

President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi
Extended a Message to His
Ghanaian Counterpart Nana Addo
Dankwa Akufo-Addo on Saturday
To Congratulate Him on
National Day in That Country

IRAN NEWS

Health Ministry Announced on
Sunday That the Number of Deaths
From the Coronavirus Pandemic in
Iran Increased to 137,948 With
201 More Iranians Killed by the
Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

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IAEA, Iran Moving Into More Cooperative Relationship

VIENNA (Dispatches) - The director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) says the UN nuclear watchdog and Tehran are developing a more cooperative relationship in order to resolve what he called open issues with Iran.

Rafael Mariano Grossi made the remarks in a press conference in Vienna on Saturday after returning from Iran where he had talks with senior Iranian officials, including head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami, and Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian.

"We are moving into a more cooperative relationship, things are moving toward a better atmosphere," he said at the presser that was held at the Vienna International Airport following his return from Tehran.

The IAEA chief added that when in Tehran, he had held "very good talks" with the Iranian foreign minister.

Speaking to Grossi in Tehran earlier on Saturday, the top Iranian diplomat stressed the importance of improving cooperation with the UN nuclear agency on issues beyond supervision and inspection, including the IAEA's support for Iran's peaceful nuclear industry.

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Iran Crude Oil Exports Exceed 1.5m bpd

TEHRAN (MNA) - The director-general of the Iranian Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) has said that the country's crude oil exports have exceeded 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd).

The PMO Director-General Ali Akbar Safaei, who is also the deputy minister of the Road and Urban Development, made the remarks on an inspection visit to projects being carried out in the southern Iranian Province of Bushehr.

"Fortunately, with the very good measures taken after the recent visits of the President to the regional countries and the resulting breakthroughs that were created, we have had good growth in exports and imports, and in Bushehr port, we see 22% growth compared to last year, which promises a boom in maritime activities," Safaei said.

The PMO Director-General also noted that in the field of oil activities, crude oil exports have exceeded 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd), adding that, Bushehr ports are supporting these activities to continue the export of petroleum products and crude oil in the best way.

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Leader Stresses Need to Replace Fossil Fuels With Renewable Energy



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has stressed the need for further development of renewable and clean energy sources, such as civilian nuclear energy, to replace fossil fuels.

"Development of non-fossil energy, such as nuclear energy, which is increasingly being used across the world and looked for by the countries in our region, besides wind and solar power, should seriously be taken into consideration," Ayatollah Khamenei said on Sunday, as he planted saplings to mark Iran's national Arbor Day and Natural Resources Week.

The Arbor Day, which is celebrated every year to promote the development and preservation of greenery across the country, inaugurates the national Natural Resources Week.

On Arbor Day, which fell on Sunday this year, Iranian individuals, groups and environmental activists plant trees and encourage others to do so.

Planting two saplings, Ayatollah Khamenei described the tradition as a completely "religious and revolutionary" move, and underlined the significance of preserving trees.

The Leader went on to equate deforestation and environmental degradation with the destruction of national interests, terming environmental protection as one of the most fundamental issues of the country.

He called on Iranian officials to attach greater significance to soil, water and wildlife conservation measures.

In Islam, hunting is allowed only if needed for food; otherwise it is illegal. Poaching must be dealt with seriously and wildlife conservation must be taken note of, Ayatollah Khamenei added.

The Leader urged the Iranian Department of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad to prevent land use conversion, emphasizing that the act "is to the detriment of national interests and that agricultural lands must expand."

MBS's Remarks Show New Inclination in Riyadh to Mend Tehran Ties

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian says Iran welcomes Saudi Arabia's "new inclination" to fix relations with Tehran, and that managing the differences between the two sides will benefit both nations as well as other friendly states.

Speaking to IRNA news agency on Saturday, Amir-Abdollahian said he considered the recent remarks by a high-ranking Saudi official as an effort to "show a new inclination to advance bilateral interactions," adding, "We welcome it."

In an interview with The Atlantic published on Thursday, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, also known as MBS, said, "Iran is a neighbor forever. We cannot get rid of them and they cannot get rid of us. So it's better for both of us to work it out and to look for ways in which we can coexist."

The top Iranian diplomat said although Riyadh chose to cut ties with Tehran, the Islamic Republic has constantly invited Saudi Arabia to good neighborly interactions over the past years.

"We have different views and approaches on some issues in the region, but the management of those differences by the two sides can serve the interests of the two nations, as well as friendly and brotherly countries," he said.

Also in his interview, bin Salman said the kingdom intends to continue "detailed talks" with Iran to reach a satisfactory agreement for both.

The discussions, he said, would enable reaching "a good situation and mark a bright future" for both sides.

Amir-Abdollahian said that Iran has held four rounds of talks with Saudi Arabia hosted by Iraq in the course of the past year.

"These talks created a good atmosphere and yielded results, albeit small ones, and we are pleased that Saudi Arabia has taken the path of dialog. Such a view, if held continuously, can lead to positive results, because improving relations and cooperation is in the interest of both countries," he noted.

The foreign minister further reiterated the determination of the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi to interact with Iran's neighboring states.

Saudi Arabia severed diplomatic relations with Iran in January 2016 after Iranian protesters, enraged by the Saudi execution of prominent Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr, stormed its embassy in Tehran.

For years, the kingdom pursued a confrontational foreign policy toward the Islamic Republic, but it appears that it has recently changed tack.

Referring to the protracted Saudi-led military aggression against Yemen, Amir-Abdollahian reaffirmed the need for a political settlement of the conflict.

"It is clear that the Yemen crisis has no military solution. Yemen belongs to all Yemenis. The solution is political based on intra-Yemeni dialog, away from foreign interference. It will be achieved through the end of the siege and war," he said.

ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

Zionists' Crimes Go on Amid UN Silence

What a strange world we are living in where words are losing their real meanings and turn into a series of sounds coming out of the mouths. One of the words is human rights and the other one is peace that both are losing their genuine meanings especially in the international bodies like the United Nations.

In recent days the United Nations and majority of its members have been fully busy with condemning Russian military action in Ukraine and it has jumped to defend Ukrainian people's lives. No problem. They are right because it is main task of the UN to defend and to save nations but they should look at all countries with the same glasses and they should not act unfairly. The UN has exerted all of its forces to condemn Russia and even to bring this country to the international court of justice but in recent decades this important international body has closed its eyes on any crime committed by the Zionists and sometimes it issues some watery statements and resolutions against criminal Zionist regime. These statements are not enough to stop the Zionists and even they embolden Zionists to commit more crimes.

