

Health Ministry Announced on Monday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 138,116 With 168 More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian on Monday Said That Iran Will Not Allow Any External Factor to Affect Its National Interests in the Vienna Talks

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Prospects for Deal in Vienna Talks Remain Unclear

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council says the prospect for reaching a good deal in the ongoing Vienna talks between representatives from the Islamic Republic and the remaining parties to the 2015 deal remains unclear as Washington has yet to make a political decision.

"Prospect of a deal in Vienna talks remains unclear due to Washington's delay in making political decision. Priority of Iranian negotiators is to resolve remaining issues that are considered in the red line. Rapid access to a strong deal requires new initiatives from all parties," Ali Shamkhani wrote in a post published on his Twitter page on Monday.

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Iran Decision Over Talks Based On U.S. Actions, Not Messages



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN – Foreign Ministry Spokesman says Iran says the U.S.'s behavior would determine whether Tehran would hold "direct talks" with Washington over the revival of the 2015 agreement.

"We make decisions based on the behavior of the US and not on non-transparent messages," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh told reporters on Monday when asked about Tehran's stance on having direct talks with the U.S.

Khatibzadeh stressed that the request for direct negotiations "would make sense only when we know the reason for that meeting".

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Putin Tells Ukraine To Stop Fighting
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Australia, Spain, France And U.S. Into Ffinals
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Iran, Iraq Sign Joint Oil Field Development Contract

TEHRAN (IP) – The CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company announced that Iran and Iraq have signed a contract for developing the 'Sohrab' joint oil field.

Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr said the contract for developing the 'Sohrab' joint oil field with Iraq in Khuzestan Province was signed to produce 30,000 barrels per day and also to invest about \$ 840 million.

'Sohrab' joint oil field is located northwest of Ahvaz city and along the Iran-Iraq border and is shared with Hoveyze oil field in Iraq.

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Export Tender DRI (NGHSCO)

NEYRIZ GHADIR STEEL COMPLEX (NGHSCO) INTENDS TO SELL 25,000 MT DIRECT REDUCED IRON (DRI) WITH THE BELOW TERMS AND SPECIFICATIONS TO THE BEST AND HIGHEST PRICE OFFER. THE DELIVERY DATE OF THE PRODUCT IS 20 DAYS AFTER SIGNING THE CONTRACT AND MAKING THE PREPAYMENT. THEREFORE, IF YOU WISH, RECEIVE THE AUCTION DOCUMENTS FROM THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT OF NEYRIZ GHADIR STEEL COMPLEX. AFTER COMPLETING THE DOCUMENTS, SUBMIT THEM TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE TRANSACTION COMMISSION OF THIS COMPLEX. THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING BIDS IS 7 WORKING DAYS FROM THE DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT. ADDRESS: NO. 17, WEST 14TH ALLEY, BOKHAREST ST., TEHTAN, IRAN.

A- TECHNICAL DETAILS:

Chemical Composition		
Total Fe %	87% (+/-1%)	Average
Metallic Fe %	80% (+/-1%)	Average
Total Gaung %	8.5	Maximum
Carbon (C) %	1.8% (+/-0.2%)	Average
Phosphorous (P) %	0.08	Maximum
Sulphur (S) %	0.01	Maximum
(SiO2 + Al2O3 + CaO + MgO) %	8	Maximum
Size Distribution		
From 6.3 to 16.0 mm	88	Minimum

B- BULK CARGO, FOB IN SHAHID RAJAEI PORT OR BAHONAR PORT OF BANDAR ABBAS

C- TERMS OF PAYMENT:
20% OF THE TOTAL VALUE TO BE PAID AS AN ADVANCE PAYMENT BY T/T PAYMENT WITHIN 5-7 WORKING DAYS FROM THE SIGNING DATE OF THE CONTRACT TO THE NOMINATED ACCOUNT BY THE SELLER.
80% BALANCE OF TOTAL VALUE IS TO BE PAID BY T/T PAYMENT (TO THE NOMINATED ACCOUNT BY THE SELLER) WHILE CARGO READINESS AT WAREHOUSE AVAILABLE AND BEFORE LOADING.

D- PAYMENT METHOD: PLEASE CHOOSE THE BELOW ITEM/ITEMS:
AED in UAE
USD
EURO

IMPORTANT NOTE: IF THE BUYER REFUSES TO CARRY THE CARGO IN THE AGREED PERIOD BECAUSE OF A FALLING MARKET PRICE OR FAIL TO MAKE PREPARATIONS TO CARRY THE CARGO WITHIN ONE MONTH AFTER ISSUANCE OF THE CONTRACT SO THE SELLER HAS THE RIGHT TO CONFISCATE HIS PAYMENT AND THE BUYER MUST COMPENSATE THE SELLER FOR ALL LOSS AND DAMAGE FROM SUCH A REFUSAL TO THE SELLER'S INTEREST.

E- ALL BANK TRANSACTIONS SHOULD BE DONE THROUGH NGHSCO INTRODUCED BANK OR BROKERAGE MENTIONED IN THE CONTRACT.

F- PRICE SHOULD BE BASED ON USD BUT CHANGEABLE TO EURO OR AED (SELLER'S OPTION). EXCHANGE RATE OF USD TO EURO AND AED SHOULD BE SPECIFIED AND CONFIRMED BY BOTH SIDES BEFORE ANY TRANSACTION. THE EXCHANGE CURRENCY WILL BE CALCULATED FROM WWW.XE.COM.

G- NGHSCO IS AUTHORIZED TO ACCEPT OR DECLINE SUGGESTIONS.

H- BIDS MUST BE SENT IN THREE SEPARATE ENVELOPES IN FOLLOWING ORDER:
-26 BILLION RIALS DEPOSIT RECEIPT OR GUARANTEE IN THE SAME AMOUNT TO GUARANTEE PARTICIPATION IN THE AUCTION IN THE ENVELOPE (A)
- IMAGE OF LICENSE, ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION, REGISTRATION ID, POSTAL CODE, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER IN ENVELOPE (B)
- PRICE OFFER SHEET WITH STAMP AND SIGNATURE ON ALL PAGES IN ENVELOPE (C)

FOR ANY MORE NEEDED INFORMATION AND NEGOTIATIONS JUST USE: SALE.NGHSCO@GMAIL.COM
YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENT:
+98 21 86047527 OR +98 21 88754305

Nader Keshtakar, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kish Builders Association:

The Doors of the Free Zone Open To Investors

people are trying to bring down the free zones, and we, as an assembly, consider it our duty to build trust and two-way communication with the authorities to pave the way for the growth and development of economic activities in the free zones.

He said: "I, in turn, thank those who were with us in this important decision to remove the value added law, and in particular Dr. Khandouzi, Minister of Economy, Dr. Pour-Ebrahimi, Chairman of the Economic Commission, Dr. Pashaei, Chairman Thank you, Engineer Jabbari, Member of Parliament, Mr. Jabbari, Member of Parliament, and Dr. Saeed Mohammad, Advisor to the President and Secretary of the Supreme Council of Free Zones, for their efforts to resolve this issue.He emphasized: "We have a main goal in the Kish Builders Association and that is to preserve and support Kish assets." It was with this intention that, based on a heavy expert work in the Assembly, conditions were included in the law so that Kish, as the oldest free zone in the country, would be excluded from VAT. Of course, Mr. Saeed Mohammad's view in this area was very accurate and expert, and they were very helpful in this regard, and I am sure he will continue to make useful efforts to solve the problems of Kish and other free and special areas of the country.Keshtkar also said that another important issue that the Assembly is looking for is the implementation of the progressive law on how to manage free zones. This law has not been implemented by more than 30% and many gaps in this law have been predicted and can be solved. For example, we do not yet have an offshore bank in Kish, and this is not a problem of economic activists, it is a problem of policymakers who have not yet resolved the legal obstacles to this issue.Keshtkar said: "I am very pleased to announce that next year, with the implementation of our country's new agreements with the world, the doors of free zones will open again to new investments and investors, and we will see prosperity and economic growth in these areas." will be.Also, Tahmourth Ghasemi, Secretary General of Kish Builders Association, emphasized in this meeting that this resolution was the result of cooperation and unanimity of the private sector and interaction of economic activists with legislative and executive institutions. The economic activists of Kish Island tried to reflect their demands and problems to the government and the parliament, and the elimination of VAT in the free zones is the result of the consensus of the private sector, the empathy of the parliament and the support of the government.

Iran Air Resumes Flight to Baku

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's national flag carrier, Iran Air, has resumed once-weekly roundtrip Tehran-Baku flights after a suspension that was prolonged for 2 years due to the outbreak of the coronavirus.

Iran's national flag carrier, Iran Air, has resumed once-weekly roundtrip Tehran-Baku flights after a suspension that was prolonged for 2 years due to the outbreak of the coronavirus.

