

Health Ministry Announced on Tuesday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to **140,678** With **28** More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

Minister of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Ezzatollah Zarghami Said That Iran Administration Weighs Visa Waiver For Spectators Travelling Between Qatar and Iran During the World Cup

VOL. XXVIII, No. 7472 TEHRAN Price 40,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

WEDNESDAY APRIL 13, 2022 - FARVARDIN 24, 1401

2 DOMESTIC

Gov't Focusing on Using Internal Capacities for National Development



> SEE PAGE 2

Iran Halts Consular Activities in Afghanistan

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN – Foreign Ministry on Tuesday summoned the Afghan chargé d'affaires in Tehran and informed him of halting Iran's consular activity in Afghanistan.

South Asia Director-General in Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned Afghanistan's chargé d'affaires in Tehran to convey his protest about the attacks against Iran's diplomatic missions in Kabul and Herat.

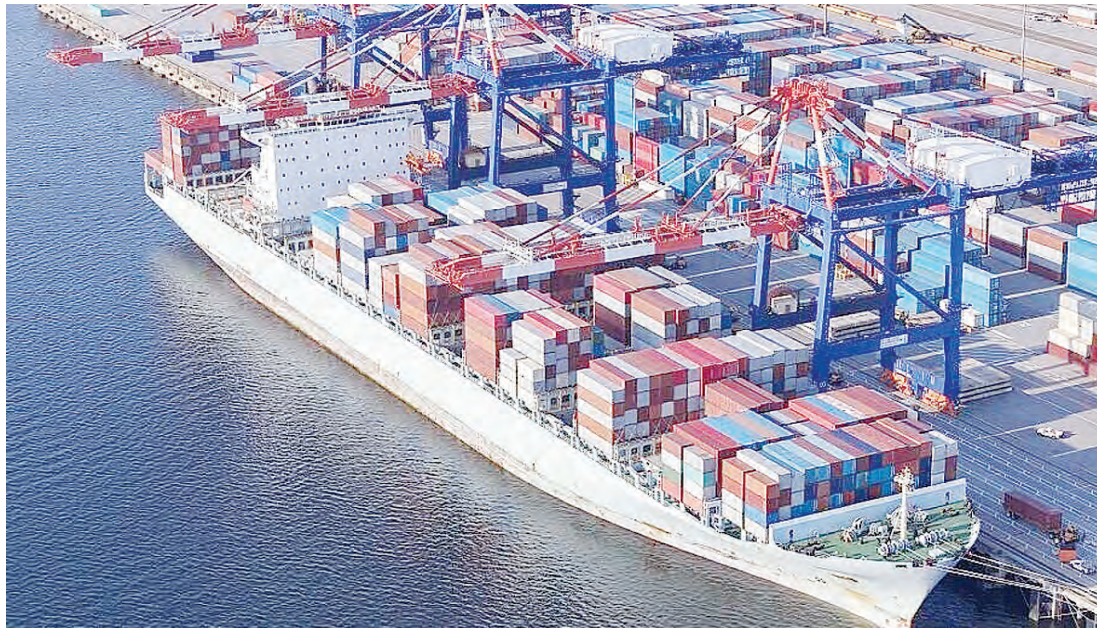
The official reminded the Afghan envoy of the governments' responsibility to provide security of diplomatic missions, urging legal punishment of the attackers.

He also informed the Afghan diplomat that consular departments of Iran's diplomatic missions in Afghanistan would be closed until further notice when Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry ensures the security of the missions.

On Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh reiterated the current rulers of Afghanistan are fully responsible for the security of Iran's embassy in Kabul and other missions in Afghanistan.

See Page 7

Iran Trade With Neighboring States Grows to \$52b



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The value of Iran's trade with neighboring countries grew 43% percent last Iranian calendar year, compared to the previous one, which ended on March 20.

Head of Iran's Customs Administration Alireza Moghaddasi said on Tuesday that the volume of trade reached nearly 52 billion dollars.

"Iran's policy of convergence with the countries of the region, especially its neighbors in the current administration, has led to the growth of trade with all countries, especially neighbors, in parallel with efforts to increase production in the country," the head of Iran's Customs Administration explained.

"100 million and 131 thousand tons of goods worth 51 billion and 875 million dollars were exchanged last year between Iran and 15 neighboring countries," Moghaddasi added.

The share of Iran's exports to these countries was 26 billion and 29 million dollars, he said.

He added that Iraq, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Afghanistan and Pakistan were the most important destinations for Iranian exports.

Major export destinations of the Iranian non-oil goods were Iraq with \$8.9 billion, Turkey with \$6.1 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with \$4.9 billion, Afghanistan with \$1.8 billion, and Pakistan with \$1.3 billion in imports from the Islamic Republic, followed by Oman, Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia, according to the official.

Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Armenia, Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain were other top neighboring countries that supplied goods to Iran in 1400, respectively.

Increasing non-oil exports to the neighboring countries is one of the major plans that the Iranian government has been pursuing in recent years.

Iran shares land or water borders with 15 countries namely UAE, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Saudi Arabia.

According to IRICA, Iran currently exports non-oil commodities to 40 European countries, 21 Asian countries, 28 African countries, and 12 American countries, while importing from 41 European countries, 31 Asian countries, 12 American countries, and 11 countries in Africa.

3 DOMESTIC

Iran Among Major Agro Exporters to Kurdistan Region



> SEE PAGE 3

ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian



U.S. Bases Or Dens of Criminals?

When on March 13 it was reported that the Islamic Republic of Iran had a missile attack at the base of Israelis in Erbil of Iraq, some Western media and officials started criticizing Iran and accusing the country of bully or atrocities in the region but recent report shows that Tehran was right to attack at the den of Zionist criminals and spies no matter where they are deployed.

A new report on Monday said Israel had been deploying part of its military aircraft and espionage equipment along with the regime's military experts in U.S. bases scattered in some countries in the West Asia region, a new report says.

The report released by Iran's Nournews website on Monday says undercover Israeli military personnel deployed to US bases in the region conduct their own missions independent of American forces present in those bases.

The important point about this regional presence, the report said, is deployment of undercover military and intelligence agents of Israel in some regional countries that enjoy close relations with Iran.

Experts believe that the main goal behind the presence of the Israeli agents in some regional countries is to spy on and collect direct information related to Iran's important bases and sensitive facilities.

Although Iranian Armed Forces are closely monitoring these provocative moves, for which the host countries are also responsible, the nature of these actions will increase tension and instability in the region and can lead to unpredictable conditions, the report said.

It added that high-resolution documented photos are available on the presence of the Israeli regime's aircraft and espionage equipment in the US bases in some regional countries, which confirm the intelligence gathered in the field on Israel's anti-Iran activities in the region.

This is not the first time that reports prove that the U.S. bases function as the espionage center and even as the haven for the criminals no matter they are Israelis, Daesh or Al-Qaeda. Unfortunately due to passiveness, naiveté or even collaboration of some governments, the Zionist forces, either spies or military forces, have stationed in their countries to have full control on them and region especially to monitor the Islamic Republic of Iran or sometimes to have sabotages in Iran via those bases.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has always reiterated that Israel is the main cause of all rifts in the region but unfortunately some Arab leaders have defied Tehran and have hugged the Zionists because of the Iranophobia created by the Western media.