Everyday some news and reports from the occupied lands and Israel reveal just small portion of crimes of Israel but there is no serious reaction from the UN regarding these crimes. According to reports, in recent days Israeli forces have suppressed several protests held across the occupied West Bank and in East al-Quds, leaving dozens of Palestinians injured.

Clashes erupted between Israeli forces and anti-settlement protesters in the town of Beita, and the village of Beit Dajan in the occupied West Bank province of Nablus, on Friday.

The Palestine Red Crescent Society reported that 20 people were hit with rubber bullets fired by the Israeli troops during the clashes in Beit Dajan, east of Nablus, adding that two emergency medical technicians were also wounded when Israeli troops fired rubber bullets at the ambulance car they were riding.

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Iran Export to Iraq Rises 20%

TEHRAN (MNA) - The value of Iran's export to Iraq rose 20 percent during the first 11 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021-February 19, 2022), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the spokesman of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Ruhollah Latifi said Iran exported over 28 million tons of commodities worth \$8.222 billion to its neighbor in the said 11-month time, indicating also 17 percent growth in terms of weight.

According to the official, Iran's export to Iraq accounted for 19 percent and 15 percent of the country's non-oil export value and weight, respectively, during the first eleven months of the present year.

As previously announced by the IRICA deputy head, the value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 38 percent during the first 11 months of the current year.

Foroud Asgari said that Iran traded over 149.4 million tons of non-oil products worth \$90 billion with other countries in the mentioned period.

He noted that the weight of trade in the mentioned period also grew by 12 percent in comparison to the figure for the previous year's same 11 months.

The official put the 11-month non-oil exports at 112.658 million tons valued at \$43.517 billion, with a 40-percent rise in value and 10 percent growth in weight.

The Islamic Republic imported 36.777 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$46.577 billion in the first 11 months of the present year, with a 36 percent growth in value and a 19 percent rise in weight year on year, according to the official.

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President Plants Sapling on National Tree-Planting Day

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Ebrahim Raisi planted an almond sapling in northern Tehran on the occasion of National Tree Planting Day and Natural Resources Week on Sunday.

During the tree-planting ceremony, President Raisi also inaugurated a project on reforestation of 1,250 hectares of vicinity of Tehran. The project is named the Green Belt. National Tree Planting Day and Natural Resources Week is when many Iranians across the country try to plant trees or take care of them.

President Calls for Supporting Vulnerable Groups

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi described the efforts of all revolutionary bodies and institutions for the development and prosperity of the country necessary and said, “It is necessary for all executive bodies and institutions of the Islamic Revolution and charities to put the issue of supporting vulnerable groups on their agenda as a priority”.

Speaking on Saturday evening at the same time as the week of charity and philanthropy, at the inauguration and unveiling of the projects of the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, President Raisi said, “As an official, it is never acceptable to me that part of the people of our country are helpless to provide the basic issues of their lives are helpless”.

The President pointed out, “It is necessary for the Ministry of Welfare to cooperate with the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, the Mostazafan Foundation, the Executive Headquarters and other institutions of the Islamic Revolution, along with charities and related agencies, to put eliminating poverty and deprivation as a priority on their agenda”.

Raisi emphasized, “The existence of deprivation and poverty is not something that should be in the Islamic system and I believe that with the efforts of everyone, the root of absolute poverty can be dried immediately”.

Emphasizing that social and economic systems should be based on justice, the President said, “Poverty and deprivation are basically the product of economic and social injustices, and if the country’s facilities and capacities are distributed fairly, there will be no poverty and deprivation”.

He added, “The government, based on justice, intends to develop different parts and regions of the country in a balanced way, and in this regard, next year’s budget has been compiled based on spatial management”.

The President said, “The government’s orientation in macroeconomics is also in the



direction of eliminating poverty and deprivation in society, and in this regard, it seriously pursued policies such as controlling and reducing inflation”.

Referring to the relationship between benevolence and charity and eliminating deprivation and economic infrastructure activities, Raisi said, “Doing neither of these two tasks takes precedence over the other, and the situation of the poor and deprived can be addressed simultaneously with the implementation of major infrastructure and economic projects”.

Emphasizing the government’s efforts to complete e-government and smarten administrative services in the country, Raisi said, “Unfortunately, there are backlogs in this field that must be overcome with double action and the smart government must be completed”.

The President continued his speech by referring to the need to build housing for the poor and deprived in the society and noted, “The government has promised to build 4 million housing units by 1404, which is also a legal obligation in the Housing Production Leap Law”.

Raisi added, “The Ministry of Roads and Urban Development also intends to pursue the construction of a housing unit with the cooperation of different sectors, with priority given to needy and deprived families”.

The President further emphasized the importance of empowerment and self-sufficiency of deprived families and said, “The plan of self-sufficiency of deprived families is a lasting measure that is in line with both religious principles and preserving the dignity of families and it is necessary to continue strong programs in this field”.

Iran Wants U.S. to Give Solid Guarantee Not to Withdraw JCPOA

TEHRAN (MNA) – Turning to the talks which are ongoing in Austria, a member of the Iranian Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Commission said that the country wants US to give a guarantee not to withdraw from JCPOA once again.

Ebrahim Rezaei emphasized that any agreement must give a well-grounded guarantee to other party and any agreement which lacks guarantee is not accepted by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He reiterated that Iran accepts an agreement that secures necessary and sufficient guarantees from the opposite side, adding that they [Western parties in Vienna talks] should give a necessary guarantee that they will abide by their commitments under JCPOA.

He noted that Iran’s strategy in the process of negotiations is clear and “we have emphasized it many times so that Americans withdrew from JCPOA and must return to ensure that they would not leave JCPOA again.”

Elsewhere in his remarks, Rezaei pointed to the visit of IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi to Tehran and said, “Western countries have adopted hostile approach against Iran since he was introduced as Director-General of International Atomic Energy Agency.”

Iran has always tried to show its goodwill, but Grossi’s policy over these years has been in line with policies of the United States and the West, the lawmaker stressed.

However, the IAEA director-general must decide whether he wants to be an impartial observer of Iran’s nuclear program or whether he is still going to lean towards the United States in nuclear talks and to give baseless claims.

Hyrcanian Forests Cultural, Natural Heritage

RASHT (IRNA) - Hyrcanian Forests’ inscription on UNESCO World Heritage List took place on July 10, 2019, so the Iranians residing in Gilan Province plan to hold artistic and cultural festivals in order to introduce the significant natural heritage to the world.

Hyrcania is the second natural heritage of Iran, which was registered in the UNESCO World Heritage List in its 43rd meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan Republic, in order to be preserved for Iranians and the whole world forever.

