 16 Arab and African countries, United States, Singapore and four European countries, so if our products are not subject to sanctions with a reliable certificate from Oman, we can take advantage of this change of exporting products."

There are some countries that have voiced their readiness to purchase and import Iranian products but presently, the export of Iranian products to these countries is impossible due to the sanctions, he added.

Zarrabi pointed to the level of trade exchanges between Iran and Oman and said, "Trade volume exchanged between Iran and Oman in 2013 hit \$221 million, the rate of which increased \$1.161 billion in 2018, showing a considerable hike."

## CBI Reports...

FROM PAGE 1

The figures showed that Iran's monetary base, which covers the cash in circulation and deposits held by the CBI, rose 37.6% year on year in late December to 5,608.60 trillion rials (nearly \$20.92 billion).

Government debt to the CBI declined 75.1% in the three quarters to December 21 to minus 393.69 trillion rials (minus \$1.47 billion), said the bank.

The data showed that debts owed by private and state-run banks to the CBI rose by 31.2% over the same period to 1,537.4 trillion rials (\$5.73 billion).

They showed that total foreign assets held by the CBI and other Iranian banks and institutions rose 32% year on year in late December to reach 6,981.3 trillion rials (\$26.05 billion).

## 15th Iran Plast...

FROM PAGE 1

Addressing the opening ceremony, Owji considered the role of the petrochemical industry in meeting the country's hard currency needs very important, and said: "In the difficult conditions of the country, petrochemical companies were able to funnel \$10 billion to the NIMA system over the first 10 months of the current calendar year, which began on March 21, in line with the sales of crude oil, gas condensate and natural gas."

He added: "I am proud of what I saw in this exhibition which has been created with the round-the-clock efforts of petrochemical industrialists."

Pointing out that the petrochemical industry has been one of the great achievements of the Islamic Revolution in every sense of the word, he said: "The production capacity of the country's petrochemical products at the beginning of the revolution (1979) was from 1.5 million to 3 million tons per year, according to various accounts, most being urea and ammonia which were used for agricultural purposes."

Owji stated: "Thanks to the elites and activists of this industry, in the current year, the petrochemical industry with a capacity of 90 million tons is active in the country and a variety of polymers, chemicals, chemical fertilizers, aromatic substances and hydrocarbons as well as the supply chain of petrochemical industries are being supplied domestically."

"Iran, with 153 billion barrels of extractable oil and 33,000 billion cubic meters of extractable gas, ranks first in the world in terms of total hydrocarbon reserves. And in 44 years we have grown and developed our own industry," he said. "In the early years of the revolution we had only Bidboland gas refinery and the country's gas production capacity was 25 million cubic meters per day, which today has reached more than one billion cubic meters," Owji went on to add.

Referring to the petrochemical sector and stating that in the 13th government, good things should happen in this industry, he said: "By 2027, the production capacity of petrochemical products will reach 140 million tons per year."

Owji said one of the plans of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) is the development of gas fields, especially joint fields, adding that so far and under the 13th Administration, \$4.5 billion worth of contracts have been signed with domestic and foreign companies along with more than 10 memoranda of understanding in this regard.

Owji said that one of the other actions of the Oil Ministry, which concerns feedstock supply is construction of petro-refining units, and said: "Unfortunately, our refinery capacity was not noticeable because no investment was made in it, besides the fact that the Supreme Leader has emphasized construction of petro-refining units."

He underlined consideration of construction of a 300,000-barrel petro-refining unit in the budget bill, and said that in addition to providing fuel and ensuring energy security, petro-refineries also provide feedstock for the petrochemical industry. "So far 12 contracts have been inked for building petro-refineries with a total processing capacity of 1.46 million barrels."

The exhibition is attended by 430 Iranian and foreign companies and aims to help develop the downstream petrochemical industries and increase production of petrochemical products.

Iran Plast has attracted participants from 15 countries, despite the coronavirus pandemic and the United States' sanctions on Iran's energy sector.

These are companies and trade as well as political delegations from such countries as China, Brazil, Hungary, the Azerbaijan Republic, Taiwan and Iraq.

Iran produces eight million tons of polymer products every year and this makes it a key hub for petrochemicals.