Although Iranian Armed Forces are closely monitoring these provocative moves, for which the host countries are also responsible, the nature of these actions will increase tension and instability in the region and can lead to unpredictable conditions, the report said. See Page 7

انتخاب برترین قاری، حافظ، مرثل مردمی

۱۴۰۰

فجر قرآنی

هَذَا بَيَانٌ لِلتَّاسِ (ششمین فجر تلاوت)

زمان برگزاری ۲۶ فروردین ۱۴۰۱

محل برگزاری تالار وحدت

Fajr Quranic Festival 2022

www.quranfajr.com

Instagram: @ftfQuran

ftfQuran

AUCTION

SJSCO. 140102

Hereby Sirjan Jahan Steel Complex announces selling and export 30,000 STEEL BILLET (5SP & 3SP Size 150 x 150 mm) on basis of FOB, Interested bidders are invited to get documents with send an email to sjsco.sales.info@gmail.com All the documents will be sent VIA email. All bids on conformity to tender instruction should be submitted no later than 11am, Tuesday, April 19, 2022(2022-04-19)

For more information, please contact us at:

Tel: +2186084642

Sirjan Jahan Steel Complex

Iran Among World Top 10 Fighting COVID

TEHRAN (IP) - Minister of Health says the country is among the top 10 countries in the world that are successfully fighting against coronavirus.

In a condition that Iran was facing a severe lack of vaccines and the death reached 700 cases, with the conformity of people to the taken measures, the country managed to contain the outbreak of the virus and be among the top 10 countries across the world in this regard, said Bahram Einollahi in the open chamber of the Parliament on Tuesday. Einollahi pointed to the resumption of the education and business activities in the

country and said in the U.S. and EU, the Omicron variant caused 2,000 to 3,000 casualties a day. Still, in Iran, the vigor returned to the people.

Despite the U.S. sanction on Iran's medicine amid the coronavirus outbreak, the Iranian scientist managed to develop vaccines and simultaneously vaccinate people.

Iranian-made COVIran Barekat vaccine was registered by the World Health Organization (WHO); according to research by Iranian scientists, the COVIran Barekat prevents up to 98% of deaths.

Gov't Focusing on Using Internal Capacities for National Development

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi describes the network of religious gatherings as an effective and valuable group and says, “Religious gatherings are composed of young people with sincerity and love for the revolution and Islamic values that have an effective and decisive presence in all stages of the Revolution”.

Speaking on Monday in a meeting with eulogizers, President Raisi said that today we have a heavy responsibility for the progress and development of the country and solving the problems of the people.

Referring to the unfavorable economic conditions at the beginning of the 13th Administration, the President said, “With God's help, we were able to generate income for the country and pay employees without borrowing from the Central Bank or creating money that would greatly increase inflation”.

“Unfortunately, in the last 8 years, the average economic growth rate was very low, but in this government, we have targeted 8% growth for this year,” he said.

Stating that this government does not look beyond the borders, Raisi added, “We pay attention to our resources and capacities to run and develop the country and believe that relying on internal and internal capabilities, it is possible to run the country, national economy and economic growth”.

Referring to the slowdown in inflation in recent months, the President said, “Today, with the measures taken, the growth of inflation has been somewhat curbed and we hope that with the coordination of the three branches and the help of parliament, we can take steps to control inflation and increase economic prosperity”.

In another part of his speech, Raisi emphasized the government's commitment to employing revolutionary human resources and said, “I always urge the officials to use



motivated revolutionary human resources in different categories, especially the young”.

Referring to the remarks of one of the guests regarding the priority of cultural work over economic activities, the President emphasized, “Both are among the priorities of the country and should be considered at the same time”.

Touching upon the government's measures to increase revenue for the country, the President said, “In the past few months, due to the measures taken, the volume of trade and exports with different countries has multiplied, while in the past, oil sales were subject to various contracts”.

“We were exporting oil easily today, and it became clear that if there is a serious will to do the job, no obstacle can stop the country,” he said.

Raisi went on to say, “The government respects everyone, but certainly those who are the perpetrators of the current situation should not be employed in management”.

The President described the network of religious gatherings as an effective and valuable group and said, “Religious gatherings are composed of young people with sincerity and love for the revolution and Islamic values that have an effective and decisive presence in all stages of the Revolution”.

Raisi pointed out, “The enemies and ill-wishers of the system magnify the slightest mistake of the revolutionary forces and the government, so the quality and content of activities must always be strengthened and upgraded while maintaining vigilance”.

Economic Ministry to Ease Business Licensing Process

TEHRAN (IP) - Minister of Finance and Economy says a board of 30 officials will verify the business license-granting stages across the country to facilitate the process.

Ehsan Khandouzi said the verification was an initiative of the government ratified by the Parliament to facilitate the process of issuing business licenses across the country.

Delivering a speech at the open chamber of the Parliament on Tuesday, Khandouzi said the Parliament assigned the ministry of finance to make the licensing conditions more transparent, accessible, registration-based, and online. Khandouzi said with the implementation of plan 2780, ambiguous conditions or golden signatures were omitted, adding that more deregulation meetings were held to facilitate the process of licensing compared to the past years when, on average, four sessions used to be had.

Meanwhile, Iran's Vice President for Human Recourse said on Monday that those expert immigrants to Iran who can create jobs would be granted residence, a move to support entrepreneurship and production in the country.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution named the current Persian year “knowledge-based, job-creating, production.”

Iran Determined to Strengthen Ties With African States

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian says Iran is determined to strengthen ties with African countries, including Burkina Faso.

Amir-Abdollahian made the remarks in a phone conversation with Burkina Faso's Foreign Minister Olivia Rouamba, highlighting the significance of Africa in Tehran's foreign policy objectives.

According to a readout of the phone conversation provided by the Iranian Foreign Ministry on Tuesday, the Iranian foreign minister underscored the importance of establishing

a joint cooperation commission between the two nations.

He also congratulated Rouamba on her appointment.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Amir-Abdollahian expressed worries over Takfiri terrorist groups' activities in Burkina Faso and West Africa.

Rouamba, for her part, called for the expansion of scientific and technical cooperation and receiving assistance from Iran in various fields. As a country that has been grappling with terrorism for years, Iran can share its experience in this regard with Burkina Faso, she added.

Iran, Qatar Sign Bilateral Aviation Agreements

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran and Qatar signed a bilateral operational agreement to link Doha aviation information with Iran's aviation information territory.

An agreement was also signed to increase the number of flights between Qatar and Iran, in the presence of the Qatari Minister of transport and communications, Jassim bin Saif Al-Sulaiti and the Iranian Minister of Roads and Urban Development Rostam Qasemi.

The agreements were signed by Mohammad Faleh Al-Hajri, who is in charge of the operation of the general civil aviation authority, and Mohammed Mohammadi Bakhsh, President of the civil aviation organization of Iran.

A series of meetings were also held between the two sides to strengthen cooperation in the transport sector.

During the meetings, the two sides discussed all matters related to the activation of memorandums of understanding for the shipping sector and port management, as well as consideration of all issues that would remove all obstacles in support of strengthening and facilitating transport and trade between the ports of the two countries.

FM Stresses Lifting Siege, Establishing Yemeni Ceasefire



TEHRAN (MNA) - In a meeting with the Yemeni Ambassador to Tehran Ibrahim Mohammad al-Deilami, the Iranian Foreign Minister stressed the need to completely lift the Yemeni blockade and establish a permanent ceasefire in the country.