Since there are severe rivalries to inscribe places and monuments on the UNESCO list and some countries resort to any means to register their monuments on the list, it seems that inscription of Hyrcanian Forests on the list will help introduce the historical, natural and cultural background of the ancient forests and promote tourism industry in this region both at domestic and international level.

Hyrcania is a historical region composed of the land south-east of the Caspian Sea in modern day Iran and Turkmenistan, bound in the south by the Alborz mountain range and the Kopet Dag in the east. The forest stretches 850 km along the southern coast of the Caspian Sea and covers around 7 % of the remaining Hyrcanian forests in Iran, dating back to 25 to 50 million years ago.

Vali Jahani, head of Gilan Province’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, told IRNA that cooperation between people and officials can help preserve the million-year-old forests, whose registration will provide Iranians and foreign tourists with benefits.

According to the provincial official, the headquarters of Hyrcanian Forests heritage plans to launch a photo exhibition concurrent with the National Natural Resources Day and the National Arbor Day.

A Gilani artist’s works on sustainable fashion will be unveiled in the exhibition, Jahani said, adding that handicrafts and products of Hyrcanian Forests region will be showcased on the sidelines of the exhibition.

Fariba Babai, the chairperson of Hyrcanian World Heritage headquarters, noted that natural heritage of Hyrcanian Forests encompasses 12 sites in five provinces in Iran.

She went on to say that 300 photos have been presented by photographers from Gilan Province to the photography seminar.

Kazakhstan Calls for Iranian Businesses’ Presence



BOJNOURD (IRNA) - Counsel-general of Kazakhstan in Iran’s Golestan Province said there are proper grounds in his country for Iranian businesses and Astana supports investors.

In a meeting with investors of northeastern North Khorasan Province in Iran on Sunday, Yerbol Akhmetov said that Kazakhstan welcomed naming Almaty and Bojnourd, North Khorasan capital, as sister cities which was floated when a group of the province’s investors visited Kazakhstan earlier this year.

He also said that his country welcomed naming of a street and a square in Almaty as Bojnourd and vice versa.

Kazakhstan is one of the most important former Soviet republics in agriculture and animal husbandry and there are good grounds for investing in building materials.

Head of North Khorasan Chamber of Commerce Saeed Pourabadi said that a delegation of Kazakh businesses would pay a visit to the province later this year.

He said that the province has reached an agreement with Almaty University to open a research office in the university to facilitate research activities for North Khorasani experts.

Pourabadi also said that another agreement was reached with the governor of Almaty to cede two hectares of land to North Khorasan Chamber of Commerce to hold an exhibition of its products.

Vice versa, North Khorasan agreed to cede the same area of land in the province to Kazakh business to showcase their products.

Among other agreed issues are opening of a tourism office in Almaty municipality and establishing a medical center by Khorasani investors, according to Pourabadi.

Tehran, New Delhi Discuss Expansion of Health Cooperation

TEHRAN (MNA) - Director-General of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education of Iran Mohammad Hossein Niknam met and held talks with the Indian envoy to Tehran Gaddam Dharmendra.

Thanking the Indian government for donating shipments of medicine, vaccines and corona diagnostic equipment to Iran, Niknam stressed the importance of joint cooperation between the two countries of Iran and India in the field of health.



Referring to the issues agreed at the meeting of the Joint Virtual Executive Working Group of the two sides on April 6, 2021, as well as the drafts of cooperation, the Iranian official expressed hope that the plans will be implemented as soon as possible.

During the meeting, both sides decided that the Ministry of Health of the two countries will make the necessary arrangements to hold a meeting of the Joint Executive Working Group and prepare an executive plan for cooperation for the years 2022 to 2024.

Oil Ministry Not Kept by Vienna Talks

TEHRAN (Shana) – Iranian Oil Minister Javad Owji said the Oil Ministry was not kept waiting for the result of the Vienna talks, adding an oil contract is being signed with local developers every two to three weeks.

Speaking on Sunday, Owji on the sidelines of the signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding for Pars Oil Products Pipeline (Mehran - Fasa - Shiraz), told reporters that in recent months foreign finances have been used in some development projects in the country, adding details of the contracts will be released soon if necessary.

He said that the 445-kilometer Pars Pipeline (Mehran-Fasa-Shiraz) will be built using the financial resources of Tejarat Bank, adding, today banks can enter into oil industry projects.

“According to plans, an oil industry contract will be signed every two to three weeks using domestic funds,” he went on to add.

He pointed out that in the last 6 months, the Oil Ministry has signed \$4.5-billion worth of contracts for the development of oil and gas fields using domestic and foreign resources. “We will sign a contract for developing an oil and gas field with its value chain with a consortium of domestic banks.”

In response to a question about whether Iran will become an importer of gasoline in the coming calendar year, the Oil Minister noted: “This will not happen with the measures taken and the support of the members of parliament.”

Tehran Welcomes More Cooperation With IAEA

TEHRAN (IRNA) - First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber voiced Tehran’s readiness to further expand cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for peaceful use of the nuclear knowledge.

He made the remarks in a meeting with the visiting IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi on Saturday.

The ranking Iranian official stressed the need for the IAEA to adopt an impartial approach towards Iran’s nuclear activities and said the international community expected the international nuclear watchdog to examine world countries’ nuclear programs with the eyes of a specialist expert.

Noting that the Iranian nation has, throughout its long history, always been famous for pursuing science and knowledge to help humanity, he also stressed that Iran is developing its nuclear industry for energy, industrial, health and medical purposes to meet the basic needs of its people.

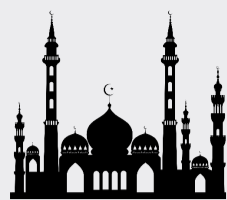
Highlighting the religious verdict (fatwa) issued by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei in prohibition of production and use of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear ones, Mokhber stressed that Iran has never been after development of nuclear arms.

He said the IAEA too has in the past years verified that there are no signs of any non-peaceful nuclear programs by Iran.

Grossi, for his part, expressed happiness over his current visit to Tehran which entails finalizing agreements as well as constructive negotiations.

Emphasizing the right of all world countries, including Iran, for peaceful use of nuclear science, he said Iran-IAEA commitment and cooperation will be to the benefit of the world nations as well as Iranians.

He went on to stress that Iran’s scientific record and religious background has proved the nation’s significant contribution in world peace and progress.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:15
■ Evening (Maghreb)	18:22
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:01
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:24

33. A Sign for them is the earth that is dead:

We do give it life, and produce grain therefrom, of which ye do eat.