According to an announcement by the airline, the flight departs from Imam Khomeini International Airport at 2:00 p.m. on Monday. The return flight leaves Heydar Aliyev International Airport the same day at 4:55 p.m. local time.

Khwarizmi Int'l Award, Symbol of Scientific Dynamism

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Ebrahim Raisi has described Khwarizmi International Award (KIA) as a symbol of scientific dynamism in Iran.

KIA is a place for presenting great plans and projects, President Raisi said during his speech to the 35th edition of Khwarizmi International Award (KIA) held in Tehran on Monday morning.

Today, science without ethic is one of the problems for humanity, the president said while stressing the importance of paying attention to those two together.

At his remarks, the president said research and scientific efforts are among characteristics of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Raisi continued his speech by saying, "The effectiveness and efficiency of research and innovative efforts in the country depend on their commercialization, and it is only in this case that research and innovation can have added value and be useful for the development and progress of the country".

The President described knowledge-based companies as the main reference for commercialization of technology and innovation in the country and said, "Knowledge-based companies are among the assets of the country. If the ministries, organizations and industrial complexes align themselves with scientific and knowledge-based centers, and on the other hand, the knowledge-based companies direct their efforts and activities in order to meet the needs of these complexes, a brilliant result will be achieved for the country".

In this regard, Raisi emphasized on determining the missions of universities and scientific centers in accordance with the needs of the country and said, "It is necessary to pay attention to local, regional and international needs in the type of missions of the country's scientific centers". The President added, "Easy access and encouragement of young people to science and knowledge is an important issue that can pave the way for



scientific growth and prosperity in the country".

In the end, emphasized, "University should be the center of ethics in the society and the place of acquiring science and knowledge along with ethics. Science and epistemology knows no geographical boundaries and science and knowledge can be acquired from anywhere".

Meanwhile, the scientific efforts have to be practical and be used for resolving the problems, he added.

Research and innovation can help country make progress, the president stressed.

At the end, President Raisi said the knowledge-based companies are among the country's assets.

The Chinese, Italian and French professors were among those who were awarded at the 35th KIA. Nine domestic and three foreign projects were awarded at the international scientific event earlier in the day.

Iran, Qatar to Expand Scientific Cooperation

TEHRAN (MNA) – Referring to the signed memorandum of understanding between Iran and Qatar during the recent visit of the Iranian President to Doha, an Iranian official said that Iran-Qatar scientific relations are expanding.

Hossein Salar Amoli, Deputy Minister of Science for International Affairs and Head of the Center for International Scientific Cooperation of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, said that the MoU is based on the respect for equality and common interests, as well as the laws of the two countries

Preserving intellectual property laws and international law are also emphasized in the document, according to him.

Salar Amoli also stated that according to the document, the two countries of Iran and Qatar will support the establishment of rules for the admission of university degrees and the exchange of certificates issued by the countries' scientific institutions.

Supporting the exchange and sharing of scientific resources regarding the art and the culture of the two countries for being reflected in academic textbooks is another area included in the MoU, he added.

Salar Amoli went on to say that assessing the quality and accreditation at the higher education level, preparing advanced educational programs, managing scientific research in the academic community, as well as teaching and supervising students' research are the priorities of the governments of Iran and Qatar for joint scientific cooperation.

According to the provisions of the memorandum of understanding, Iran will support the development of the Arabic language in its education system and Qatar supports the development of the Persian language in its education system in return, the deputy minister noted.

People of Ukraine Falling Victim to Evil Policies of U.S.

TEHRAN (PressTV) - President Ebrahim Raeisi says the people of Ukraine have fallen victim to the United States' evil policies, reiterating the Islamic Republic's opposition to war.

Raisi made the remarks in a Sunday address at a cabinet meeting, during which he touched on a host of issues, including regional developments and the ongoing military conflict in Ukraine.

"The people of Ukraine, like the people of Afghanistan, Yemen and Iraq, have fallen victim to the United States' evil policies," Iran's president said.

Raisi added, "As declared by Leader [of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei], the Islamic Republic of Iran is definitively opposed to war and the sooner this war ends, it will be to benefit of the region and nations and it will do less harm to and cause less problems for people."

Speaking in a televised speech on Tuesday, Ayatollah Khamenei blamed the American regime for the current Ukraine crisis, and demanded an end to the war in Ukraine, saying the Islamic Republic of Iran has always opposed war and destruction anywhere in the world.

"The U.S. disrupted the stability of the country by interfering in its affairs and organizing rallies and creating a color coup," he said, adding, "We oppose the killing

of people and the destruction of the infrastructure of nations."

Elsewhere in his remarks, Raisi outlined the latest developments regarding the ongoing talks with the P4+1 group of countries in the Austrian capital of Vienna aimed at securing a revival of the 2015 Iran deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and the removal of sanctions imposed on Tehran after Washington's unilateral withdrawal from the landmark agreement.

"[Iran's] Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the negotiating team are pursuing the negotiations with diligence, but the administration does not and will not tie any [of its] moves to the talks and the JCPOA," the president said.

He added that the JCPOA does not constitute the entire foreign policy of Iran but is one of its subjects.

Raisi added that the secret of his administration's success over the last six months was that it "vigorously pursued all matters, including issues related to foreign policy, the banking system and oil [sales], and did not make any of them conditional on the JCPOA or a possible agreement in the Vienna talks."

Iran Ready to Present Innovative Investment Opportunities to D-8 States

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's representative in D-8 Technology Transfer and Exchange Network expressed readiness to offer innovative investment opportunities and to export technology products to D-8 member states.

Mohammad Saleh Khaleghi referred to facilitating regulations and paving the way for developing technological exchanges as the programs on the agenda of Iran National Technmart.

He stressed establishing a joint fund and facilitating commercial regulations among D-8 member states.

According to its official website, "D-8 TTEN is targeted at assisting technologists in member countries to show their capabilities to the ones in need of technology."

"Besides, BizTech events (Business-Technology Meetings) have been also designed in which fulfillment of technology needs in the host country has been aimed."

Experience of U.S. Fleeing Afghanistan To Be Repeated in Syria

TEHRAN (MNA) - Turning to the disgraceful U.S. fleeing Afghanistan, an advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said that this fleeing will be repeated in Iraq and eastern Syria as well.

Major General Rahim Yahya Safavi pointed to the salient specifications of Iran's top general Martyr Lt. Gen. Soleimani, saying that that Martyr Soleimani was an international figure of the Islamic Resistance and known by people of the world as an anti-terror commander in a way that people in India and other parts of the world mourned for him.

Referring to the recent conflict between Russia and Ukraine, he said, "We observed that how Americans and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) besides 30 European countries withdrew themselves in the war broke out between Russia and Ukraine and did nothing to solve this problem."

As a matter of fact, Americans are on the verge of decline both in terms of morals and power in international arenas, Safavi emphasized.

Hundreds of Tree Saplings Planted at Chadormalu Co.



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Concurrent with the National Tree Planting Day and Natural Resources Week, hundreds of tree saplings were planted at Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Complex.

The ceremony was held in the presence of Friday Prayer Leader of Ardakan, some officials of Ardakan, director general of Natural Resources Organization of the province and officials of Chadormalu Company.

Addressing the ceremony, Friday Prayer Leader of Ardakan Hojjatoleslam Shaker pointed to the recommendation of Islam for the tree plantation, adding that creating green space is effective in the individual and social fate of people and this is a very desirable act that people should do it for creating green space to improve environmental indicators along with industrial development.

Then director general of the Natural Resources Organization of the province hailed Chadormalu Company for creating the green belt and termed it a very valuable act, adding that with the beginning of the "Green Iran" campaign, 100,000 saplings of olive were earmarked by Chadormalu Company for Yazd Province and this campaign will be carried out and followed by the company with the slogan of "one Iranian, one sapling" and "one martyr, 1000 saplings".

At the end of the ceremony, the CEO of Chadormalu Company Eng. Taghizadeh was honored and awarded with plaque of appreciation for his effective role in this campaign.

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

TENDER NO.:

08-21-0040006

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	TUBING, API GRADE P-110, SEAMLESS "VAM FLUSH JOINT" THREAD , RANGE 3, LEVEL OF INSPECTION : 1 3-1/2 IN. , 9.3 PPF DRIFT : STANDARD	700 LE

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, 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 21,807 EURO or 6,129,102,264 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

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.: 061 341 23455 Fax No.: 061 34 45 74 37

Public Relations
www.shana.ir
www.nisoc.ir
<http://iets.mporg.ir>

Lamerd Special Economic Zone Marks Tree Plantation Day

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – On the National Tree Plantation Day and in a symbolic move the managing director of Lamerd Special Economic Zone Eng. Ansari planted a tree sapling.