Referring to the resistance of the Yemeni people against the Saudi-led coalition attacks and expressing concern about the critical situation in Yemen, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian stressed the need to lift the complete siege of Yemen and establish a permanent ceasefire to pave the way for Yemeni-Yemeni talks to determine their own destiny.

The Iranian top diplomat also stated that the Yemeni people will decide their own destiny with intelligence and Resistance spirit.

Al-Deilami, for his part, appreciated the position and the support of the Iranian government and nation to Yemen.

The Yemeni envoy also briefed Amir-Abdollahian on the temporary ceasefire and the latest developments in Yemen.

Science Parks Determined to Boost Knowledge-Based Economy

TEHRAN (IP) - The heads of the Iranian science and technology parks shared their ideas on how to boost knowledge-based production and shift the country more and more towards a knowledge-based economy that thrives on research.

The heads of the Iranian science and technology parks convened on Monday in the presence of Minister of Science, Research and Technology Mohammad-Ali Zolfigol and Vice President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari and reviewed their plans to further develop knowledge-based companies.

The meeting came following the emphasis of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei on moving toward a knowledge-based economy as the key to solving the economic problems.

Ayatollah Khamenei has designated the Persian New Year as the year of ‘Production, Knowledge-Based and Job-Creating’, saying that the development of knowledge-based companies will be the best way to create new jobs.

In recent years, the Iranian government has been shifting more and more towards a knowledge-based economy that thrives on research and plays a significant role in entrepreneurship.

Iranian knowledge-based companies have been successful in expanding products in the market that may have been previously imported.

1m Foreign Nationals Employed In Iran Lack Work Permits

TEHRAN (IRNA)- A bout 1.3 million foreign nationals are currently employed in Iran, only 300,000 of whom have work permits and the remaining 1 million are working illegally, according to the caretaker of Employment and Entrepreneurship Affairs Department of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare.

“The financial benefits of taking on illegal foreign nationals are the main reason Iranian employers tend to hire foreigners and refugees for implementing their projects,” Mahmoud Karimi Beyranvand said.

“At present, Iran is hosting five million Afghan refugees,” says Hamid Haj-Esmaili, a labor market expert.

“Some of these refugees have resided in Iran for some time now and some have recently crossed into Iran after the transition of power in this neighboring state last year. A majority of Afghan refugees in Iran are illegal residents and don't have passports. Many of these refugees are active in Iran's job market without having work permits,” he told the Persian daily Jahan-e Sanat.

Iran Condemns Israeli Attacks on Syria

TEHRAN (IP) - Iran strongly condemned the Israeli repeated attacks on Syrian territory, stressing that these practices, which are based on aggression and violence, pose a real threat to peace and security in the region and they are flagrant violations of international law.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh, in a press conference on Monday, criticized the silence of the international community and the UN Security Council regarding those systematized attacks on Syrian sovereignty.

Khatibzadeh said, “This Silence affects the credibility of the international community and the UN Security Council, which must assume its responsibilities regarding those hostile acts against Syrian sovereignty which undermine the efforts of the Syrian state in the field of development and bringing back security to its entire territory.”

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The newly-unveiled Comprehensive Strategic Document of Iran's Nuclear Industry will hopefully be an effective step towards removing obstacles and developing this industry, Mohammad Eslami, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said.

Eslami on his Instagram page said that the document, which sets goals for the country's nuclear industry for the next 20 years, deals with different dimensions of nuclear technology in order to bring Iran a good world status in this regard.

He added that the production of 10,000 megawatts of nuclear-powered electricity as well as the construction of a 360-megawatt power plant in Darkhuein, which will be built by Iranian scientists, is among other goals of that document.

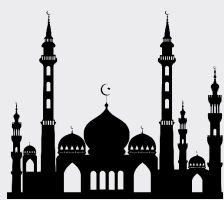
Strategic Document of Nuclear Industry a Key Step to Remove Obstacles

was marked on April 20, saying that on the occasion of the national event, nine nuclear achievements were unveiled, which included radiopharmaceuticals, plasma, lasers and control systems.

He referred to President Ebrahim Raisi's comments on the Nuclear Technology Day, who described the nuclear technology as the forerunner of the country's scientific progress, and called for maintaining that status of the nuclear technology through creativity and innovation.

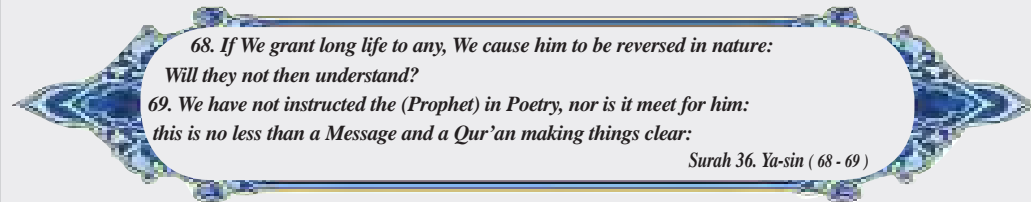
Eslami said, in line with the president's remarks, “we should take important measures to progress nuclear technology and we should powerfully continue research in peaceful nuclear technology.” He also said that the AEOI will put on its agenda commercializing the country's nuclear achievements, which was raised by President Raisi.

The head of the AEOI also referred to Iran's Nuclear Technology Day that



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:04
■ Evening (Maghreb)	18:54
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:04
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:32



Iran Among Major Agro Exporters to Kurdistan Region

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The majority of agricultural products in the Kurdistan Region are imported as demand has increased in Ramadan, with around 70 percent coming from neighboring Iran and Turkey, head of Erbil's fruit and vegetable market told Rudaw.

The demand for agricultural products has increased since the start of Ramadan and the majority of these are imported, with around 70 percent coming from neighboring Iran and Turkey, the head of Erbil's fruit and vegetable market told Rudaw on Monday.

"Due to the weather conditions, local produce have not entered the market, in previous years, most of produce would enter the market in April, however the wave of cold in January destroyed all of our local produce," Head of Erbil's Produce Market Council, Rajab Aziz, told Rudaw.

Aziz said that demand has doubled during Ramadan, adding that all the products currently one the market are imported from outside.



"Vegetables are imported from Iran and fruits from Turkey, those two countries have dominated the market in the Kurdistan Region," Aziz said, adding that other produce is imported from Egypt, South Africa, and Ukraine.

Despite having a fertile soil, the Kurdistan Region often struggles with putting local produce into the market.

In 2020, farmers trampled their own tomatoes in protest over low prices, and potato farmers dumped their produce in the street, protesting the presence of banned imports that pushed their produce out of the market.

However, due to increasing demand and the low rate of local produce, The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) decided on Wednesday to remove import tariffs on a number of goods for two months.

TPO, ICC Sign Cooperation MoU

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) and the Iranian Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC Iran) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to cooperate in the facilitation and development of the country's international trade.

The MOU was signed by TPO Head Alireza Peyman-Pak and Secretary-General of ICC Iran Mohammad Khazaei on Monday, the TPO portal reported.

Cooperation in developing the application of new trade tools and knowledge-based solutions to enhance the export potential of Iranian companies, promoting the application of new financial technology tools to facilitate foreign trade, holding training courses required by the country's businessmen and exporters, providing legal and trade advisory services to traders and businessmen, cooperation in resolving disputes between Iranian businesses with foreign parties using non-judicial methods within the framework of the ICC Iran and TPO duties are mentioned as some of the areas that the two sides are going to cooperate on based on the signed MOU.