34. And We produce therein orchard with date-palms and vines,
and We cause springs to gush forth therein:

Surah 36, Ya-sin (33 - 34)

Exports to Moldova Halted Due to War In Ukraine

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Chairman of National Union of Agricultural Products of Iran says some of Iran's agro products which were exported to Moldova via Ukraine border have come to a halt due to the current war between Russia and Ukraine.

Speaking to ILNA, Reza Noorani pointed to the prolongation of war between Russia and Ukraine, adding that safety of the Moscow-bound land and sea routes is guaranteed and exports to Russia continue but since Russia is one side of the war and during the war the safety of the routes decreases, the trend of exports progresses sluggishly.

He pointed to the devaluation of Russian currency rouble as the main factor in slowing down the pace of exports to Russia, adding that this point has increased heavy pressures to exporters because Russian traders never buy at cash and exporters get their money in 45 days and therefore exporters make no considerable profit.

Noorani pointed to the halt in exports of agro products to Russia, saying that some part of Iran's agro products is exported to Moldova via Ukraine borders and the breakout of the war in Ukraine has led to a halt in exports to Moldova.

Touching upon Iranian exported products to Russia, he said that greenhouse products like bell pepper, tomato and fruits like kiwi and apple are exported to Russia.

Meanwhile Head of Iran Greenhouse Manufacturers Association Mr. Abdolrahman Hosseinfard said that the Russia-Ukraine war is to the benefit of fruits and vegetables



exporters of Iran, adding that after the war broke out in Ukraine, countries in the world imposed heavy sanctions on Russia and the country is under economic pressure.

He added that Iran has not sanctioned Russia and it is among countries which have taken advantage of this opportunity and has increased its agro products to Russia and the war has increased Iran's exports to Russia.

He went on to say that currently Iran has no more products for exports, adding that after return of Iran's bell pepper from Russia, many producers closed their production unit or destroyed their products and therefore there is not so much products to be exported.

Hosseinfard went on to say that now Russians are demanding every type of Iranian fruits and vegetables, adding that products like tomato, cucumber, bell pepper, lettuce and cabbage and eggplant are exported to Russia.

He went on to say that devaluation of rouble has led to the rise in the price of exported agro products to Russia, adding that war has led to the rise in the price of vegetables in Russia.

He went on to say that vegetables and greenhouse products earn the country some \$800m annually and this figure can increase.

Russia is one of the major destinations for Iran's vegetables but recently Russians have returned exported Iranian bell pepper due to the health issues but it is now said that the problem has been resolved and Iranians can export bell pepper to Russia.

Rising Demand May Cause Iran to Resume Gasoline Imports

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Demand for gasoline in Iran is expected to reach record levels as a report warns that the country may be forced to resume imports more than a decade after it reached self-sufficiency in production of the fuel, shows a report.

The Saturday report by the Fars news agency cited figures by the Iranian Oil Ministry's fuel department showing the demand for gasoline is expected to reach 120 million liters per day during the high travel season in late March.

The report said that easing of coronavirus restrictions and a successful rollout of a vaccination program by the Iranian government had caused road travel in Iran to surge to levels not seen before the pandemic.

The report said that demand for gasoline is expected to exceed Iran's total production of the fuel in the upcoming months as it warned that the country may be forced to start taking delivery of gasoline shipments from abroad just years after it became a net exporter of the fuel.

Iran started gasoline exports in 2019 when domestic demand for the fuel dropped to as low as 75 million liters per day.

A series of price hike announced in late 2019 also helped control domestic fuel consumption in Iran, a country with nearly 25 million motorists.

Unconfirmed reports published in local media have suggested that Iran resumed importing diesel fuel in February after demand for the fuel exceeded the local production capacity.

Those reports quoted sources from the Iranian Oil Ministry as saying that diesel shipments had been imported from countries to the north of Iran.

Iran Predicts to Increase Economic Relations With China, Russia

TEHRAN (IP) - Chairman of the Iranian Parliament's Economic Commission says that China and Russia are two countries that have had significant cooperation with Iran in recent years in various fields.

Mohammad Reza Pour Ebrahimi said: "Economic cooperation with countries that have political relations with us is one of Iran's priorities."

He noted that China and Russia are considered military and economic powers, and they also have commonalities with Iran in many areas.

The head of Iranian Parliament's Economic Commission said: "The financial partnership of the two countries is growing under the presidency of Iran's Ebrahim Raisi, and the relations are developing."

"In the Parliament, we support the increase of economic relations with countries that are aligned with the Islamic Republic of Iran," noted the MP.

Iran Holds Second Int'l Caspian Horse Evaluation Course

KARAJ (IRNA) - The CEO of Caspian Conservation Society (CCS) said that it held the second international course of Caspian horse evaluation as a webinar on Saturday.

Over 30 breeders, experts, and enthusiasts of Caspian horse from Australia, Bermuda, Canada, France, Iran, Norway, Sweden, Spain, UK, and US took part in the webinar, Mohammad-Javad Dehqan told IRNA on Sunday.

Mrs. Ateshe Larsson-Firouz, International Caspian Horse Society Patron, and Mrs. Elizabeth Webster, an

international Caspian horse evaluator, gave lectures in the webinar, according to Dehqan.

As evaluation is the main part in the international registration of foundation stock Caspian horses, Dehqan advised breeders to get acquainted with the topic to be able to select the mare and the stallion correctly.

Alborz Province, located in the west of Tehran, is a hub of horse breeding in Iran. CCS is based in Kordan in Savojbolagh County, Alborz Province.

Iran, Pakistan Officials Discuss Ways to Develop Cultural Cooperation

ISLAMABAD (IRNA) - Cultural Adviser of Islamic Republic of Iran in Pakistan met with Director General Federal Department of Archaeology and Museums to discuss ways to develop joint cultural and artistic cooperation.

During the meeting between Cultural Consular Ehsan Khazaei and Syed Junaaid Akhlaq, the two sides discussed common ground and cooperation capacities to promote and preserve the joint cultural and artistic heritage of Iran and Pakistan.

"Iran is a Muslim country and a close neighbor of Pakistan and there are many historical and cultural similarities between the two countries," said Director General Federal Department of Archaeology and Museums.

He announced full readiness of the Lok Virsa Cultural Complex in Islamabad to cooperate with Iranian Cultural Consulate to hold cultural programs.

Iranian Cultural Consular Ehsan Khazaei in his views said that there are many areas of cooperation in the cultural sector between Iran and Pakistan and hoped that with Federal Department of Archaeology and Museums would cooperate in this regards.

Khazaei added the Cultural Consulate of the Iranian embassy in Islamabad has put various programs on the agenda to promote the culture, customs, traditions, and civilization of the two countries.

He added under an agreement between Lok Virsa Museum of Pakistan and the National Museum of Iran cultural and artistic exhibitions, calligraphy workshop, Nowruz program and traditional Iranian music would be held between the two sides.