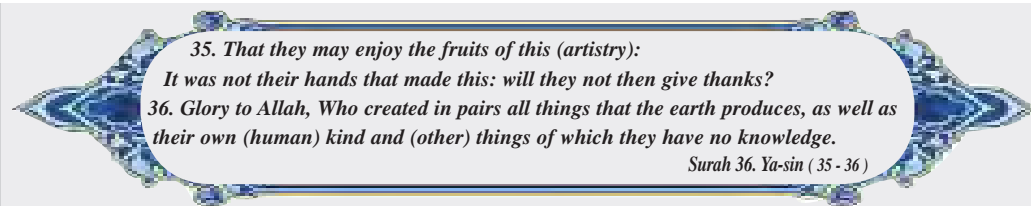
According to reports, during a ceremony which was held at the forest park of the zone and in the presence of the senior official of the zone, Eng. Ansari felicitated the month of Shaaban, Shabaniyah days and birthday anniversary of Imam Hossein (AS) and honored the Pashdar (IRGC) day and war disabled who are busy working at the zone. He then said that plantation of tree not only helps environment but also it brings blessings to the lives of the people.

He emphasized the significance of plantation and creating green space in the business environment, adding that the contractor of the green space of the special zone is committed to plant 14,500 tree saplings on an area round 107,000 square meters based on the plan in two years. At the end of the ceremony, the executive deputy of the zone and other managers of the zone hailed efforts of their colleagues in broadening and developing green space and each planted a tree sapling in the forest park of the special zone.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:15
■ Evening (Maghreb)	18:23
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:00
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:23



Iran, Germany Waiting For Vienna Deal to Boost Bilateral Trade

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Iran and Germany are waiting for the JCPOA deal in Vienna to boost their bilateral trade which has been affected by the sanctions.

In the farewell ceremony of the outgoing Germany's special economic envoy and the CEO of Iran-Germany Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ms. Dagmar von Benstein which was held by Tehran Chamber of Commerce, both sides emphasized that Iran and Germany are waiting for a green light from Vienna talks to boost their trade.

In the ceremony, Head of Tehran Chamber of Commerce Mr. Masoud Khansari hailed Von Benstein for her performance during her tenure in the chamber which developed trade relations between the private sectors of the two countries.

Khansari said that in 2015 and after the JCPOA and return of many countries to Iran's market, a new chapter began in the Iran-Germany trade relations but sudden exit of the U.S. and reimposition of sanctions did not let many agreements and cooperation contracts between Iranian and foreign companies especially Germans be completed. He added that Germany has always been one of Iran's major trade partners and in recent years, Tehran Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with Iran-Germany Chamber of Commerce and Union of Bavarian Economy as well as the private sector has done their best to keep the economic relations of both countries and to keep it on course of growth.

He reiterated that the ground for broadening economic relations of Iran and Germany is ready in case the JCPOA talks in Vienna ends successfully. He expressed hope Ms. Von Benstein's substitute would plan for developing



economic relations between Iran and Germany.

Von Benstein, for her part, said that she is leaving Tehran after four years of efforts to improve trade relations of the two countries, adding that today the trade volume of Iran and Germany is around \$2b and there are grounds which can increase the figure considerably.

She went on to say that Union of Bavarian Industry has been one of the major partners in broaden trade ties and hailed head of Tehran' Chamber of Commerce for his support and trust. She added that sanctions have been the major hurdle in way of trade between Iran and Germany but today Germany is Iran's major trade partner in the EU and it has shown its friendship and faithfulness to Iran and Iranians.

Then German Ambassador to Tehran, Hans-Udo Muzl, for his part, pointed to the talks which are underway in Germany, adding that Germany is preparing itself for cooperation with Iran which is possible through revival of the JCPOA. He noted that some famous German companies are preparing for this cooperation, adding that for example Germany's Lufthansa has resumed its flight for one year from Frankfurt to Tehran and it has good cooperation with Iranian airlines and this action is the first step for trust building.

He reiterated that long term cooperation is only possible through joint projects and not by only selling goods.

Iran, India Call for Boosting Cooperation on Cooperatives

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Head of Iran Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC) Mr. Bahaman Abdollahi upon the invitation of Head of National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI) paid a two-day visit to India where both sides called for broadening trade in the cooperatives sector.



According to reports, during his two-day visit to India, Abdollahi visited two big cooperatives companies of India in the field of urea fertilizer and urea. He had several meetings which were held to broaden trade interactions in the cooperatives sector of Iran and India as well as sharing the joint experiences, knowhow and assistance to the growth and development of cooperatives in the international level.

In the meeting of heads of ICC and NCUI, the new head of International Cooperatives Association (ICA) in the Asia-Pacific zone met with the head of ICC on reciprocal support and cooperation between Iran and India in the ICA issues.

In some part of Mr. Abdollahi's visit to India, he had some online talks on challenges and problems of cooperatives in Iran and other countries.

He also elaborated issues related to women and the specialized youths and capacities and capabilities of these two fields as well as how countries can move out of the COVID pandemic crisis.

That must be said that over 800,000 cooperatives with over 300m members are active in India and 80% of them are active in the agro sector. In the latest developments, India set up a new ministry of Cooperatives Ministry in 2021 which is in charge of policy-making and institutionalizing and implementing the laws related to the cooperatives in India.

HOSCO Donates 5,000 Saplings

IRAN NEW NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – On the Tree Plantation Day, the second central greenhouse of Hormozgan Steel Company (HOSCO) was inaugurated in the presence of the company's officials.

According to reports, the Tree Plantation Day ceremony was held at Hormozgan Steel Company aimed at supporting

environment and with slogan of "one steel man, one sapling."

The ceremony was held in the presence of the CEO, deputies and senior officials of HOSCO and the second central greenhouse of the company was inaugurated.

With the inauguration of this greenhouse, the number of flowers ready to be planted was doubled.

Addressing the ceremony, the CEO of the company Dr. Maroufkhani said plantation of sapling is a God-loving act and

recommended others to plant tree sapling which is sireh of the Prophet (PBUH).

HOSCO in the week of plantation with the slogan of "one steel man, one sapling" donates 5,000 sansevieria flowers.



With Support of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex of Rafsanjan

World's First Perfume Produced From Pistachio Essence Unveiled

The unveiling ceremony of the products of "Benova" perfume brand, the first perfume produced from pistachio essential oil in the world, was held in Tehran on the evening of March 29, with the support of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Rafsanjan. According to the public relations of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Rafsanjan, this ceremony was attended by Dr. Saad Mohammadi; Managing Director of National Iranian Copper Industries Company, Engineer Afzali; Chairman of the Board of Directors of Copper Company, Engineer Ahmadi; Member of the Board of Directors of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex of Rafsanjan, Dr. Ranjbar Karimi; The President of Valiasr University of Rafsanjan, a group of managers of the Copper Company and a number of economic, social and perfume activists in the country and Kerman province, was held.



Copper Company Support for Creative Ideas

The CEO of the National Iranian Copper Industries Company said at the ceremony: "When the Shahid Sattari Innovation and Acceleration Center was set up in Rafsanjan to support different ideas and creative ideas, we did not think it would be so successful." Congratulating the unveiling of Benova perfume brand products and expressing hope for the brand's presence in international markets, Dr. Saad Mohammadi continued: Finally create wealth. He also said that the copper company is undergoing a growing process in the field of production, sales, exports and development, emphasizing the need for serious work in the field of nanotechnology in the copper sector and added: "It is possible that young people with creativity in this field." We will provide special support to provide conditions that both the country and the copper industry can use.

The need to support small and medium enterprises

The director of innovation and business affairs of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Rafsanjan also said at the ceremony: "In the past few decades,



countries around the world have increasingly turned to supporting large companies and considered it an advantage. Humanity and entrepreneurship have led to the support of small businesses. Dr. Jandaghi mentioned job creation, income generation and economic growth as the characteristics of small enterprises and added: the major part of the gross national product and two thirds of the official employment in the world are medium and small economic enterprises; Also, according to global studies, 30 to 60% of these companies are innovators and knowledge-based. He continued: "Medium and small enterprises can make an effective contribution to economic development and create entrepreneurial opportunities, solve unemployment and help improve and distribute income, so it is necessary to pay attention to them." The director of innovation and business affairs of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Rafsanjan stated: The copper company stands with all its might to take the hands of medium and small economic enterprises and bring them to the desired point, and to support the enterprise whose work has led to the production of "Benova" perfume brand. It has been in line with this approach.



10 knowledge-based companies in Rafsanjan University

The President of Valiasr University of Rafsanjan also said at the ceremony: "Currently, there are 75 companies in the growth center of Valiasr University of Rafsanjan, of which 10 are knowledge-based companies, and one of them is the producer of this perfume product."

Dr. Ranjbar Karimi congratulated the strong connection between the university and the copper company and added: "A young university lecturer developed the idea of producing perfume from pistachio essential oil and his scientific discovery has been registered in the US PATENT; The Innovation and Acceleration Center of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Rafsanjan came to the aid of this idea, and the result today is the unveiling of perfume brand products.