Furthermore, developing and facilitating Iran's trade relations with other countries, translating and localizing ICC's international agreements within the framework of the ICC regulations, providing advisory assistance by the ICC Iran to TPO for the development of international trade, cooperation with companies, and facilitating and encouraging their membership in the International Chamber of Commerce, cooperation in translation and publication of reports and statistics published by the International Chamber of Commerce, cooperation and planning in holding joint business events, cooperation in the development of international trade using the capacities of both institutions, coordination, and cooperation for exchanging trade delegations within the framework of the duties of the Iranian Committee are also among the provisions and areas of cooperation.

ICC Iran, as the ICC representative in Iran, was founded in 1963 to promote international trade and investment.

Gov't Not to Allow Crypto Payments

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran will not recognize cryptocurrencies as a means of payment, a high-ranking government official has indicated. His statement came as the Central Bank of Iran announced rules for the issuance of digital coins in the country. These are meant, however, for its own "crypto rial," the pilot phase of which should start in the near future.

Cryptocurrencies like bitcoin will not be treated as legal tender in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Discussing regulatory matters related to the storage and exchange of cryptocurrencies, Iran's deputy minister of communications, Reza Bagheri Asl, emphasized: "We do not recognize payments with cryptocurrencies."

The government official was commenting on the latest resolution by the Digital Economy Working Group regarding crypto assets. He pointed out that the use of any foreign currency is outside the sovereignty and against the monetary and banking law of Iran.

"So, we will by no means have any regulations recognizing payments with cryptocurrencies that do not belong to us," Bagheri Asl elaborated, quoted by the Iranian financial news portal Way2pay. "Iran has its own national cryptocurrency, so no payments will be made with non-national cryptocurrencies," he insisted.

The deputy minister added that in order to prevent risks for the Iranian citizens, digital asset exchange in the country will be subject to a set of rules similar to those that apply to the stock market and other currencies. "Cryptocurrencies must be regulated and banking systems must be observed," he added.

Tehran authorities have in the past considered allowing Iranian business to use decentralized digital currencies for settlements with foreign partners as a way to circumvent Western financial sanctions. What they are focusing on at the moment, however, is the launch of the digital version of the nation's fiat currency, the rial.

The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has recently informed banks and other credit institutions about regulations related to the "crypto rial," which has been under development for some time. They apply to the minting and distribution of the central bank digital currency (CBDC). The CBI will be its sole issuer and will determine the maximum supply.

The crypto rial will be issued under the legal provisions governing the emission of banknotes and coins, the report noted. The CBI will be monitoring the economic impact of the digital currency and managing its effects in accordance with the authority's monetary policy. Users will be able to make transactions with the CBDC only within the territory of Iran.

Chabahar Port to Allocate Special Wharf for Steel, Minerals Exports

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Governor of Sistan and Baluchestan in meeting with the CEO of Golgozar Mining and Industrial Company said according to the agreements, a special wharf will be constructed at Chabahar Port for exports of steel and minerals.

In the meeting which was held on Monday at the investor company, it was decided economic and financial views and opinions of Golgozar Company to be submitted to the governor general in this regard and within one month and after feasible studies, the venue for construction of the wharf is determined.

Meanwhile it was agreed the issue of the modern technologies of separating iron ore from Titanium to be put on the agenda of the research and academic centers in the form of the knowledge-based headquarters in order that many of polymetal mines of the province whose iron ore is blended with titanium could be activated.



Annual Alumina Powder Production Hits Over 230,000 Tons

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iran has produced 230,682 tons of alumina powder in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), according to the data released by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO).

The IMIDRO's data put the alumina powder output at 231,612 tons in year 1399.

Aluminum oxide, which is commonly called alumina, is an inert, odorless, white amorphous material often used in industrial ceramics.

Alumina is an important ceramic material for industrial applications. The numerous fields of application range from construction materials, to filling materials, as well as abrasives and catalysts.

In plants and mechanical engineering, alumina ceramics are mainly used for wear and corrosion protection.

The particle size distribution largely determines the application range and the quality of an alumina powder. Reliably identifying the differences in particle size is therefore an essential requirement of the measuring instrument.

Call for Establishment of Iran-Qatar Joint Publicity Committee



TEHRAN (MNA) – Secretary of the Supreme Council of Free and Special Economic Zones said that a joint publicity committee should be set up between Iran and Qatar.

Speaking in a meeting to review Iran's capabilities and planning to support the World Cup in Qatar, Saeed Mohammad said, "Considering the hosting of Qatar from the World Cup in 2022 and its amicable and friendly relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, giant steps can be taken to introduce Iran's capacity for joint advertising for this prestigious sports event."

In addition to using national capacities, taking advantage of facilities and infrastructures of Qeshm and Kish islands, as free trade zones close to the country, has specifically been taken into serious consideration, he said, adding that the provision of food required for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar is the issue that cannot be ignored.

Stating that Kish and Qeshm islands will be ready to welcome some World Cup travelers in the remaining period, he added that currently, 10 five-star hotels are active on Kish Island and five more five-star hotels will be operational next months.

In addition to port and airport facilities, construction and standardization of five pitch fields and gyms are also being completed and enthusiast passengers and football teams can use these facilities, he added.

Iran Grants Residence To Foreign Entrepreneur

TEHRAN (IP) - Vice President for Human Recourse says those expert immigrants to Iran that are able to create jobs will be granted residence.

Ali Hosseini said that by launching a system to support specialists and non-Iranian entrepreneurs, the capacity and expertise of these people in the country would be used.

Hosseini added that foreign specialists and entrepreneurs living in Iran could receive special residences of 3 and 5 years with special conditions.

"So far, 250 foreign elites, specialists and entrepreneurs have been identified, to whom we are granting special residence for three and five years," he said.

KSC Honored at 8th National Conference on Jihadi Management

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN -The CEO of Khorasan Steel Complex Company (KSC) Mr. Kasra Ghafoori was honored in the 8th annual national conference on jihadi management which was held in the presence of Vice-President on Economic Affairs Mr. Mohsen Rezaee.

In the conference, the top jihadi managers of the country were honored and the CEO of KSC Mr. Ghafoori was one of them as he was awarded with statue and special plaque of the event.

Addressing the event afterreceiving the award,



Ghafoori said that jihadi management is a software for implementing the goals of the Second Step of the Revolution in the management of the country in the decade ahead, adding that selecting the jihadi managers creates this expectation that the style and indigenous pattern of management in the country in the years ahead would be based on the approaches which materialize the ideals of the Islamic Revolution and would accelerate their achievements.

Every year the conference chooses the top managers in the country who has adopted jihadi management to run their organizations.

24 Dead in Philippines Landslides, Flooding

ABUYOG (Dispatches) - At least 24 people have been killed in landslides and flooding across central and southern Philippines, authorities said Monday, after tropical storm Megi dumped heavy rain and disrupted travel ahead of the Easter holidays.

More than 13,000 people fled to emergency shelters as the storm pounded the region Sunday, the national disaster agency said, flooding houses, inundating fields, cutting off roads and knocking out power.

The central province of Leyte was among the hardest hit, with landslides leaving 21 people dead in four villages, Baybay City disaster officer Rhyse Austero told AFP.