At the end of the meeting, the two sides stressed that holding joint programs would give the message of peace and solidarity between the two nations and expressed hope that mutual cooperation would expand further.

Lok Virsa Complex, the largest national heritage site in Pakistan was established in 1974. The museum consists of several buildings as well as an outdoor museum which can accommodate up to 3000 visitors.

In this complex, in addition to the Iranology Department, which is managed under the supervision of cultural consultants, other countries also have permanent booths.

It is worth mentioning that the Iranology section of this museum has always been welcomed by visitors and was recently visited by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of Pakistan.

Majlis Agrees to Remove 4,200 Tomans Dollar

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Despite earlier warnings about the possibility of hyperinflation and economic crisis, Majlis approved on Sunday to remove the 4,200 toman currency from next year's budget.

By eliminating the preferred currency, the government will save \$9 billion it must allocate for imports of basic goods, according to domestic media reports.

Following the decision, MPs have mandated the government to compensate for the loss of consumer welfare by electronic methods such as issuing goods (vouchers) to compensate for the elimination of the allocation of 4,200 tomans for imports of basic goods, medicines and medical equipment.

The election of an order of 4,200 tomans for a U.S. dollar in the spring of 2018 was one of the most controversial decisions of the twelfth government, headed by Hassan Rouhani.

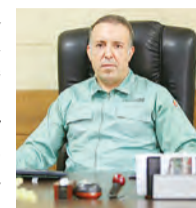
Majlis session on the 4,200 tomans dollar was in the presence of the government officials.

President Ebrahim Raisi government officials and some lawmakers, however, say the policy has caused corruption and failed, and the price of some basic goods imported in the currency of 4,200 tomans has risen sharply.

Positive Change in Steel Industry With Holding Conference on Casting

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Technology and Development Deputy of Hormozgan Steel Company (HOSCO) says the conference on continuous casting creates an appropriate bed for exchange of information and views of participants that it can turn into a positive point in the steel industry.



Alireza Kazemi in an interview highlighted the goals behind holding this conference, saying that exchange of information and views among the participants in different issues related to the specialized field is of the main goals of the conference.

He went on to say that with call for participation in the conference, enthusiasts in this field try to prepare papers or give lectures in the conference by presenting their record of activities and knowledge in the related field in the national or international levels. Then it will be an effective move on course to progress of the national steel industry, he added.

Kazemi noted that presentation of papers sometimes leads to challenges among the presenter of the papers and participants and even among those who have read these papers through the media.

He reiterated HOSCO holds the conference for displaying new achievements, identifying solutions for joint issues in the steel industry, exchange of views among the experts of the industry as well as impressing the steel industry.

Kazemi went on to say that the first edition of the conference was held in 2020 which had acceptable results although it was a new and unknown conference and was held in national and international level and presented lectures and papers in the conferences were welcomed. He noted some solutions presented in the conference were applied in HOSCO and other steel companies successfully.

He went on to say that one of the reasons for huge number of participants in the second edition is the attraction and applicability of the presented papers.

Kazemi noted that in the second edition, the company wants to create an environment for dissemination of new achievements and identification of solutions for joint issues in the steel industry.

The conference will be held in Bandar Abbas on March 8-9.

CEO's Note on Anniversary of Saba Steel Inauguration



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – On the eve of the anniversary of official inauguration of the plant of Persian Gulf Saba Steel Company, the CEO of the company Mr. Ehsan Dashtianeh in a message felicitated the occasion and hailed the efforts of the personnel and management of the company.

In his message, Mr. Dashtianeh said that the anniversary of the official inauguration of the plant is just a pretext to honor the efforts of the managers, staff and sincere workers of the company during their four years of continuous activities in making a learner and with knowledge organization and experienced one in the national steel industry, adding that he is proud of cooperating with hard working and sincere colleagues for materializing sublime goals of the company. He noted that today everybody is witnessing the result of those efforts under the full support of the board of directors of the company to improve the performance of brilliant Persian Gulf Saba Steel Company.

He then felicitated the day to each one of the members of this big family and wished a prosperous future for the company to stabilize its position among the national steel companies.

Shanon
(adviser)

Farmanieh Apt (\$2200)
200sq.m, 3bdrs
S/p, Sauna
J, balcony
pkg, & yard
Fully Furn

Pasdaran Villa (\$2500)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
S, J, balcony
marble floor
Fully Furn

Parsian

Elahieh (\$2500) 200sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, pkg, & F.F
Velenjak (\$2700) 300sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, pkg, & F.F

Darrous Apt (\$1800)
180sq.m, 3bdrs, balcony, F.F

Zaferanieh bldg (\$10000)
5storey, 20bdrs, S/p, & pkg lots

Sa`adat abad (\$1300)
140sq.m, 2bdrs, & F.F

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Volkswagen Plans 2b Euro Electric Car Plant

FRANKFURT (Dispatches) - German auto giant Volkswagen said on Friday it had approved a 2 billion euro investment in a new electric car plant, as it seeks to overhaul its business in the face of stiff competition from U.S. rival Tesla.

Construction on the new German factory next to the group's historic home in Wolfsburg will begin "as early as spring 2023" for a production start in 2026, VW said in a statement.

The new site will be dedicated to the production of mass-market "Trinity" vehicles, the center point of Volkswagen's new all-electric fleet.



China Sets Lowest GDP Target in Decades

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China set its lowest GDP target in decades, as Premier Li Keqiang warned of a "grave and uncertain" outlook against the backdrop of the coronavirus, a property slump and uncertainty over the war in Ukraine.

Li announced the unusually modest target of around 5.5 percent -- the lowest since 1991 -- in his speech opening the annual session of China's rubber-stamp parliament.

Addressing about 3,000 members of the National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing's cavernous Great Hall of the People, Li said the world's second-largest economy "will encounter many more risks and challenges, and we must keep pushing to overcome them".

The target was based on a need to maintain stable employment, basic living needs and "guard against risks", according to his speech, which is China's version of an annual state of the nation address.

The growth target is closely watched in China, whose ruling Communist Party has based its legitimacy on delivering steady economic expansion and improved standards of living.

The party is deeply concerned over any social instability in its huge population should economic growth dip too low.

The annual parliament session is a week of highly choreographed meetings that lays out the party's political priorities, economic expectations, and foreign policy goals, and this edition comes in a year in which President Xi Jinping intends to further cement his grip on power.

Prior sessions have unveiled high-profile legislation such as the tough national security law imposed on Hong Kong and reversals to the country's one-child policy, but no flagship laws are expected this year.