The story of the arrival of pistachios in the perfume market

A member of the faculty of Vali-e-Asr University of Rafsanjan and the CEO of "Iranian Pistachio Fragrance" Company also told the story of achieving the production of a pleasant and fragrant pistachio perfume in this ceremony and said: In 1392, I went to Tehran to meet a friend. Ironically, my friend had a party in Germany. I brought some fresh pistachios from Rafsanjan as a souvenir for this friend. When the pistachio was introduced to a German, in front of my surprised eyes, he pulled the soft and soft skin of the pistachios between his hands and sniffed it, and he liked the smell so much that there was a spark in my mind and he noticed the presence of a valuable element. (Pistachio scent) and I benefited that its perfume can be scientifically produced to wrap around the world and attract many people. Seyyed Mohammad Baqer Marashi continued: When I returned to Rafsanjan from Tehran, I was thinking about it and the next year, in the pistachio season, by studying about essential oils, I got acquainted with the methods of extracting essential oils and



tried to provide the necessary basic equipment and some essential oils. He added: "After that, by introducing a friend and referring to the Essential Oil Research Institute in Kashan, I was convinced of its importance and the special nature of this essential oil, and the steps of domestic patent and" patent "(exclusive patent abroad) Began. Of course, there were many problems in this way, which were solved thanks to God and continuous pursuits, and finally in 2018, the honor of registering the first natural pistachio essential oil in the world called Iran was achieved, which is an honor for the country and Rafsanjan.

Marashi explained: "From September of this year, the production of perfume began. At the same time, negotiations were held with the officials of Rafsanjan city and the copper company, and promises were made to help and support the production of products. Fortunately, our teamwork has paid off, and for the first time in the world, fragrances with exclusive scents based on pistachio essential oil have been produced. The CEO of Iranian Pistachio Fragrance Company, noting that the company's products are produced under the original name "Benova" derived from the name "Banah", which are the ancestors of current pistachio trees, added: "These products are all based on natural pistachio essential oil, which



Bangladesh Arrests Rohingya Cleric

DHAKA (Dispatches) - Bangladesh police arrested a powerful Muslim cleric who allegedly issued an execution edict against a prominent Rohingya activist shot dead last year in the vast refugee camps near the Myanmar border, officials said.

The murder last September of Mohib Ullah, the head of an important civil society group, sent shockwaves through the massive settlements that house hundreds of thousands of Rohingya who fled a violent crackdown by Myanmar's army in 2017.

His family blamed the murder on the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), which is the main Rohingya insurgent group in western Myanmar and believed to be involved in drug smuggling and violent crime in the camps.



Kazakhstan Permits Large Pro-Ukraine Rally

ALMATY (Dispatches) - Russia's ally Kazakhstan permitted a large peace rally in its biggest city as authorities in the Central Asian country look to distance themselves from Moscow's sanctions-triggering military action of Ukraine.

Ex-Soviet Kazakhstan's regime has appeared spooked by suggestions that unprecedented Western sanctions against Russia over Ukraine should target Moscow's allies too. The Kazakh foreign ministry has stressed its neutrality in the conflict and this week invited Britain's ambassador for talks after a UK lawmaker on Monday appeared to call for sanctions against individuals in the country "complicit and supporting" Russian leader Vladimir Putin.



Putin Tells Ukraine To Stop Fighting



LIVE (Dispatches) - Russian President Vladimir Putin said his campaign in Ukraine was going to plan and would not end until Kyiv stopped fighting, as efforts to evacuate 200,000 people from the heavily bombarded city of Mariupol fell apart for a second day in a row.

Most people trapped in the port city are sleeping in bomb shelters to escape more than six days of near-constant shelling by encircling Russian forces that has cut off food, water, power and heating supplies, according to the Ukrainian authorities.

The civilian death toll from hostilities across Ukraine since Moscow launched its invasion on Feb. 24 stood at 364, including more than 20 children, according to the United Nations on Sunday, with hundreds more injured.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights said most civilian casualties were caused by the use of "explosive weapons with a wide impact area, including shelling from heavy artillery and multi-launch rocket systems, and missile and air strikes." Moscow has repeatedly denied attacking civilian areas.

In Irpin, a town some 25 km (16 miles) northwest of the capital Kyiv, men, women and children trying to escape armed clashes in the area were forced to take cover when missiles struck nearby, according to Reuters witnesses.

Soldiers and fellow residents helped the elderly hurry to a bus filled with frightened people, some cowering as they waited to be driven to safety.

The invasion has drawn almost universal condemnation around the world, sent more than 1.5 million Ukrainians fleeing from the country, and triggered tough Western sanctions against Russia aimed at squeezing its economy.

"War is madness, please stop," Pope Francis said in his weekly address to crowds in St Peter's Square, adding that "rivers of blood and tears" were flowing in Ukraine's war.

Putin made his demand for Kyiv to end the fighting in a phone call with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, who appealed for a ceasefire. Putin told Erdogan he was ready for dialogue with Ukraine and foreign partners but any attempt to draw out negotiation would fail, a Kremlin statement said.

Russian media said Putin also held almost two hours of talks on Sunday with French President Emmanuel Macron. Macron told Putin he was concerned about a possible imminent attack on the southern Ukrainian city of Odessa, Macron's office said.

Anti-war protests took place around the world including in Russia itself, where police detained over 4,300 people, an independent protest monitoring group said. The interior ministry said 3,500 demonstrators had been held, included 1,700 people in Moscow and 750 in St Petersburg. Thousands of protesters chanted "No to war!" and "Shame on you!", according to videos posted on social media by opposition activists and bloggers. Reuters was unable to independently verify the footage and photographs on social media.

North Korea Claims It Conducted Test of Spy Satellite



SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korea carried out "another important test" towards the development of a reconnaissance satellite, state media said, but analysts warned it was a thinly-veiled ballistic missile launch, just days before South Korea elects a new president.

From hypersonic to medium-range ballistic missiles, Pyongyang test-fired a string of banned weaponry in January and last week launched what it claimed was a component of a "reconnaissance satellite" -- although Seoul described it as another ballistic missile.

North Korea is under biting international sanctions for its nuclear weapons programs, but peaceful satellite launches are not subject to the same level of restrictions -- although they use much of the same technology.

Zemmour Wins Backing of Marine Le Pen's Niece

PARIS (Dispatches) - French far-right presidential candidate Eric Zemmour won the backing of the niece of Marine Le Pen - his main far-right rival, highlighting the fractured opposition to President Emmanuel Macron which could boost Macron's re-election chances.

Marion Marechal Le Pen, who is also the grand-daughter of French far-right figurehead Jean Marie Le Pen, gave her endorsement at a rally of Zemmour supporters in Toulon, southern France, on Sunday.

"There is a big, national movement behind your candidacy," Marion Marechal Le Pen told the Toulon rally.

She also told the Valeurs Actuelles magazine at the meeting that she shared Zemmour's views over France facing a "battle of civilizations."

"With regards to the term of battle of civilizations, I obviously include questions regarding migration, culture and demographics," Marion Marechal Le Pen told Valeurs Actuelles.

Zemmour has recently poached several people from Marine Le Pen's Rassemblement National far-right party, although he has also started to lose ground in opinion polls.

Splits between France's far-right parties along with similar rifts among left-wing parties, such as the Parti Socialiste and the more hard-left La France Insoumise party, are seen as benefiting Macron.

Opinion polls point to Macron getting re-elected in April.

A poll published this weekend by Le Monde newspaper showed that Macron's lead over rival candidates had grown in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Russia's invasion has forced the usually Russophile Marine Le Pen and Zemmour to justify their past support for Putin.

Macron officially launched his re-election campaign earlier this month, saying he was there to defend the values of France that "the world's disorders are threatening."

U.S., Poland Exploring Deal to Supply Planes to Ukraine

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Washington is working on a deal with Poland to supply Ukraine with Soviet-era warplanes to bolster Kyiv's defenses against the Russian invasion, according to U.S. media.

Multiple news outlets reported Saturday that US officials told them of the possible deal, in which Poland would send Soviet-era aircraft to Ukraine in return for American F-16 fighter jets.

Since Russia invaded 10 days ago, the economic and humanitarian toll of the war has spiraled and officials have reported hundreds of civilians killed.

Weapons, ammunition and funds have poured into Ukraine from Western allies.

"We are working with the Poles on this issue and consulting with the rest of our NATO allies," a White House official was quoted as saying in reports by the Wall Street Journal and NBC.

Kyiv has urged the West to boost military assistance to the besieged country, including warplanes, with President Volodymyr Zelensky pleading for Eastern European neighbors to provide Russian-made planes that his pilots are trained to fly.

The Ukrainian leader had addressed U.S. lawmakers by video call Saturday, pleading for further funding

and an embargo on Russian oil imports.

The Wall Street Journal's report cited two people on the call, who said Zelensky requested fighter jets after Senate minority leader Mitch McConnell asked the Ukrainian president what he needed most.

"The urgency of the United States and its allies to support freedom for the people of Ukraine has never been greater," Senator Rob Portman said after he and Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin spoke with Zelensky.