UK Imposes Sanctions on Bosnian Serb Separatist Leader

LONDON (Dispatches) - Britain said it had imposed sanctions on Bosnian Serb separatist leader Milorad Dodik and a second Bosnian-Serb politician for what it described as their attempts to undermine the legitimacy and functionality of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia has been going through its worst political crisis since the end of the Balkan wars of the 1990s, with Bosnian Serbs challenging state institutions as part of their longtime bid to secede and eventually join neighboring Serbia.

The sanctions on Dodik and Zeljka Cvijanovic, President of the entity of Republika Srpska, include travel bans and asset freezes, the government said.



Biden, Modi Discuss Ukraine War



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a virtual summit Monday, clouded by U.S. frustration over New Delhi's neutral stance on Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The South Asian nation has tried to walk a tightrope between maintaining relations with the West and avoiding alienating Russia, and has not imposed sanctions over the war.

New Delhi has raised concerns in Washington in particular by continuing to buy Russian oil and gas, despite pressure from Biden for world leaders to take a hard line against Moscow.

India said ahead of the talks the meeting would be about strengthening the allies' "comprehensive global strategic partnership," while Washington spotlighted "Russia's brutal war against Ukraine and mitigating its destabilizing impact."

The more pointed U.S. statement suggested that a resolute Biden would press Modi to take a stronger line on Moscow during the call.

Biden began the meeting however by saluting the "deep connection" between the two countries and said he wanted to continue their "close consultation" over the war, as Modi appeared alongside him on a large screen.

The Indian leader said the two countries were "natural partners," describing the Ukraine crisis as "very worrying" and recalling that India supported talks between Ukraine and Russia while delivering medical assistance to Kyiv.

Biden and Modi failed to reach a joint condemnation of the Russian invasion when they last spoke in early March at a meeting of the so-called "Quad" alliance of the United States, India, Australia and Japan.

New Delhi abstained when the UN General Assembly voted last week to suspend Russia from its seat on the 47-member Human Rights Council over allegations that Russian soldiers in Ukraine engaged in war crimes.

The United States has already warned that any country that actively helps Russia to circumvent international sanctions will suffer "consequences."

Yet this has not deterred India from working with Russia on a rupee-ruble payment mechanism to circumvent banking sanctions, while taking advantage of discounted oil prices offered by Russian producers.

Meanwhile state-run Indian Oil Corp. has bought at least three million barrels of crude from Russia since the start of the invasion on February 24, in defiance of an embargo by Western nations.

Biden said on March 21 that India was an exception among Washington's allies with its "somewhat shaky" response to the Russian offensive.

In the Cold War, officially non-aligned India leaned towards the Soviet Union -- in part due to US support for arch-rival Pakistan -- buying its first Russian MiG-21 fighter jets in 1962.

Ukraine Says Tens of Thousands Killed in Mariupol

KYIV (Dispatches) - Ukraine said tens of thousands of people have likely been killed in Russia's assault on the southeastern city of Mariupol while the country's rights ombudswoman accused Russian forces in the region of torture and executions.

Reuters has confirmed widespread destruction in Mariupol but could not verify the alleged crimes or the estimate of those killed in the strategic city, which lies between Russian-annexed Crimea and eastern areas of Ukraine held by Russian-backed separatists. "Mariupol has been destroyed, there are tens of thousands of dead, but even despite this, the Russians are not stopping their offensive," President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a video address to South Korean lawmakers without providing more details.

If confirmed, it would be by far the largest number of dead so far reported in one place in Ukraine, where cities, towns and villages have come under relentless bombardment and bodies, including civilians, have been seen in the streets.

The head of the Russia-backed self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, Denis Pushilin, told Russia's RIA news agency on Monday that more than 5,000 people may have been killed in Mariupol. He said Ukrainian forces were responsible.

The numbers of people leaving the city had fallen because Russian forces had slowed pre-departure checks, Petro Andryushchenko, an aide to the mayor of Mariupol, said on Monday on the Telegram messaging service. Around 10,000 people were awaiting screening by Russian forces, he said. Russia does not allow military personnel to leave with civilian evacuees. There was no immediate comment from Moscow, which has previously blamed Ukraine for blocking evacuations.

Citing figures from Mariupol's city administration, Ukraine's human rights ombudswoman Lyudmyla Denisova said 33,000 residents of Mariupol had been deported to Russia or territories held by Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine. Russia said on Sunday it had "evacuated" 723,000 people from Ukraine since the start of what it called its "special operation." Moscow denies attacking civilians.



Embattled Sri Lanka PM Appeals for Patience From Protesters

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa pleaded for "patience" Monday as thousands continued to take to the streets to protest his family's rule, with public anger at a fever pitch over the country's crippling economic crisis.

Sri Lanka's 22 million residents have seen weeks of power blackouts and severe shortages of food, fuel and even life-saving medicine in the country's worst downturn since independence in 1948.

Protesters have rallied daily since Saturday against President Gotabaya Rajapaksa -- Mahinda's younger brother -- in Colombo and across the island nation, chanting "Gota go home" and calling for his government's removal.

In his first address since the crisis, Mahinda -- the patriarch of the powerful Rajapaksa family omnipresent in Sri Lanka's politics for two decades -- said he needed more time to pull the nation out of the deep end.

"Even if we can't stop this crisis in two or three days, we will solve it as soon as possible," Rajapaksa said in his televised address.

"Every minute you protest on the streets, we lose an opportunity to earn dollars for the country," he said.

"Please remember that the country needs your patience at this critical moment."

Pressure on the powerful Rajapaksa family has intensified in recent days, with the country's vital business community also withdrawing support for them over the weekend. Mahinda did not directly address the growing calls for him and Gotabaya to step down, but he defended his administration by saying that opposition parties had rejected their offer to form a unity government.

"We invited all other parties to come forward and take up the challenge, but they did not, so we will do it on our own," he said, also blaming Sri Lanka's ballooning foreign debt on the pandemic. While the coronavirus-spurred restrictions and stoppages have torpedoed Sri Lanka's vital tourism-driven economy, experts say the crisis was exacerbated by government mismanagement, years of accumulated borrowing and ill-advised tax cuts.

Italy PM Signs Algeria Gas Deals to Reduce Russia Reliance

ALGIERS (AFP) - Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi announced a deal on Monday to boost gas deliveries from energy heavyweight Algeria, as he steps up efforts to reduce Rome's heavy reliance on Russian imports.

Addressing journalists after meeting President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, Draghi told journalists the two governments had signed a preliminary deal on energy cooperation. "There is also a deal between ENI and Sonatrach to boost gas exports to Italy," he said, referring to the Italian energy giant and Algeria's state hydrocarbons firm.

The firms agreed to boost gas exports through the Transmed undersea pipeline starting this autumn, gradually "increasing volumes of gas... up to 9 billion cubic meters per year in 2023-24", ENI said in a statement.

The Ukraine war has sparked a Western push for sanctions against Moscow, including moves to drastically cut purchases of Russian gas.

Italy buys the vast majority of its natural gas from overseas, and is one of the most Russia-reliant gas importers in Europe, with over 40 percent of its imports coming from the country.

But Italy also imports significant amounts from Algeria, including some 6.4 billion cubic metres of Algerian gas during the first quarter of 2021, a 109 percent uptick from the previous year.

The war in Ukraine and the subsequent campaign of Western sanctions have prompted Rome to step up the search for alternative sources, with gas giant Algeria an obvious option.