Chinese economic growth has slowed markedly in recent years from its past boom decades, when annual expansion sometimes exceeded 10 percent.

It has recently been hit by a cascading property market slump, regulatory crackdowns on the property, tech and financial sectors, and virus outbreaks resulting in smothering containment measures.

China's economy, a key driver of global growth, last year handily exceeded the official target of at least six percent growth, eventually expanding by 8.1 percent.

But it slowed markedly in the second half.

China's "zero-Covid" policy has largely contained the virus and allowed economic activity to continue, but a series of outbreaks and sweeping containment measures in recent months have hit consumer demand.

Beijing's drive to curb excessive debt and rampant consumer speculation has also weighed.

The government also announced on Saturday that China's military budget -- the second largest in the world after the United States -- will increase by 7.1 percent this year to 1.45 trillion yuan (\$230 billion), a rate in line with recent years.

China has poured billions of dollars into transforming its huge military into a world-class force rivaling that of the US and other Western powers.

Russia Faces Lasting Consequences From Ukraine War

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Russia's war in Ukraine has "horrified" the World Bank's shareholders and will have lasting consequences for Russian President Vladimir Putin and Russia's standing on the global stage, the global lender's president said.

World Bank President David Malpass told Fox Business Network that China's reaction to the war and the Western sanctions imposed on Moscow would be influential in determining how Russia's future trade relationships develop.

"There's a global outpouring in favor of Ukraine, and that will have lasting consequences, whatever the outcome of the war," Malpass said, citing what he called "a very clear focus on Putin being the source of the problem."

He listed previous Russian invasions, including of Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Georgia in 2008 and the annexation of the Crimea region of Ukraine in 2014, but said the current war was far broader.

"This is an order of magnitude worse in terms of the decimation and the deaths that are occurring, so I think there will be lasting consequences," he said. Malpass said he would speak with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy later on Friday and planned to submit to the World Bank's board on Friday a loan package for Ukraine that has been expanded with country contributions and has been coordinated with "people that are in bunkers in Ukraine."

Reuters reported on Thursday that the package had grown to 460 million euros (\$503 million). Malpass said the goal was to get the money to Ukraine as early as next week.

Malpass, a former U.S. Treasury official, said the financing for Ukraine would be "for payment of the ongoing - call it war effort - the ongoing development effort and the medicine efforts that they need to do as a government."



Russia's global financial isolation intensified on Friday as the London Stock Exchange suspended trading in its last Russian securities and as Europe, the United States and other countries continued to roll out financial sanctions on Russia.

Malpass said the raft of sanctions were having a significant impact on Russia's interactions with financial markets, while raising questions about its dependence on China and delivering a huge supply shock to world energy and food markets.

China, a major shareholder in the World Bank, had to be "horrified at where this is developing," Malpass said, adding, "That'll be an important issue in how world trade develops. They buy oil from Russia when the sanctions are in place, but can the companies really remain part of the world system when they're so engaged with Russia? We'll have to see how that evolves."

Neutral Switzerland's Economy Shaken by Sanctions on Russia

ZURICH (Dispatches) - Switzerland's newly adopted tough stance on Russia has forced the Swiss economy to readjust to sanctions, blowing a wind of panic through the raw materials market in particular.

Switzerland announced Monday it would follow the sanctions being imposed by the European Union, abandoning Bern's traditional reserve by ordering the immediate freezing of assets belonging to Russian companies and individuals appearing on the EU blacklist.

And it went further on Friday, adopting even stricter EU sanctions applied in response to Moscow's February 24 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Exporting goods that could enhance Russia's military capabilities is prohibited, as is the exportation of certain goods and services in the oil sector, and aviation technology.

"The implementation of these sanctions is compatible with Switzerland's neutrality," the government insisted in a statement.

The wealthy Alpine nation's businesses are complying with the sanctions but have also stressed that Russian money accounts for only a fraction of their turnover, in an attempt to reassure investors.

The airline Swiss, a subsidiary of Germany's Lufthansa, has suspended its flights to Moscow and Saint Petersburg.

Global container shipping company MSC and freight logistics firm Kuehne + Nagel have stopped taking Russian orders for cargo, except for food, medical and humanitarian goods.

Business lobby Economiesuisse said the sanctions would have "limited" direct consequences on foreign trade.

Russia is only Switzerland's 23rd-biggest trading partner. The Swiss mainly export medicines, medical products, watches and machinery to Russia, while the chief imports are gold, precious metals and aluminum.

In 2021, exports to Russia amounted to 3.2 billion Swiss francs (\$3.5 billion, 3.2 billion euros), with imports as low as 270 million francs, according to the customs authorities.

However, the landlocked state is an important player in raw materials trading, through companies such as Glencore, Trafigura, Vitol and Gunvor.

Gennady Gatilov, Russia's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, said Friday he was surprised by the sanctions, because Switzerland had always "tried to maintain a certain neutrality".

"We are disappointed with this, because we have very good relations with Switzerland... and the joining of Switzerland to these unlawful sanctions... will have (a) certain negative impact," he told reporters.

Brazil Exits Recession, But Faces Tough Year



RIO DE JANEIRO (Dispatches) - Brazil exited recession in the fourth quarter, the government said, though weak growth and high inflation still dog Latin America's biggest economy as President Jair Bolsonaro gears up to seek re-election in October.

Gross domestic product (GDP) grew 0.5 percent for the period from October through December, reversing its 0.3-percent and 0.1-percent contractions in the previous two quarters, said the national statistics institute, IBGE.

That brought GDP growth for 2021 to 4.6 percent on the year, erasing the economy's painful contraction in pandemic-battered 2020, which was revised to 3.9 percent.

But the economy remains a headache for far-right leader Bolsonaro, with growth still weak and inflation hitting Brazilian households hard.

Uncertainty fueled by Bolsonaro's expected election showdown with leftist ex-president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and international turmoil around Russia's invasion of Ukraine will likely weigh heavily on the Brazilian economy this year, analysts say.

"2022 is a difficult year due to both internal and external factors," said economist Gilberto Braga of business school IBMEC in Rio de Janeiro.

"Uncertainties around the country's political future are making things unpredictable and will delay strategic decisions on the economy... And external issues will weigh down global GDP, and Brazil's along with it," he told AFP.

"The current scenario is 'stagflation'."

The rebound was driven by Brazil's key agricultural sector, which grew 5.8 percent quarter-on-quarter -- though it contracted 0.2 percent on the year, hit by the country's worst drought in nearly a century.

The services sector grew 0.5 percent quarter-on-quarter and 4.7 percent year-on-year, while industry contracted 1.2 percent for the quarter but grew 4.5 percent for the year.