"We must eliminate every obstacle to providing every measure of support to Ukraine to include finding a way for the United States to compensate our Eastern European partners who wish to donate their Soviet-style aircraft to Ukraine. There is no time to lose," Portman said in a statement.

U.S. legislators promised an additional US\$10 billion (RM41.8 billion) aid package, but the White House has so far ruled out an oil ban, fearing it would ratchet up prices and hurt American consumers already stung by record inflation.

The Journal said U.S. officials mentioned a number of challenging practical questions, including getting the planes to Ukraine, and that the deal would require White House approval and congressional action.



Pakistani PM Hits out At Western Envoys' Joint Letter on Russia



ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan hit out at Islamabad-based Western envoys who last week urged Pakistan to condemn Russia's actions in Ukraine, asking them if they thought Pakistan was their "slave".

The heads of 22 diplomatic missions, including those of European Union member states, released a joint letter on March 1 urging Pakistan to support a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly condemning Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

The move to release the letter publicly was rare.

"What do you think of us? Are we your slaves ... that whatever you say, we will do?" Khan said while addressing a political rally.

In the event, Pakistan, a traditional ally of the West, abstained from voting as the U.N. General Assembly overwhelmingly reprimanded Russia for invading Ukraine.

"I want to ask the European Union ambassadors: Did you write such a letter to India?" Khan said, noting that Pakistan's arch-rival had also abstained.

Khan also said European countries had not censured India for its actions in Kashmir, a mountainous region over which Pakistan and India have fought two wars.

He said Pakistan had suffered because it had supported the Western NATO alliance in Afghanistan, and instead of gratitude faced criticism.

Khan and his government found themselves in the spotlight after he went ahead with a visit to Moscow in late February as fears of an invasion were growing, and met Vladimir Putin a few hours after the Russian president had ordered his troops into Ukraine.

"We are friends with Russia, and we are also friends with America; we are friends with China and with Europe; we are not in any camp," Khan added, saying Pakistan would remain "neutral" and work with those trying to end the war in Ukraine.

On Friday, a Pakistani foreign office spokesman said it was "not usual diplomatic practice" for envoys to make appeals such as their letter public, "and we have made that clear".

Velenjak Apt (\$2700)
250sq.m, 4bdrs
S/pool, Sauna
J, balcony
marble fl
Fully Furn

Shanon (adviser)

Pasdaran Villa (\$4000)
1000sq.m
5bdrs, S/p
S, J, balcony
marble floor
Fully Furn

Parsian

(\$2500)
Farmanieh
220sq.m, 3bdrs
S/pool, S, J
Large balcony
Nicely Furn

Gheitarieh (\$1600) 2bdrs, & F.F
Darrous (\$2000) 3bdrs, & F.F

Shahrak-e-Gharb (\$1800)
160sq.m, 3bdrs, S/p, S, J, & F.F

(\$6000)
Elahieh bldg
4storey, 12bdrs
enough pkgs
renovated
Semi Furn

Jordan Apt (\$2000)
140sq.m, 2bdrs, & F.F

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India to Send 8,000 T Wheat to Afghanistan

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India will send 8,000 tonnes of wheat in March to Afghanistan, the government said on Saturday, in a bid to help the country facing poverty and hunger since the takeover by the Taliban last year.

In total, India plans to send 50,000 tons of wheat to Afghanistan on an infrequently used land route through Pakistan, with 2,000 tons already being sent in February.

Permission for such a convoy is rare, with Pakistan having barred the entry of goods from India for years as the relationship between the two nuclear-armed nations has deteriorated.



Ukraine War Is Economic Catastrophe

LONDON (BBC) - The war in Ukraine is “a catastrophe” for the world which will cut global economic growth, the president of the World Bank has told the BBC.

“The war in Ukraine comes at a bad time for the world because inflation was already rising,” said David Malpass.

He stressed his biggest concern is “about the pure human loss of lives” that is occurring.

Thousands of civilians and soldiers are thought to have been killed by the fighting.

Malpass said the economic impact of the war stretches beyond Ukraine’s borders, and the rises in global energy prices in particular “hit the poor the most, as does inflation”. Food prices have also been pushed up by the war, and “are a very real consideration and problem for people in poor countries”.

Malpass points out that both Russia and Ukraine are big food producers. Ukraine is the world’s biggest producer of sunflower oil, with Russia number two, according to S&P Global Platts. Between them they account for 60% of global production.

The two countries also account for 28.9% of global wheat exports according to JP Morgan. Wheat prices on the Chicago future exchange have been trading at 14-year highs.

Russian supplies of these commodities are being restricted because of the widespread sanctions which make it hard for the rest of the world to buy its products. Ukrainian supplies have been stopped because fighting has closed the country’s ports.

“There’s no way to adjust quickly enough to the loss of supply from Ukraine and from Russia, and so that adds to prices,” said Malpass.

He says the same is true of Russian energy supplies, and it is particularly damaging for western Europe, where governments have “neglected other aspects of how to have enough electricity”. About 39% of the EU’s electricity comes from power stations that burn fossil fuels, and Russia is the biggest source of that oil and gas.

As the EU looks to accelerate its transition to other energy sources, Vladimir Putin’s government “may permanently lose some of their markets”, said Mr Malpass. Such a loss of income is just one way this war will dent living standards in Russia, so too will the fall in the value of the rouble and the inflation that brings.

The World Bank has committed \$7.9bn to help develop Ukraine’s economy since the 2014 revolution. That money has helped the country institute wide-ranging economic reforms including privatizations in the energy and banking sectors, as well as efforts to make its farmland more productive.

Less than a month before the Russian invasion Ukraine’s independent central bank forecast that the \$180bn economy would grow 3.4% this year, after the difficulties of the pandemic.

However, war means “a catastrophic impact for our economy, for the region overall”, according to Alexander Rodnyansky, who is an economic adviser to President Zelensky.

He adds: “We’ve already seen massive destructions of roads and bridges and infrastructure. So that is something that will have to be rebuilt over the years when the war is over.

“It’s hard to put a number on that right now, but we can already see that we’ve given up percentages and GDP growth just because of what happened already.”

With hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians fleeing the country or joining the fight against Russia the workforce has shrunk dramatically, which is making it difficult to keep the wartime economy going.

“Production is just collapsing”, says Mr Rodnyansky, who says there are disruptions to vital food and energy supplies.

China-Backed Bank Halts Lending to Russia, Belarus

BEIJING (Dispatches) - The China-backed Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank said it will suspend business related to Russia and Belarus, which have been hit with massive international sanctions over the Ukraine war.

In a statement issued yesterday, the AIIB said that “in the best interests of the bank, management has decided that all activities relating to Russia and Belarus are on hold and under review”.

The bank added that it was “actively monitoring the situation” in Ukraine and that management would do the “utmost to safeguard the financial integrity of AIIB”.

The multilateral financial institution, a brainchild of Chinese President Xi Jinping, was launched in 2016 to counter the West’s dominance of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Russia is among the AIIB’s founding members and holds around a six percent vote in its operations. It also has a seat on the bank’s board of directors.

It is the third-biggest stakeholder behind China — which holds almost 27 per cent of voting power — and India. Disclosures on the AIIB website show it has so far approved two Russia projects with financing of US\$800 million. Only a small portion of its loan portfolio is in Russia.

Two projects for Belarus have also been proposed, in the fields of public health and transport.

“AIIB stands ready to extend financing flexibly and quickly and support members who have been adversely impacted by the war,” the bank said, without giving further details.

While Russia and Belarus are members of the bank, Ukraine is not.

Turkey Warns About Economic Risks of Ukraine War

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey hopes the conflict between Russia and Ukraine will end as soon as possible, the treasury and finance minister said on Friday, as fears grow over the fallout of the crisis.

Nureddin Nebati’s remarks are the first detailed evaluation by an economic official on the potential impact of Moscow’s aggression on its southern neighbor on Turkey’s economy.

Nebati also addressed the government’s new economic policy, recent steps as well as concerns over inflation.

Turkey shares a maritime border with Russia and Ukraine and has good ties with both. It cooperates closely with Russia in energy, trade and defense. It has deep defense links with Ukraine. And both markets are among the country’s most important tourist sources.

“Of course, the duration and size of the war are important in the impact of this undesired geopolitical tension on our economy,” Nebati was cited as telling Anadolu Agency (AA).

“It is our greatest wish that this war ends as soon as possible.”

Ankara is facing a tough balancing act as its Black Sea neighbors are also among its most important economic partners. It has criticized the invasion as unacceptable but avoided the harsher rhetoric of other alliance members and opposes their use of sanctions, seeking ways to mediate in the crisis.

“The most important thing for increasing prosperity not only from the point of view of our country but also in terms of the region where we live is that the climate of peace and tranquility prevails. This is for the benefit of all of us,” said Nebati.

Turkey’s trade with both Russia and Ukraine reached a record high in 2021. The volume with Russia reached \$34.7 billion (TL 494 billion), while the turnover with Ukraine jumped to \$7.4 billion.