"Immediately after the invasion of Ukraine I announced that Italy would organize quickly to reduce its dependence on Russian gas," Draghi said.

"The deals today are a significant response to reach this strategic goal, and others will follow."

Draghi arrived in Algeria weeks after Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio made the same trip, during which he confirmed that Italy was "committed to increasing energy supplies, notably in gas", including from Algeria, which he said had "always been a reliable supplier".

Algeria's Sonatrach said at the time that it was prepared to increase deliveries, notably via the Transmed pipeline linking Algeria to Italy.

Its CEO Toufik Hakkar said Europe is the "natural market of choice" for Algerian gas, which accounts for about 11 percent of Europe's gas imports.

But he said any boost to exports would depend on first satisfying Algeria's ever-growing domestic needs.

Sonatrach and Italy's ENI jointly operate the Transmed pipeline, which has a capacity of some 32 billion cubic metres per year.

Aydin Calik, an energy analyst at the Middle East Economic Survey, said Monday's deal implied additional exports that would push the limits of the Transmed pipeline.

"That's assuming Algeria actually has the capacity to supply more, given its other commitments," he told AFP. "There are lots of questions."



Sweden's Ruling Party Launches Debate on NATO Membership



STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) - Sweden's ruling Social Democrat party, which has until now rejected membership in NATO, has said it is reviewing its international security policy in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Comprising the biggest party in parliament and forming a single-party, minority government, the Social Democratic party has consistently rejected calls to join NATO, arguing that military non-alignment has served the country well.

But an increasingly belligerent Russia has forced a rethink across the political spectrum in both Sweden and neighboring Finland, which is also outside the 30-member North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance.

"When Russia invaded Ukraine, Sweden's security position changed fundamentally," the Social Democrats said in a statement on Monday.

Daily DN quoted Social Democrat Secretary-General Tobias Baudin saying the review would be complete before the summer.

Finland is expected to outline its path regarding NATO in the coming weeks.

Earlier, the Kremlin said the possibility of Sweden and Finland joining the NATO military alliance would not bring stability to Europe.

"We have repeatedly said that the alliance remains a tool geared towards confrontation and its further expansion will not bring stability to the European continent," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told reporters on a conference call when asked about the possibility of Sweden and Finland joining NATO.

A senior United States Department of State official said last week that the prospect of Finland and Sweden joining NATO was part of the discussion between foreign ministers from the military alliance in Brussels.

The Social Democrats reaffirmed their policy of military non-alliance in November last year, and their stance is widely seen as the biggest hurdle to an application for NATO membership.

"The Social Democrats are the key [to membership]," Peter Esaiasson, political science professor at Gothenburg University, said. Four centre-right opposition parties back a NATO application, with the leader of a fifth saying he wanted his party to support joining if Finland goes ahead as well.

Velenjak Apt (\$2500)
250sq.m, 3bdrs
S/p, Sauna
J, balcony
yard, & pkg
Fully Furn

Shanon (adviser)

Niavaran Villa (\$4000)
1000sq.m
4bdrs, S/p
S, J, & yard
green yard
Fully Furn

Parsian

(\$2200)
Darrous Villa
300sq.m, 3bdrs
S/pool, Sauna
Jacuzzi, pkg
Fully Furn

Farmanieh (\$2400)
240sq.m, 4bdrs, S/p, F.F

(\$10000)
Zaferanieh bldg
5storey, 20bdrs
S/p, S, J, pkg lots
marble fl, storages
brand new, & F.F

Jordan (\$1500)
130sq.m, 3bdrs, F.F

Cell: +989121907875
Shanon_tari@yahoo.com
Tel : 88510081
Fax : 88506474

Vanak office (\$25 per sq.m)
200sq.m, 3bdrs, & pkg lots

IRAN NEWS
ADVERTISING
44253401

Don't Waste Your Time

Visit our website to choose your desired rental Properties

www.DeltaHOME.ir
The Most Specialized Website for Foreigners

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

IRAN NEWS
PUBLISHER OF NEWSPAPERS
ADVERTISING

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

AIG Considers Cutting Off Insurance for Russia, Ukraine

LONDON (Dispatches) - AIG, one of the world’s biggest commercial insurers, is considering cutting cover for Russia and Ukraine to shield itself from the risk of hefty claims as sanctions ratchet up and the war drags on, an insurance broker and a source familiar with the matter said.

AIG is looking at adding exclusion clauses for businesses operating in the region across a range of policies, according to the two sources who declined to be identified.

Other major insurers are also looking to exclude Russia, Ukraine and even Belarus from a range of policies, the sources said, citing some insurers and policyholders.



World Bank Warns of Bleak Economic Outlook for Ukraine, Region

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The World Bank issued dire forecasts for Ukraine as Russia’s invasion impacts both the country and its neighbors, warning in a report released yesterday of an even bleaker economic outlook if the conflict drags on.

Ukraine’s economy will collapse by 45.1 per cent this year, the bank predicted, far worse than the 10 per cent to 35 per cent downturn the IMF projected last month.

Russia will see an 11.2 per cent decline in GDP, and the World Bank said the entire region is suffering economic consequences from the war, which began in late February and has caused more than four million Ukrainians to flee to Poland, Romania and Moldova.

The conflict also has caused prices of grains and energy to soar. “The results of our analysis are very sobering. Our forecasts show that the Russian invasion in Ukraine has reversed the region’s recovery from the pandemic,” said Anna Bjerde, World Bank vice president for Europe and Central Asia.

“This is the second major shock to hit the regional economy in two years and comes at a very precarious time for the region, as many economies were still struggling to recover from the pandemic,” she told reporters.

The Washington-based institutions expect emerging and developing countries in the Europe and Central Asia region to contract by 4.1 per cent this year, a sharp reversal from the three per cent growth projected before the war, and twice as bad as the pandemic-induced recession in 2020.

Ukraine faces the starkest outlook, with its economy under “severe strain” from shrunken government revenues, businesses that have closed or are only partially operational and trade in goods that is severely disrupted.

Grain exports and other economic activity have “become impossible in large swaths of the country due to heavy damage to infrastructure,” Bjerde said.

The bank’s forecasts assumed the war would continue for a few more months, but cautioned that they “are subject to significant uncertainty.”

In a more pessimistic scenario, which reflects an escalation of the conflict, there would be a larger negative impact on the euro area, increased Western sanctions and a financial shock due to eroding confidence.

The region’s economy would contract by nearly nine per cent — worse than the 2008 global financial crisis — with a 20 per cent decline for Russia and a 75 per cent collapse for Ukraine, the report said.

Another cause for concern is a projected increase in poverty in Ukraine.

The proportion of the population living on US\$5.50 (RM23.22) a day is expected to rise to 19.8 per cent this year from just 1.8 per cent in 2021, according to the World Bank.

Even if the region avoids the worst case scenario, Eastern Europe alone is expected to see its GDP plummet by 30.7 per cent rather than grow by 1.4 per cent, as projected before the invasion.

The region also has been impacted by the sanctions imposed on Russian ally Belarus for its role in the war.

The Arab world’s most populous country has been struck by mounting economic pressures since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in late February caused global commodity price to shoot up.

As the world’s largest importer of wheat, Egypt relied on the two countries for 85 per cent of its supply, as well as 73 per cent of its sunflower oil.