Moody's Downgrades Ukraine Debt Rating

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Moody's Investors Service yesterday joined other ratings agencies, downgrading Ukraine's debt to Caa2 from B3 due to the worsening crisis following Russia's invasion.

The move follows similar moves by Fitch and S&P Global Ratings last week, when Moody's warned that a downgrade was possible.

The agencies also have cut Russia's debt rating, and both countries could face further downgrades, Moody's said.

"The two-notch downgrade of Ukraine's ratings and the decision to maintain the ratings on review for further downgrade were triggered by the intensification of Russia's military invasion of Ukraine," Moody's said in a statement.

"The intensification of the military invasion of Ukraine could have implications for sovereign debt repayments." And despite pledges of substantial international financial support it will not be sufficient to allow the country to make payments given the large costs inflicted by the war, the agency said.

In addition, Moody's cited "the heavy human toll and the damage to Ukraine's productive capacity."

The government faces external repayments of around US\$6 billion in 2022 and between US\$2-6 billion each year over the next decade, and held foreign currency reserves of US\$27.5 billion at the end of January 2022, the statement said.

IMF Chief Kristalina Georgieva and World Bank President David Malpass each spoke yesterday with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to renew their pledges of support for the war-torn country.

Pakistan Signs Trade Deal With Russia

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Pakistan has become the first country to officially sign a huge trade deal with Russia at a time when Moscow has come under severe criticism for invading Ukraine. As part of the agreement, Pakistan will import two million tons of wheat and natural gas from Russia.

Not only have the U.S. and European Union thrashed out stringent sanctions against Russia, the World Bank and the IMF, too, have issued a joint statement condemning

Moscow while promising to provide assistance to Ukraine and other countries that have opened their doors to Ukrainian refugees.

Notably, Pakistan is now seeking a bailout package from the IMF, which approved disbursement of \$1 billion under its \$6 billion loan program. However, the Imran Khan government is desperately seeking a larger portion of loan from the IMF to support its sagging economy.

Pakistan's dependence on IMF assistance has risen in the last few years with the growing external debt. This year, Islamabad's gross external financing requirement is estimated at around \$30 billion.

In a joint statement, the IMF and World Bank called for coordinated international action to mitigate risks and navigate the treacherous period ahead as the Russia-Ukraine crisis intensified.

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to Russia on the eve of the Ukraine attack has already come under scrutiny. Khan met Russian President Vladimir Putin on February 24 to discuss ways to expand bilateral relations.

"This visit could not possibly have created a good image of Pakistan in the international community. Pakistan is, after all, heavily dependent on the financial aid of Western countries and their monetary institutions like the IMF and the World Bank," the News International said in a report.

While Russia has 2.59 per cent of the total votes at the IMF, the US has 16.40 per cent. The UK has 4.03 per cent and Germany 5.31 per cent. China has 6.08 per cent.

Notably, China, an ally of Russia has also opted to remain cautious while maintaining neutrality.

Khan has justified his meeting with Putin, saying that the agreements will support import of natural gas, which is the need of the hour amid Pakistan's depleting reserves.

Immediately after the Khan-Putin meeting, a Rs 9.69 billion fine was slapped on National Bank of Pakistan's New York branch by the US regulatory authorities for charges relating to non-compliance and anti-money laundering.

Norway's Johaug To Retire

SLO (Dispatches) - Norwegian cross-country skier Therese Johaug has announced she is to retire at the end of the season after winning three Olympic gold medals at last month's Beijing Winter Games. The 33-year-old, who also won a relay gold at the 2010 Olympics, said on Instagram she wants to focus on other things outside of sport. "There are still several races to be contested this season but the moment has come to focus on life outside top level sport," she wrote.

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Svitolina out of WTA Monterrey

LONDON (Dispatches) - Ukrainian top seed Elina Svitolina crashed out of the WTA Monterrey tournament, losing in three sets to Colombia's Camila Osorio. Svitolina -- who had vowed to donate all of her prize money from the tournament to the Ukrainian military after Russia's invasion of her homeland -- looked to be cruising into the semi-finals after taking the first set 6-1. But fifth seed Osorio roared back to level before recovering from a double break down to win the third set on a tie-break to seal a 1-6, 7-5, 7-6 (7/5) victory.

Chelsea Thrash Burnley Leeds Lose Under New Boss

BURNLEY (Dispatches) - Chelsea put aside their ownership worries to solidify their grip on third place in the Premier League with a 4-0 win at Burnley, while Leeds United slipped further into trouble with a 1-0 loss at Leicester City under their new manager. With leaders Manchester City hosting Manchester United on Sunday, the focus was on Chelsea whose Russian owner Roman Abramovich put the club up for sale this week amid calls for sanctions against him following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Eighteenth-placed Burnley wasted a series of first half chances but their normally resilient defence fell to pieces after Reece James opened the scoring in the 47th minute.

German forward Kai Havertz drifted off Burnley defender Connor Roberts to head home a Christian Pulisic cross to make it 2-0 for the visitors six minutes later. Havertz then had another simple finish, converting a James cross from close range in the 55th before American Pulisic had the easiest of tasks, scoring after Burnley defender James Tarkowski diverted a Saul Niguez cross into his path after 69. Chelsea manager Thomas Tuchel said the performance was proof his team were to keep the ownership issues out of their mind. "It shows the guys have what it takes to play for Chelsea, it shows obviously (they have) the environment to focus on football because we believe we are allowed to focus on football as good as possible. That is why I'm very happy," he said.

Beijing Winter Paralympics Open After Athlete Ban Controversy

BEIJING (Dispatches) - Athletes paraded through Beijing's national stadium as the Winter Paralympics opened Friday after a storm of controversy that surrounded the banning of Russian and Belarusian athletes due to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. High tension in the athletes' village, threats of competition boycotts and organizers' eleventh-hour reversal of a previous decision to let Russian athletes and those from ally Belarus compete as neutrals, marred the lead-up to the Games. But on Friday, Chinese President Xi Jinping officially declared the Games open and a fireworks display erupted over the capital's "Birds Nest" stadium. The sparkling sound and light show spectacular capped off a week of high drama and wrangling among officials on the sidelines. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) had urged sporting federations across the world to exclude athletes from Russia and Belarus. On Wednesday, Paralympic organizers said the "harshest punishment" they could dish out was to force athletes from those countries to compete as neutrals. But that decision was reversed less than 24 hours later after multiple teams and athletes threatened not to compete if Russia and Belarus were represented. This was "jeopardizing the viability" of the Games, organizers said as they announced the ban, citing safety concerns and a volatile mood in the athletes' village. International Paralympic Committee president Andrew Parsons used his speech at the ceremony to promote peace and sporting excellence. "The 21st century is a time for dialogue and diplomacy, not war and hate," he said, adding the Olympic truce for peace must be respected and not violated. "Here in Beijing, Paralympic athletes from 46 different nations will compete with each other, not against each other," he said. "Through sport, they will showcase the best of humanity and highlight the values that should underpin a peaceful and inclusive world."