Russia ranked 10th among its biggest export markets last year and came in second when it comes to imports. Ukraine stood 20th in exports and 13th in imports, Nebati said.

“The share of these two countries in our exports is 3.9%, while their share in our imports is 12.4%,” the minister noted.

The geopolitical developments in recent history have affected the Turkish economy like other countries, Nebati said.

But he stressed the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war “is of even greater importance, considering the size of our commercial and tourism relations with the two countries and our contracting services.”

Some 4.7 million Russians and 2.1 million Ukrainians arrived in Turkey last year, according to the Culture and Tourism Ministry data.

They accounted for 27.34% of the total 24.7 million foreign tourists that arrived throughout the year, the minister said. The share jumped from 24.55% in 2020 and 19% in 2019.

Gas Prices In U.S. Rise to 10-Year High

NEW YORK (Dispatches) -

Consumers in the United States are grappling with the country’s highest gasoline prices in nearly 10 years,

according to data compiled by Anadolu Agency (AA), as global markets grapple with harsh sanctions imposed on major producer Russia over its invasion of Ukraine.

The national average stood at \$3.837 a gallon for regular gasoline, its highest since September 2012, data by American Automobile Association (AAA) showed.

The highest price was seen in the state of California, where it stood at \$4.42. This was followed by Hawaii at \$4.66 and Nevada and Oregon near \$4.28. Relatively cheaper rates were seen in southeastern states of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida – all below \$3.70 a gallon.

The average gasoline price marked a 3.6% increase from a week ago when it was \$3.572, while it posted a gain of 12.1% from a month ago when it stood at \$3.42. On an annual basis, the average gasoline price jumped a whopping 39.8% from \$2.745 per gallon a year ago.

Rising prices have become a major issue for American consumers. Although the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden has repeatedly said it is fighting high gasoline prices, releasing crude oil from strategic petroleum reserves does not seem to have helped.

Crude prices have been on the rise since the economy largely opened up after being shut down by the coronavirus pandemic, pushing up global oil demand, but supply has been lagging.

International oil benchmark Brent crude soared Thursday to \$119.78, marking its highest level since May 2, 2012. American benchmark West Texas Intermediate jumped to \$116.50 – its highest since Sept. 2, 2008.

Oil prices etched out a parabola over the last week with risks amid Russia’s war on Ukraine. The U.S. and its allies’ sanctions on Moscow have triggered fears that they may soon be extended to include the Russian oil sector.

The U.S. Commerce Department took the first step Friday when it announced measures targeting Russia’s oil refining sector with export controls. One of the measures builds on existing U.S. restrictions put in place on the Russian deepwater oil and gas exploration and extraction industries in 2014, when Russia annexed Crimea. It imposes restrictions on a wide variety of items necessary for refining oil.

Russia is one of the three major oil-producing and exporting countries in the world, along with the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. It is also a member of OPEC+, which includes Saudi-led OPEC and its allies.

Bulgaria to Boost Wheat Reserves as Producers Fear Export Ban



SOFIA (Dispatches) - Bulgaria has plans to bolster its grain reserves and buy enough grain from local producers to ensure domestic needs for a year ahead as it weighs in risks from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and volatility of grain markets, its deputy premier said.

Grain producers in the Black Sea country said the state plans to buy about 1.5 million tons of wheat out of 3 million tons that are still in the country’s silos and might restrict wheat exports until it has carried out the planned purchases.

Traders say Bulgaria, one of European Union wheat exporters is seeing extra export demand as merchants seek to replace grain they planned to ship from Ukraine and Russia, two of the world’s biggest suppliers.

On Friday, Hungary banned all grain exports due to price increases caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

“We need to prepare for the worst-case scenario. We have grains for two years in the country, while the state reserve has wheat stocks for 60 days,” Deputy Prime Minister Assen Vassilev told public BNT television late on Friday.

“We have the resources to do that (buy wheat), rather than we export all of it and wonder in September where to buy from, or at what prices,” Vassilev, who is also finance minister, said.

Bulgaria’s National Association of Grain Producers (NAGP) said a working group is being set up with the government to discuss details on the planned state purchases, including their timeline and prices and how they would affect exports.

“We have been told at a meeting on Friday that until the states buy out 1.5 million tons of wheat, export might be restricted,” Radoslav Hristov with the NAGP said.

Extra customs checks by Bulgaria earlier this week were slowing grain vessel loadings, which producers said was an unofficial attempt to halt exports.

Mexico Inflation Seen on the Rise Again in February

MEXICO CITY (Dispatches) - Mexico’s year-on-year inflation likely accelerated in February after cooling slightly over the previous two months, a Reuters poll showed, reinforcing expectations that the central bank will continue to raise its key interest rate.

The consensus forecast of 11 analysts surveyed was for inflation to grow to 7.23% from 7.07% in January. If the prediction is correct, it would be the first increase since November, when inflation hit a 20-year high.

The core rate of inflation, which strips out some volatile food and energy items, was seen accelerating to 6.58%, which would be the highest rate since June 2001.

The Bank of Mexico targets inflation of 3%, with a one percentage point tolerance range above and below that. In February the bank raised its benchmark interest rate by 50 basis points, a sixth consecutive rise, citing inflation.

The central bank’s next monetary policy decision is scheduled for March 24, a week after the United States’ Federal Reserve is expected to hike percentages after years of near-zero rates.

Just in February, Mexican consumer prices are estimated to have increased by 0.78% with the core price index seen advancing 0.74%.

Mexico’s national statistics agency will publish the latest inflation data on Wednesday.



Facebook Blocks Al-Alam Page

TEHRAN (IP) - Facebook banned the Al-Alam News Network's page on Sunday without prior notice.

Over the past years, Facebook — along with YouTube, Twitter, and Google, have repeatedly targeted media outlets of Iran and the countries critical of the West and the Israeli regime's occupation of Palestine.

The page was launched in 2010 and soon reached millions of followers around the world; but despite repeated requests from Al-Alam, Facebook refused to register the Al-Alam page on the pretext that it did not meet the publication conditions regarding the axis of resistance from Hezbollah and the picture of its flag and leaders, as well as the Palestinian resistance and the Yemeni National Salvation Government.



Argentina's New IMF Deal Pushes Default Fears Down the Road

BUENOS AIRES (Dispatches) - Argentina has sealed a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a \$45 billion program, which will push looming debt payments down the road while tying the country to an agreed economic program.

That agreement still needs approval from Argentina's Congress and the IMF board. Argentina, which has had 22 huge bailouts from the IMF, agreed to a record \$57 billion program in 2018 under then-President Mauricio Macri. That deal failed to head off economic crisis and the country slumped into recession with high inflation.

Unable to pay back its debts, the country revamped over \$100 billion in bonds with private creditors in 2020 before turning its attention to the over \$40 billion outstanding with the IMF.

The country faces some \$17.5 billion of payments under the 2018 agreement this year which it cannot pay.

"The agreement was necessary in order not to default with the IMF," said economist Roberto Geretto of Fundcorp.

Once fully approved by Congress and the IMF board, the fund is set to make disbursements of the \$45 billion over a 2-1/2 year period, much of which will go towards repaying the debt from the 2018 program. Each payment will come after a review.

Those payments from the IMF would be heavily front-loaded, with over three-quarters of it to be handed out in the first six payments of a total 11 planned disbursements, according to the government's letter of intent to the lender.

Argentina will have to start making repayments from 2026, which should be completed by 2034.

"This allows extending the terms for the country to carry out reforms, normalize its situation and be able to return to the international capital markets," said Eugenio Marí, an economist at the Fundación Libertad y Progreso.



The deal comes with an economic program that includes targets to hit a primary fiscal balance by 2025, rein in inflation currently running at an annual rate of over 50% and reduce central bank financing of the treasury.

Argentina will also have to cut by 0.6% of GDP huge energy subsidies that the government uses to keep bills low. Those subsidies amounted to around \$11 billion last year.

The program, progress on which will be reviewed on a quarterly basis, will also include targets to deliver real positive interest rates, bolster foreign currency reserve levels and spur net exports.

Ukraine Crisis Hampers Wire Harness Supplies for Carmakers



LONDON (Dispatches) - Carmakers including Germany's Volkswagen, BMW and Porsche are struggling to obtain crucial wire harnesses as suppliers in western Ukraine have been shuttered by the Russian invasion, forcing them to curtail production.

Production of the part, needed for organizing miles of vehicle cables, has affected suppliers like Leoni, Fujikura and Nexans, and rippled through to major carmakers.

Delivery bottlenecks have already hit some assembly plants of world No. 2 automaker Volkswagen, while Porsche's luxury unit has suspended production at its Leipzig plant.

Rival BMW has also been affected.

"Due to supply bottlenecks, interruptions to our production will occur," BMW said in a statement. "We are in intensive discussions with our suppliers."