CAPMAS attributed the latest hike to a surge in food prices, specifically an 11 per cent increase in bread and grain prices and a 36.2 per cent increase in the price of cooking oil.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

Planning to develop the airport network to reach the target, the country is initially aiming

to complete the ongoing construction of the Çukurova, Rize-Artvin, Bayburt-Gümüşhane and Yozgat airports, according to an Anadolu Agency (AA) report Monday that referred to the “Transportation 2053 Vision” report prepared within the scope of the Transport and Logistics Master Plan.

Some 87% of the superstructure construction of Rize-Artvin Airport in the Black Sea region, which is the second airport in Turkey being built with the sea embarkment method, has already been completed. The work on the airport was started by the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure on April 3, 2017.

Test flights are also scheduled to start in April.

In addition, the report envisaged that the Esenboğa airport in the capital Ankara, Antalya Airport in the Mediterranean coastal city and Trabzon airport on the Black Sea will be expanded, while the second phase of Istanbul’s mega airport will also be completed.

It is expected that the investments to be made and the steps to be taken will lead to an increase in the number of passengers. Accordingly, the annual number of passengers are expected to reach 202.8 million by 2053 from the current 112.4 million.

In this process, emission monitoring, reporting and verification infrastructure will be established and carbon emissions will be strategically managed.

Environmentally friendly biofuels and synthetic fuels will be used in air transport. The development of regional air cargo transportation is also among the targets.

According to the latest data, the number of passengers transiting through airports in Turkey climbed over 67% from January through March as travel rebounds following the COVID-19 pandemic-induced fallout.

Some 29.66 million passengers, including transit passengers, traveled through the Turkish airports in the first quarter of the year, a 67.7% year-over-year increase, according to Transport and Infrastructure Ministry data.

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey aims to increase the number of airports from the current 57 in the country to 61 by 2053, while the number of passengers traveling by air is expected to reach over 200 million annually.

The country has already been dubbed as an important air transport hub for Europe, western Asia and Africa in terms of both passenger and freight traffic.

Planning to develop the airport network to reach the target, the country is initially aiming

to complete the ongoing construction of the Çukurova, Rize-Artvin, Bayburt-Gümüşhane and Yozgat airports, according to an Anadolu Agency (AA) report Monday that referred to the “Transportation 2053 Vision” report prepared within the scope of the Transport and Logistics Master Plan.

Some 87% of the superstructure construction of Rize-Artvin Airport in the Black Sea region, which is the second airport in Turkey being built with the sea embarkment method, has already been completed. The work on the airport was started by the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure on April 3, 2017.

Test flights are also scheduled to start in April.

In addition, the report envisaged that the Esenboğa airport in the capital Ankara, Antalya Airport in the Mediterranean coastal city and Trabzon airport on the Black Sea will be expanded, while the second phase of Istanbul’s mega airport will also be completed.

It is expected that the investments to be made and the steps to be taken will lead to an increase in the number of passengers. Accordingly, the annual number of passengers are expected to reach 202.8 million by 2053 from the current 112.4 million.

In this process, emission monitoring, reporting and verification infrastructure will be established and carbon emissions will be strategically managed.

Environmentally friendly biofuels and synthetic fuels will be used in air transport. The development of regional air cargo transportation is also among the targets.

According to the latest data, the number of passengers transiting through airports in Turkey climbed over 67% from January through March as travel rebounds following the COVID-19 pandemic-induced fallout.

Some 29.66 million passengers, including transit passengers, traveled through the Turkish airports in the first quarter of the year, a 67.7% year-over-year increase, according to Transport and Infrastructure Ministry data.

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - OPEC told the European Union that current and future sanctions on Russia could create one of the worst ever oil supply shocks and it would be impossible to replace those volumes, and signaled it would not pump more.

European Union officials held talks in Vienna with representatives of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries amid calls for the group to increase output and as the EU considers potential sanctions on Russian oil.

“We could potentially see the loss of more than 7 million barrels per day (bpd) of Russian oil and other liquids exports, resulting from current and future sanctions or other voluntary actions,” OPEC Secretary General Mohammad Barkindo said, according to a copy of his speech seen by Reuters.

“Considering the current demand outlook, it would be nearly impossible to replace a loss in volumes of this magnitude.”

The European Union reiterated its call in the meeting for oil-producing countries to look at whether they can increase deliveries to help cool soaring oil prices, a European Commission official told Reuters.

EU representatives also pointed out that OPEC has a responsibility to ensure balanced oil markets, the official said.

OPEC has resisted calls by the United States and the International Energy Agency to pump more crude to cool prices, which reached a 14-year peak last month after Washington and Brussels imposed sanctions on Moscow following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

In the meeting with OPEC, the EU said OPEC could provide more production from its spare capacity, according to an OPEC document seen by Reuters.

Still, Barkindo said the current highly volatile market was a result of “non-fundamental factors” outside OPEC’s control, in a signal the group would not pump more.

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - OPEC told the European Union that current and future sanctions on Russia could create one of the worst ever oil supply shocks and it would be impossible to replace those volumes, and signaled it would not pump more.

European Union officials held talks in Vienna with representatives of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries amid calls for the group to increase output and as the EU considers potential sanctions on Russian oil.

“We could potentially see the loss of more than 7 million barrels per day (bpd) of Russian oil and other liquids exports, resulting from current and future sanctions or other voluntary actions,” OPEC Secretary General Mohammad Barkindo said, according to a copy of his speech seen by Reuters.

“Considering the current demand outlook, it would be nearly impossible to replace a loss in volumes of this magnitude.”

The European Union reiterated its call in the meeting for oil-producing countries to look at whether they can increase deliveries to help cool soaring oil prices, a European Commission official told Reuters.

EU representatives also pointed out that OPEC has a responsibility to ensure balanced oil markets, the official said.

OPEC has resisted calls by the United States and the International Energy Agency to pump more crude to cool prices, which reached a 14-year peak last month after Washington and Brussels imposed sanctions on Moscow following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

In the meeting with OPEC, the EU said OPEC could provide more production from its spare capacity, according to an OPEC document seen by Reuters.

Still, Barkindo said the current highly volatile market was a result of “non-fundamental factors” outside OPEC’s control, in a signal the group would not pump more.

Egypt Inflation Rises to 12.1% as Foreign Reserves Dip

CAIRO (Dispatches) - Egypt’s annual inflation rate hit 12.1 per cent in March, official figures showed yesterday, as foreign reserves declined by \$4 billion during the same month, according to the central bank.

“The annual headline inflation rate recorded 12.1 per cent for March 2022, compared to 4.8 per cent for the same month last year,” the Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS) said in a statement.

The latest figure marks an increase of more than two per cent compared to the 10 per cent inflation rate recorded in February — already at a near three-year high.

This comes less than three weeks after the Egyptian pound depreciated against the dollar, losing about 17 per cent of its value in one day.

The Arab world’s most populous country has been struck by mounting economic pressures since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in late February caused global commodity price to shoot up.

As the world’s largest importer of wheat, Egypt relied on the two countries for 85 per cent of its supply, as well as 73 per cent of its sunflower oil.

CAPMAS attributed the latest hike to a surge in food prices, specifically an 11 per cent increase in bread and grain prices and a 36.2 per cent increase in the price of cooking oil.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.

It comes after the Central Bank of Egypt said on Thursday that foreign reserves saw a US\$4 billion decline, registering US\$37 billion at the end of March 2022, compared to US\$41 billion in February.