This also makes Iran Plast an opportunity for commercial interactions, exchange of the latest technical achievements and the development of downstream petrochemical industries.

## Imam Khomeini's Command...

FROM PAGE 1

Maintaining and empowering Iran's Army along with supporting establishment of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and promoting cooperation among different revolutionary and armed forces were among parts of Imam Khomeini's foresight, Bagheri argued.

He went on to say that Imam Khomeini issued several decrees and strategic tactics during the eight-year Sacred Defense, including his order to defeat Baathist forces in Abadan city or prevent from occupation of Bostan County by Iraqis.

Imam Khomeini could encourage people to defend the country in the face of occupying forces and foreigners' plots, Bagheri said, adding that the late Imam also ordered the then governments to equip armed forces and promote unity between the Army and the IRGC in order to consolidate the Islamic Revolution.

Whenever, officials and commanders met with Imam Khomeini and talked about problems ahead, he expressed hope for brilliant future and issued decisive orders, Bagheri noted.

**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

## Man City, Chelsea, Spurs Get Favorable FA Cup Draws

LONDON (Dispatches) - Premier League leaders Manchester City will travel to Peterborough in the FA Cup fifth round, while Chelsea and Tottenham will also visit Championship opposition. Chelsea survived a scare from League One Plymouth on Saturday to set up a last 16 trip to Luton as Spurs face Manchester United's conquerors Middlesbrough. Liverpool will have another home tie against Norwich after seeing off Cardiff in the fourth round at Anfield on Sunday.

## Anthony Wins Australia's First Winter Games Gold

ZHANGJIAKOU (Dispatches) - Jakara Anthony of Australia won gold in the women's freestyle skiing moguls event on Sunday, barreling down a steep course and landing backflips to earn her country its first gold medal at the Winter Games in over a decade. Seconds after completing her run, Anthony embraced her teammates and broke down in tears. "It's pretty mind-blowing," the 23-year old said with an Australian flag draped around her shoulders.

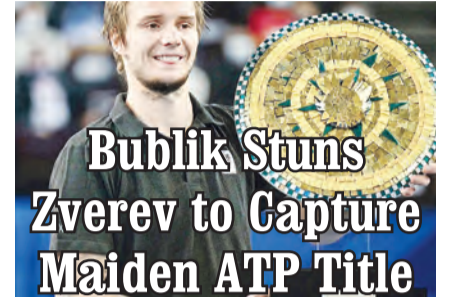
# Kobayashi Ends 50-Year Normal Hill Drought for Japan

ZHANGJIAKOU (dispatches) - Japan's Ryoyu Kobayashi converted the form that made him the dominant force in ski jumping this season into Olympic gold when he kept his nerve to deliver a solid last leap of the competition and win the normal hill title. In a fast-moving competition made exciting and unpredictable by changing winds, Manuel Fettner of Austria took silver and Poland's Dawid Kubacki the bronze. Kobayashi is one of the most successful athletes on the circuit, routinely scooping World Cup titles and making the podium a remarkable 43 times. However, his return from the biggest events has been meagre, with seventh and 10th-place finishes in his only Olympic appearance four years ago, and he has missed the individual podium in his four world championship events. But, fresh from winning the Four Hills title, he showed his confidence by opting against taking his practice jump early in the day and it proved a good decision as he had the best jump of the first round for 145.4 points. The top five were separated by just four points, however, and with the changing windmaking starting ordersomething of a lottery -- underscored by Kubacki rising from eighth after the first jump and on to the podium -- nobody could feel safe. It was a great day for Fettner, the veteran of 36 who has been competing for almost 20 years and who was fifth after the first round. He delivered the best leap of the second round for an overall tally of 270.8 points, but Kobayashi did more than enough to move



past him on an impressive 275.0.

His victory gave Japan their first ski jump gold since Kazuyoshi Funaki triumphed in the large hill on home snow at Nagano 1998 and the first on the normal hill since Yukio Kasay's success, also at home, in Sapporo 50 years ago to the day. "I can't believe it, I had a great performance today, two perfect jumps," he said. "I'm so happy." Fettner said he was almost speechless. "Expected is the wrong word, I think but I was sure that it was possible," he said. "But it was possible for maybe 20 jumpers because it was so close."