A wire harness is a vital set of parts which neatly bundle up to 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) of cables in the average car. Unique to each car model, vehicles cannot be built without them.

Suppliers like Leoni, which has two wire harness factories in western Ukraine, are scrambling to "compensate for production losses" and "interruptions in our two plants in Stryi and Kolomyja, triggered by the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine," Leoni said in a statement. Leoni said it had formed a task force to evaluate developments.

Suppliers including Germany's Forschner, Kromberg & Schubert, Prettl, SEBN and Japan's Yazaki have built up a hefty wire harness production sector in Ukraine, which has a lower-cost, skilled work force.

Starlink Will Not Block Russian News Sources

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - SpaceX chief Elon Musk said the company's Starlink satellite broadband service will not block Russian media outlets "unless at gunpoint."

"Starlink has been told by some governments (not Ukraine) to block Russian news sources. We will not do so unless at gunpoint," the tech titan tweeted.

"Sorry to be a free speech absolutist."

Russian-controlled media outlets have come under fire as the West and its allies seek to crack down on misinformation about Moscow's onslaught on Ukraine.

This week the European Union banned Russian state-funded RT and Sputnik from the 27-nation bloc, while U.S.-based social media giants including Twitter and Facebook parent Meta have taken steps to block the spread of Russian state-linked news media.

Starlink was activated in Ukraine last week after Kyiv digital minister Mykhailo Fedorov urged Musk to provide the embattled country with stations days after it was invaded by neighboring Russia.

The service operates a constellation of more than 2,000 satellites that aim to provide internet access across the planet.

Web monitoring group NetBlocks has reported a series of significant disruptions to internet service in Ukraine since the Russian invasion began.

"Some Starlink terminals near conflict areas were being jammed for several hours at a time," Musk said in a separate tweet Saturday.

"SpaceX reprioritized to cyber defense & overcoming signal jamming. Will cause slight delays in Starship & Starlink V2."

Since its military invaded on February 24, Russia has pummeled Ukrainian cities, with officials reporting hundreds of civilians killed.

Russian authorities have imposed a news blackout, with multiple media websites partially inaccessible, Twitter restricted and Facebook blocked.

Venezuela February Inflation Was Lowest Since 2014

CARACAS (Dispatches) - Venezuela's rate of consumer price inflation continued to fall in February to 2.9%, the lowest figure in eight years, the central bank said.

The government of President Nicolas Maduro has been making cuts to spending in the bolivar currency since the second half of last year in an effort to stabilize the bolivar-to-dollar exchange rate and reduce inflation.

The February figure takes 12-month inflation to 340.4%, according to Reuters calculations based on central bank data.

Inflation was down from 6.7% in January, and has not been



this low since February 2014.

Despite slowing inflation, many families in the South American country struggle to make ends meet.

Maduro on Thursday announced a jump in the monthly minimum wage to the equivalent of \$29, from \$1.60 previously.

Communications was the sector with the highest increase in February, at 23.1%, while education increased 17.5% compared to January.

The government's loosening of economic controls since 2019 has allowed foreign currency to circulate more freely and provided a measure of relief for some industries.

Iran Decision...

FROM PAGE 1

"To date, we did not observe any change in the behavior of the U.S. and the maximum pressure [campaign] on Iran's people has been ongoing," the spokesman said.

Khatibzadeh also said: "Russia's approach has been constructive to date and we have gathered in Vienna to reach a collective agreement. We are waiting for them to give us more details if they have."

Commenting on reports of Russia's withdrawal from the JCPOA that have been circulated on social media, Khatibzadeh noted that, "We don't have reliable news on this issue, but China and Russia have so far acted responsibly."

Asked about a prisoner swap between Iran and the US, the spokesman said the two sides have made progress in related talks, adding that the humanitarian issue could be resolved "if the American side fulfills its obligations this time, and does not backtrack on the eve of the implementation [of an agreed deal]".

Khatibzadeh, in his remarks, also said that the agreement is going to be reached in Vienna is the one that will determine the path of return of the United States in exchange for full commitment, and this path will not be overnight.

Referring to the agreement between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its impact on the Vienna talks, Khatibzadeh said: "Grossi's visit was made within the framework of technical agreements between Iran and the IAEA."

He added that during Grossi's visit, which was preceded by talks in Vienna, comprehensive technical cooperation between Iran and the IAEA was agreed upon so that we will have a multi-stage agreement.

The IAEA chief had questions about some places in Iran, and the country's officials answered them. Therefore; It was agreed that in the next one or two months, all questions will be answered with technical cooperation between Iran and the Agency. There is a direct link between the closure of these questions and the agreement in Vienna. This agreement must be reached simultaneously with the one which is going to be reached in Vienna and would be as a part of that.

Khatibzadeh said: "The agreement that is going to be reached in Vienna is the one that will determine the path of return of the United States in exchange for full commitment, and this path will not be overnight for the US, and a time frame has been defined for it." What is defined in Tehran between Iran and the IAEA is comprehensive technical cooperation.

What has been agreed between Iran and the IAEA has a maximum time, and if the IAEA is ready to resolve it sooner, it will be unimpeded.

He called Iran's relation with Afghanistan as kinship ties.

Talking about the latest developments in Afghanistan, he stated: "Our relations with the people in Afghanistan and the personality and the country of Afghanistan are kinship."

As we all hear the voice of Ferdowsi, we have always had the same view in relations with brothers and sisters in Afghanistan, and kinship relations have helped us host a large crowd of Afghan people and prepare the ground for hosting a comprehensive Afghanistan- dialogue in Iran.

Prospects for Deal in...

FROM PAGE 1

Iran's top security official had earlier stated that securing the interests of the Iranian people was the only factor affecting the course of negotiations in the Austrian capital.

Shamkhani highlighted that Tehran was working on new negotiation initiatives and creative methods to "expedite a solution."

"Vienna participants act & react based on interests and it's understandable. Our interactions with 4+1 are also solely driven by our people's interests," Iran's top security official tweeted. "Thus, we're assessing new elements that bear on the negotiations and will accordingly seek creative ways to expedite a solution," he added.

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Iran, Iraq...

FROM PAGE 1

The contract for developing and operation of the 'Sohrab' joint oil field worth \$ 800 million was signed between the CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr and the CEO of the Dana Energy Company Mohammad Iravani on February 6, 2022, in the presence of the President Raisi and Oil Minister Javad Owji at the IRIB International Conference Center.

According to this agreement, the National Iranian Oil Company entrusted the financing, development, and operation of the 'Sohrab' joint oil field to Dana Energy Company in the form of a new model of oil contracts; the contract was signed with the aim of cumulatively producing 160 million barrels of crude oil from the 'Sohrab' joint oil field.

Meanwhile on Sunday, Iranian Oil Minister said in recent months foreign finances had been used in some development projects in the country, adding details of the contracts will be released if necessary.

Speaking on the sidelines of the signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding for Pars Oil Products Pipeline (Mehran - Fasa - Shiraz), Owji, told reporters that the Ministry of Petroleum was not kept waiting for the result of the Vienna talks, adding that an oil contract is being signed with local developers every two to three weeks.

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.

Pogacar Storms to Phenomenal Strade Bianche Victory

SIENA (Dispatches) - Tadej Pogacar won the Strade Bianche one-day cycling classic on Saturday with a long-range solo attack on the gravel roads of Tuscany.

The 23-year-old Tour de France champion Pogacar made his move 50 kilometres from the Siena finish line on a wind-swept day, finishing 37 seconds ahead of Spanish veteran Alejandro Valverde after nearly five hours of riding. The Team UAE leader made his way alone up a steep incline to a sun-kissed Piazza del Campo in Siena to win the 184km race at his fourth attempt, the latest scalp in his already long list of major career triumphs.

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Ko Storms to Singapore Victory

SINGAPORE (Dispatches) - South Korea's Ko Jin-young stormed to a two-shot victory by closing with a final round six-under-par 66 to win the HSBC Women's World Championship at the Sentosa Golf Club.

Playing in her first event of the 2022 LPGA season, Ko showed why she is the world number one as she outplayed her closest rivals by firing five birdies in her last six holes to clinch her sixth LPGA title with her winning total of 17-under-par 271.

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SPORTS

TUESDAY MARCH 8, 2022

Australia, Spain, France And U.S. Into Ffinals

LONDON (Dispatches) - Australian Open doubles champion Thanasi Kokkinakis won a decisive singles rubber to power 28-time winners Australia through to the next stage of the Davis Cup where they were joined by fellow multiple champions Spain, France and the United States.

Lleyton Hewitt's Australians went into day two tied 1-1 with Hungary and were fighting an uphill battle after Fabian Marozsan and Mate Valkusz upset John Peers and Luke Saville to clinch the doubles 6-4, 6-4.

That left world number 30 Alex de Minaur needing to win against 35th-ranked Marton Fucsovics to keep the clash alive -- and backed by a rowdy crowd at Sydney's Ken Rosewall Arena he battled through 7-6 (7/4), 6-4.