Chelsea are third on 53 points, 13 behind leaders Manchester City, while Burnley remain third-bottom on 21, a point off Everton in the safety zone but having played two more games. Leeds sacked their popular Argentine manager Marcelo Bielsa in midweek and brought in American Jesse Marsch in a bid to halt their alarming slump towards the relegation zone. But the former RB Leipzig coach's Premier League debut ended in defeat as Harvey Barnes scored the only goal for Leicester. A fifth straight loss leaves Leeds in 16th place, two points above the drop zone but having played more games than all of the teams below them except bottom side Norwich City. Newcastle United's revival under Eddie Howe continued with a 2-1 win at home to Brighton & Hove Albion extending their unbeaten run to eight games. The Magpies took an early lead through Ryan Fraser and then a Fabian Schar header doubled the advantage. Lewis Dunk pulled a goal back 10 minutes into the second half but Newcastle hung on to move seven points clear of the relegation places. Brentford dealt a hammer blow to Norwich's hopes of escaping the bottom three as Ivan Toney scored a hat-trick in a 3-1 victory at Carrow Road. It was a much-needed win for Brentford, who had lost seven of their last eight games but who are now six points better off than Burnley. Aston Villa's Brazilian midfielder Philippe Coutinho scored one goal and made another as they thrashed visiting Southampton 4-0, while Crystal Palace's Wilfried Zaha created the opener and netted a penalty in a 2-0 win at Wolverhampton Wanderers.



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LENZERHEIDE (Dispatches) - Italy's Federica Brignone was crowned super-G World Cup champion as French skier Romane Miradoli pulled off an upset with her first ever victory at this level. Brignone, 31, finished only ninth but was assured of being able to place the small crystal globe on her mantelpiece when the only rival capable of catching her in the standings, compatriot Elena Curtoni, skied out. Miradoli could look down from the top step of the podium on two stars. American Mikaela Shiffrin was second 0.38sec slower while Olympic champion Lara Gut-Behrami was third 0.88 off the pace. Another superstar was present to watch them in former tennis world number one Roger Federer -- who took selfies with the alpine stars. For 27-year-old Miradoli this victory -- the first for a French woman in a super-G World Cup race since Carole Montillet in Haus im Ennstal in Austria in February 2004 -- brought her unbridled joy in a life that has been harsh to her in the past few years. Her boyfriend was killed in a wingsuit accident in 2016 and in December 2020 she ruptured a cruciate ligament in her left knee at Courchevel and only returned to competition three months ago. "It is crazy, I cannot believe it," said Miradoli. "The race was tough but at last I was able to put together a complete run from top to bottom."

Murray Reunites With Former Coach Ivan Lendl



The Scot won his first Slam under Lendl at the US Open in 2012 before ending Britain's 77-year wait for a home Wimbledon men's singles champion the following year.

LONDON (Dispatches) - Andy Murray has appointed Ivan Lendl as his coach for a third time, reuniting with the man who guided him to all three of his Grand Slam titles. The former world number one, who has been searching for a coach since splitting from Jamie Delgado in December, first began working with the eight-time Grand Slam champion in 2012. They split in 2014 but reunited two years later, shortly before Murray clinched his second Wimbledon title. He ended the season as world number one after a string of titles -- he also won his second successive Olympic singles crown -- but hip problems began the following year and in November 2017 Lendl again left the team. It is not yet known how much Lendl will travel with Murray but the 34-year-old will stay in the United States after this month's tournaments in Indian Wells and Miami for an extended training block. Murray, currently ranked 84th, has been able to train and play consistently but his recent results have been disappointing aside from a run to the final of the ATP Tour event in Sydney in January.

Conte Says No Quick Fix for Flaky Tottenham

LONDON (Dispatches) - Antonio Conte said that no manager in the world would be able to deliver a quick fix at Tottenham, highlighting the club's inconsistencies over the past two decades. The Italian, who was appointed in November, has undertaken a rebuild project, with the squad needing major surgery if they are going to get back to the top of English football. One of their biggest problems has been stark inconsistencies in both results and performances -- they won at Manchester City in the Premier League but then lost at Burnley before a defeat against Middlesbrough in the FA Cup. Conte said that had been the story of Tottenham for the past two decades, which has coincided with Daniel Levy's reign as chairman. Tottenham, beaten Champions League finalists in 2019, have not won a major trophy since 2008. "Tottenham's story is this, many ups and downs, but to be competitive, to try to win something, to try to fight for something important and become a strong team, the first thing that has to happen is to be stable and avoid these ups and downs," he said. "To do this and to change this type of situation that is happening for many, many years in Tottenham, it's not simple. "In a short time it's impossible to do this, not only for me but I think for any manager or coach to come in and change the story in one second. This story of this club for the last 20 years." Spurs are back in action when they host Everton on Monday and they have some good injury news, with Rodrigo Bentancur and Lucas Moura back from injuries.



Australia Cricket Great Warne Dies Aged 52

SYDNEY (Dispatches) - Australia cricket great Shane Warne, widely regarded as one of the greatest Test players of all time, has died of a suspected heart attack aged 52, according to a statement from his management company. Warne's management said the retired leg-spinner died in Koh Samui, Thailand. "It is with great sadness we advise that Shane Keith Warne passed away of a suspected heart attack in Koh Samui, Thailand today, Friday 4 March," the statement read. "Shane was found unresponsive in his Villa and despite the best efforts of medical staff, he could not be revived," it added. "The family requests privacy at this time and will provide further details in due course." The announcement came just hours after the death was announced of fellow Australian great Rod Marsh, one of cricket's outstanding wicketkeepers. Warne was credited with reviving the art of leg-spin and during a brilliant 15-year career he took 708 Test wickets -- a tally surpassed only by Sri Lanka off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan, who took 800. Named as one of the five Wisden Cricketers of the Century, alongside Donald Bradman, Garfield Sobers, Jack Hobbs and Viv Richards, Warne's impact was enormous. Warne, who became as well-known for a colorful life away from cricket as he was for his exploits on the field, also helped Australia win the 1999 limited overs World Cup and took 293 wickets in 194 one-day internationals. But on the eve of the 2003 World Cup in South Africa he failed a drugs test after taking diuretics in a bid to lose weight and was sent home before Australian cricket authorities banned him for a year.