## Bublik Stuns Zverev to Capture Maiden ATP Title

PARIS (AFP) - Alexander Bublik stunned top seed and Olympic champion Alexander Zverev to win his maiden ATP title in Montpellier on Sunday. The 24-year-old Russian-born Kazakh triumphed over the world number three from Germany, 6-4, 6-3. Bublik's win will also assure him a new career-high ranking on Monday from his current 35. Before Sunday, the eccentric Bublik had lost all four of his previous ATP finals in Newport and Chengdu in 2019, and Singapore and Antalya last year. He now heads for the Rotterdam tournament next week where he has a first-round clash against former world number one and three-time major champion Andy Murray. Zverev had taken a late wildcard into the Montpellier event following a disappointing fourth-round exit at the Australian Open last month.

## Liverpool Ease Past Cardiff Into FA Cup Fifth Round

LIVERPOOL (Dispatches) - Liverpool beat the young Cardiff City side 3-1 in the FA Cup today at Anfield to advance to the fifth round, with second-half goals from Diogo Jota, Takumi Minamino and Harvey Elliott. After a goalless first half, Liverpool's perseverance paid off eight minutes into the second period when Jota rose highest to head home a Trent Alexander-Arnold cross from a set piece for his 15th goal of the season in all competitions. Liverpool doubled the lead when a defensive mix-up allowed new €45 million (RM216 million) signing Luis Diaz to steal the ball in Cardiff's box and cut back after some nifty footwork to Minamino, who fired home. Midfielder Elliott then marked his return to action after ankle surgery earlier this season with a dazzling strike when he expertly controlled a cross from Andy Robertson before turning on the spot and volleying home. Cardiff pulled one back as a consolation when 19-year-old Rubin Colwill initiated a counter-attack after stealing the ball in midfield, and he finished it with aplomb with a shot from the edge of the box. Liverpool will host Norwich City in the fifth round.



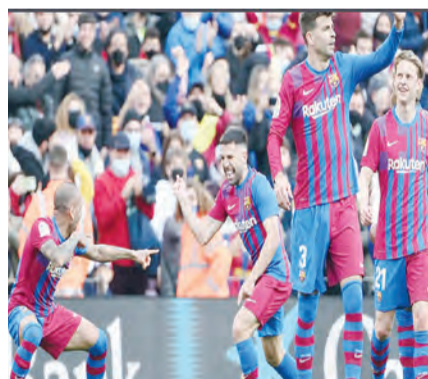
## Murray to Skip Clay-Court Season to Protect Fitness

LONDON (Dispatches) - Former world number one Andy Murray said that he intends to skip the French Open and rest of the clay-court season in order to prevent injury and prolong his career following multiple hip surgeries. The 34-year-old Murray, who crashed out in the second round of the Australian Open, will be in action at the ATP 500 event in Rotterdam starting Monday after

accepting a wildcard to enter the main draw. "The past couple of years, the clay has made issues worse," the three-times major winner told reporters ahead of his first-round match against Kazakhstan's Alexander Bublik. "Last year I had some issues at the beginning of the year, the clay didn't help, so I've spoken to my team about that and this year while I feel good and healthy, I don't want to take that risk." Murray, who made the final at Roland Garros in 2016, added that he could return to the surface in the future. "It's not that I wouldn't potentially play on clay in the future, last year I almost missed Wimbledon, was close to not playing the grass season, I'm not planning on playing the clay, I will still try to compete a bit during that period," said the Briton.