Kokkinakis last played in the Davis Cup seven years ago, but was recalled after claiming a first ATP singles title in Adelaide this year, then winning the Australian Open doubles crown with Nick Kyrgios.

With the tie on the line, he repaid skipper Hewitt's faith with a gutsy 6-4, 6-4 win over young Hungarian number two Zsombor Piros.

"Thank you Lleyton for trusting me, it's been a long time since I played and to play a fifth rubber at home has been incredible," he said.

Six-time champions Spain, playing without Rafael Nadal, advanced after world number 15 Roberto Bautista Agut gave his team an unassailable 3-1 lead over Romania with a 6-2, 6-3 victory over Marius Copil.

After losing their two opening singles matches on Friday, Romania kept their hopes alive by winning the doubles rubber, Copil and Horia Tecau defeating Alejandro Davidovich Fokina and Pedro Martinez 7-6 (7/2), 6-4 in Marbella.

But world number 261 Copil was unable to overcome the impressive Bautista Agut, who faced only two break points in the match.

"Bautista Agut did not lose a single easy ball, he played phenomenal," said Spain skipper Sergi Bruguera.

France, 10-time Davis Cup champions, were also untroubled as Pierre-Hugues Herbert and Nicolas Mahut defeated Gonzalo Escobar and Diego Hidalgo 6-3, 7-5 in Pau for a 3-0 win over Ecuador.

Record 32-time winners the United States of America enjoyed a 3-0 win over Colombia in Reno when Jack Sock and



Rajeev Ram defeated Nicolas Barrientos and Juan-Sebastian Cabal 6-3, 6-4.

Argentina, champions in 2016, wrapped up a 3-0 win over three-time winners Czech Republic in Buenos Aires when Horacio Zeballos and Maximo Gonzalez defeated rookies Jiri Lehecka and Tomas Machac 6-4, 6-4.

The Netherlands exploited the weaknesses of a Canada side missing top-15 stars Felix Auger-Aliassime and Denis Shapovalov to coast to victory, secured by Robin Haase who racked up the 32nd Davis Cup singles win of his career courtesy of a 6-1, 6-2 victory against Steven Diez.

Defending champions Russia may have been banned but there will be Russian players in the next stage after Kazakhstan defeated Norway 3-1 in Oslo.

Russian-born Alexander Bublik sealed the win by defeating world number eight Casper Ruud 6-4, 5-7, 6-4. Bublik also won his opening singles rubber on Friday while fellow Russia native Andrey Golubev and Crimea-born Aleksandr Nedovyesov claimed the doubles.

Elsewhere, Italy edged Slovakia 3-2, Belgium defeated Finland, Sweden saw off Japan, South Korea got the better of Austria while world number three Alexander Zverev won his second singles rubber of the weekend as Germany defeated Brazil in Rio.

Zverev saw off Thiago Monteiro 6-1, 7-5 for the winning point.

The 12 winners all progress to the finals, the first stage of which will be played in September with 16 teams involved.

Croatia, Great Britain and Serbia are already through, with Davis Cup chiefs to decide next week who will replace Russia after they were axed over the invasion of Ukraine.

Those 16 will be whittled down to eight for the quarter-finals in November.

Federer Unlikely To Play Wimbledon

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Roger Federer is unlikely to play this year's Wimbledon as the Swiss great continues to recover from knee surgery, his coach Severin Luthi was quoted as saying in a Swiss newspaper.

The eight-time Wimbledon champion's most recent match was at last year's Wimbledon, where he fell in the quarterfinals and afterwards announced that he would be undergoing his third knee surgery in two years.

"At the moment, I don't envisage him playing Wimbledon," Luthi told German language newspaper Tages-Anzeiger, according to the Independent.

"I'm not someone who is saying it's impossible. But I can't imagine it right now," he said.

"He's still in the rehabilitation phase. Not only do the knee and leg muscles have to be built up, the whole body has to be strengthened. It's a full conditioning program."

When Federer announced his decision to have surgery, the 40-year-old 20-time Grand Slam champion acknowledged that a return to the ATP Tour would be a challenge.

"I want to give myself a glimmer of hope to return to the tour in some shape or form," Federer said in a video at the time.

"I am realistic, don't get me wrong. I know how difficult it is at this age to do another surgery and try it, but I want to be healthy."

Klopp Renews Call for Five Substitutes

LONDON (Dispatches) - Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp has repeated his call for Premier League clubs to be able to use five substitutes after feeling the benefit of it in last week's League Cup final.

Klopp described the Wembley showpiece against Chelsea, which Liverpool won 11-10 in a thrilling penalty shootout after a 0-0 draw, as one of the most intense games he had witnessed.

Both he and opposite number Thomas Tuchel used five substitutes during the game and Klopp said the Premier League should allow five, rather than three, as it did in 2020 during the first season affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

"For the final, five substitutes was absolutely great. And we have to keep talking about that because the whole world is doing it and it helps football," Klopp told reporters.

"The game we played against Chelsea was one of the most intense games I ever saw for 120 minutes and was only possible because we had five changes. It's no other chance to do that.

"So we should really have to discuss that until it happens because it's so necessary."

Liverpool's win over Chelsea, their first domestic cup title for a decade, means they are still chasing a quadruple this season. They are second behind Manchester City in the title race, have reached the quarter-finals of the FA Cup and are well-placed to reach the Champions League's last eight.

"I'm enjoying this situation we're in but I don't enjoy the questions about it because it's constant and it's like we've won the games already," Klopp said.

Carlos to Play for English Pub Team

LONDON (Dispatches) - Brazil and Real Madrid great Roberto Carlos will get a taste of English grassroots football when he turns out for a pub team on Friday.

The 48-year-old retired full-back will appear for Bull in the Barne United in Shrewsbury, western England, after the team won a charity "Dream Transfer" raffle on eBay in January.

Worley Takes Giant Slalom

LENZERHEIDE (Dispatches) - Tessa Worley won the World Cup giant slalom at Lenzerheide to complete a French double at the Swiss resort.

Worley edged Italian Olympic runner-up Federica Brignone by 0.29 seconds and Swedish Olympic champion Sara Hector (0.31sec).

Mikaela Shiffrin was fourth and increased her lead in the overall standings to 117 points over Slovakian Petra Vlhova, who skied out in the first run.

Worley, a 32-year-old giant slalom specialist, claimed her 16th career World Cup victory the day after teammate Romane Miradoli took her first by winning a super-G.

Hector led after the first run with Shiffrin second, Worley third and Brignone fifth.

LeBron Scores 56 as Lakers Down Warriors

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - LeBron James produced a 56-point masterpiece as the Los Angeles Lakers snapped their four-game losing streak with a thrilling 124-116 win over the Golden State Warriors.

James delivered his highest single-game points tally since joining the Lakers in a pulsating battle with the Warriors, who themselves are in a mini-slump that now runs to four straight defeats.

A see-saw game at the Lakers' newly renamed Crypto.com Arena saw the lead change hands nine times, with the Lakers jumping out to a 14-point lead in the first quarter before the Warriors hit back with a 42-point second quarter display.

That left the Warriors in the driving seat and leading by 14 before James and the Lakers gradually worked their way back into the contest with a late burst of scoring in the fourth quarter.

James, who finished with 56 points and 10 rebounds, said afterwards that "desperation" had inspired the Lakers.

"Just desperation," he said. "We needed this win for sure. It means a lot.

"Obviously they're the second best team in the West. They've been struggling a little bit of late, but we've been struggling all year pretty much. "For us to get a win like this in front of our home fans -- they deserve it. We haven't played like much of anything of late so it's good to get a win like that in front of them." James hopes the win can act as a catalyst for the Lakers' troubled season. The 2020 NBA champions remain out of the automatic playoff places and are ninth in the Western Conference with a 28-35 record.



Tuchel Slams Chelsea Fans for Singing Abramovich's Name

BURNLEY (Dispatches) - Thomas Tuchel has slammed the Chelsea fans who chanted Roman Abramovich's name during a minute's applause for war-torn Ukraine before 4-0 win against Burnley.

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Premier League clubs held a pre-match moment of solidarity with the country before every game this weekend and the majority of fans joined the applause at Turf Moor.

However, a section of the travelling Chelsea support interrupted the applause to sing the name of the club's Russian owner.

Abramovich this week announced he will sell the Champions League holders amid speculation he could be sanctioned by the British government for his alleged links to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

However, Chelsea boss Tuchel was disappointed with the fans who chose not to respect the show of support for Ukraine. "It's not the moment to do this. If we show solidarity we show solidarity and we should do it together," he said.

"We take the knee together. If an important person from our club or another club unfortunately dies we have a minute of respect.

"It is not the moment to give other messages. It's the moment to show respect. We want to do this. As a club we need our fans to commit to this minute of applause.

"We do it for Ukraine and there is no second opinion about this situation. They have our thoughts and our support and we should stand together. It's not the moment for other messages."