## Barca Go Fourth After Defeating Atletico

BARCELONA (Dispatches) - Jordi Alba scored an extraordinary volley and Dani Alves was sent off as Barcelona delivered a major boost to their hopes of finishing in La Liga's top four on Sunday by winning a six-goal thriller against Atletico Madrid. A rampant Barca scored four goals in 40 minutes at Camp Nou before surviving a late fightback from Atletico after Luis Suarez headed in against his former club and Alves saw red with 20 minutes left. A statement victory returns Xavi Hernandez's into the top four for the first time since September, with Atletico now two points behind in fifth. Atletico took an early lead through Yannick Carrasco but Barcelona came storming back, Alba equalising with surely one of the goals of the season before Gavi, Ronald Araujo and Alves all struck to leave Atletico facing an annihilation. Instead, Suarez headed in and Alves was sent off as tempers flared. But Barcelona held on, with Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, signed from Arsenal, coming on off the bench to make his debut in the second half. With Barcelona in containment mode, Aubameyang's influence was limited and it was another January signing, Adama Traore, who made the biggest impact with an electric first-half performance. Barca were ninth in the league, six points behind Atletico in fourth, when Xavi was appointed coach. Now, they are in the driving seat to seal qualification for the Champions League, which would be so crucial to their financial recovery. Barca came into the game on the back of a dramatic transfer window that also saw Ferran Torres brought in. Traore, a La Masia graduate, and Torres both started but Aubameyang, who had been sidelined by Arsenal in recent weeks, was only deemed fit enough for the bench, along with Ousmane Dembele, who Xavi welcomed back into the fold despite threats of exile last month from the club. Dembele is yet to extend his deal, which expires in the summer, and he was whistled before kick-off. He was not introduced in the second half, although such was the drama of the contest by then, perhaps the crowd might not have noticed.



## LeBron Returns With Triple-Double

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - LeBron James returned from a five-game absence due to injury and had a triple-double of 29 points, 13 rebounds, 10 assists, and the Los Angeles Lakers rallied from a 21-point, second-quarter deficit, beating the New York Knicks 122-115 in overtime. James missed the games due to swelling in his left knee, but came back to play in a nationally televised game and with the Lakers three games under .500. "He's incredible. I guess the time off served him well," coach Frank Vogel said. "We didn't want to play him 39 minutes, but overtime impacted that." "He was special tonight. Just a great performance." It was the Lakers' largest comeback since they rallied from 21 down at Denver in 2015. "After the first quarter, the knee loosened up a lot more, my mind loosened up a lot more and I was able just to play basketball," James said. "Happy I was able to make a few plays to help us win." Meanwhile, Ja Morant scored 33 points in three quarters and the Memphis Grizzlies led by as many as 31 points in a 135-115 win over the Orlando Magic on Feb. 5. Morant scored 22 points in the first half as Memphis won its second straight and for the fifth time in six games. The Grizzlies went on a 14-0 run in the first quarter and led 76-56 at the half. "It was just me taking what the defense was giving me when they tried to shift to me and pack the paint," said Morant, who got teammates involved with the pass in the first quarter and then went into attack mode before halftime. "I've got too much shooters for that. I was just playing cat and mouse with the defense, pretty much." "I thought Ja was phenomenal tonight," Memphis coach Taylor Jenkins said. "He did a great job against a team that was in an early shift and wanting to take away the paint, and he did a great job getting the ball out early to his teammates. He always gives the defense a different look. Is he in attack mode, is he in score mode, or playmaking mode? Then, when he reads the game, he knows when to take over." Morant finished with seven assists, and his most spectacular pass of the game came in the third quarter when he passed behind his back to Zaire Williams, who fed a lob pass to De'Anthony Melton for a dunk. The play put Memphis ahead by 31 points and sent Morant jumping into the arms of his teammates. "Killing their spirits, we try to do that with every team we play by going out and sending a message," Morant said. "We keep our foot on the gas, we have a little fun and then we're going to let you hear about it."



## Hamilton Ends Silence

LONDON (Dispatches) - Lewis Hamilton returned to social media following a lengthy silence that dates to last season's controversial Formula 1 finale. Hamilton had dropped out of public sight after he was denied a record eighth championship in the December finale in Abu Dhabi. He re-emerged on Feb. 5 with a post that showed the seven-time champion smiling from what appears to be the Grand Canyon. "I've been gone. Now I'm back!" wrote Hamilton. Hamilton did one brief post-race interview following his Dec. 12, 2021 loss to Max Verstappen in Abu Dhabi. He skipped the mandatory news conference, skipped the gala in Paris, and his last public appearance was three days after the Abu Dhabi race when Hamilton received his knighthood at Windsor Castle.