It attributed the decline to its mobilisation of foreign reserves “to calm the markets” in the wake of the Ukraine war.

Egypt has rolled out a series of measures to mitigate the economic fallout from the conflict, including announcing a \$7 billion relief package to shield society’s most vulnerable.

It also announced it was applying for a new loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Regional ally Saudi Arabia last month deposited US\$5 billion directly in Egypt’s central bank.

A third of Egypt’s 103 million people live in poverty, and nearly the same number are vulnerable to falling into poverty, according to the World Bank.



IMF, Lebanon Strike Conditional Deal on \$3b Aid

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - The IMF announced a conditional agreement to provide Lebanon with \$3 billion in aid to help it emerge from a severe economic crisis, following months of negotiations.

The country has been battered by triple-digit inflation, soaring poverty rates and the collapse of its currency since a 2020 debt default.

Officials in Beirut applauded the announcement as it will open the door to additional financial support from foreign donors.

But experts reiterated doubts over the willingness of Lebanon’s political elite, widely blamed for endemic corruption, to implement the reforms needed to resuscitate the economy.

The deal is “a visa stamp for donor countries to begin co-operating with Lebanon and to put Lebanon back on the global finance map”, Prime Minister Najib Mikati told reporters on an upbeat note after the International Monetary Fund announcement of the “staff-level agreement”.

Saudi Arabia, a key financial backer, announced Thursday it was sending an ambassador to Lebanon for the first time since a row broke out five months ago over the Riyadh-led military intervention in Yemen.

Fellow oil-rich Gulf state Kuwait, which sided with Riyadh in the row, also announced that its ambassador would return “in response to appeals of moderate national forces” in Lebanon.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.



Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy to restore growth and financial sustainability”.

However, approval is contingent on “timely implementation of all prior actions and confirmation of international partners’ financial support”, he said in a statement.

Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, who led the IMF mission to Lebanon, said that once approved by the global crisis lender’s board, the 46-month financing program will “support the authorities’ reform strategy

Iran to Become One of Exporters of Space Services in Region

TEHRAN (MNA) - Minister of Communications and Information Technology (ICT) said that Islamic Republic of Iran will be turned into one of main exporters of space-related services in the region in the very near future.

Speaking on the sidelines of his presence in the meeting of Parliament Industries and Mines Commission on Monday, Issa Zare'pour reiterated that Iran will be turned into one of the main

exporters of space services both in region and Islamic countries.

The ICT minister called implementation of different phases of the national information network as one of the main programs of his ministry and stated, "With the planning made in this regard, it was decided to implement about 70% of the national information network in the current year in 1401 (started March 21, 2022)."



Japan Tops up LNG Reserves as Possible Russian Gas Cutoff Looms

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Japan's government has asked power companies to top up their liquefied natural gas (LNG) reserves and share energy resources, a person familiar with the contingency plan said, as civilian deaths in Ukraine push Tokyo to halt Russian fuel imports.

Utilities are scrambling for already stretched energy sources as resource-poor Japan joins the West in punishing Russia, a major oil and gas producer - a search made harder on Friday when Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced a ban on Russian coal and other sanctions.

Kishida, who faces national elections in July, is seeking to balance energy security for the world's third-biggest economy against growing pressure on the Group of Seven industrial powers for harsher sanctions against Russia as allegations of atrocities in Ukraine spread.

The International Criminal Court is investigating what Ukraine and several G7 leaders have called war crimes by Russia in Ukraine. Moscow rejects the allegations and denies targeting civilians in what it calls a "special military operation" to demilitarize and "denazify" its neighbor.

Japan's industry ministry has directed power companies to ensure they have three weeks of reserves and has urged gas and electricity companies to sell each other spare gas rather than offer it overseas, the source told Reuters.

Ministry officials are also discussing LNG measures with industry representatives, said the source, who asked not to be identified because they are not allowed to talk to the media.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry officials said no one was available who could comment. The Prime Minister's Office declined to comment, referring questions to relevant ministries.

The measures would be modest, matching steps utilities took during a power crunch last year, and Russian LNG accounts for just 3% of Japan's overall electricity production.

But Japan has little room for error. Generating capacity has been stretched by the closure of nuclear power plants in the wake of the 2011 Fukushima disaster. An earthquake last month that temporarily knocked out some power plants prompted warnings of blackouts.

Japan aims to reduce its dependence on Russian energy but will continue to import from Sakhalin oil and gas projects in Russia's Far East, in which the Japanese government and companies hold stakes, Kishida said recently.

Whether Japan can keep the Sakhalin gas flowing, however, has become less certain after Russia threatened to cut off gas to "unfriendly" European countries unless they pay in roubles.

Unlike some European countries that can store months of natural gas supplies in underground salt caverns or depleted gas fields, Japan keeps LNG superchilled in



storage above ground near import terminals. Those terminals can only store around three weeks of the fuel.

As uncertainty grows over Russian energy imports, Japanese utilities have started looking for ways to replace Russian gas, which makes up 9% of the LNG consumed in Japan. It is used to generate electricity and is also piped to homes and businesses.

"In the event that getting that (Sakhalin LNG) becomes impossible, we will look for other sources or get some from other companies," Kensuke Matsufuji, the president of Hiroshima Gas Co (9535.T), said last week.

The company, which supplies Kishida's hometown and gets half its LNG from Russia, is in talks to buy gas elsewhere, including from Malaysia, a company spokesperson told Reuters.

Tokyo Gas Co, which gets one-tenth of its LNG from Russia, is also trying to buy more gas directly from producers in order to avoid spot markets, where it is around five times as expensive.

The company has approached LNG producers in the United States but has yet to win any commitment for increased shipments, president Takashi Uchida told the Nikkei newspaper.

A Tokyo Gas spokesperson said the company could increase its supplies from the United States under existing contracts but declined to say whether it had asked to do so.

UK Growth Stutters in February as Cost-of-Living Squeeze Looms



LONDON (Dispatches) - Britain's economy slowed more sharply than expected in February, reflecting a hit to car production from component shortages, storm disruption and reduced health spending as households braced for a tighter cost-of-living squeeze.

Monthly gross domestic product growth was just 0.1% in February compared with 0.8% in January, the Office for National Statistics said on Monday, below the 0.3% forecast by economists in a Reuters poll.

"The news that the economy was hardly growing at all in February ... increases the risk of a contraction in GDP in the coming months as the squeeze on household real incomes intensifies," Ruth Gregory, senior UK economist at Capital Economics, said.

Britain's economy in February was 1.5% larger than it was two years earlier, just before the country was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, the ONS said.

GDP collapsed by more than 9% in 2020, its biggest annual fall since just after World War One, but rebounded sharply in 2021 and suffered only a modest hit from the Omicron variant of coronavirus in December.

However, economists have downgraded their growth forecasts for 2022 due to a surge in inflation caused by rising energy and commodity prices -- partly linked to the war in Ukraine -- as well as ongoing supply-chain difficulties since the pandemic.

Last month the government's Office for Budget Responsibility cut its forecast for growth in 2022 to 3.8% from 6.0% in its previous forecast in October, predicting that inflation would hit a 40-year high of 8.7% later this year.

The squeeze on households' disposable income from higher inflation and a payroll tax rise that took effect in April will be the biggest since records began in 1956/57, the OBR said. Finance minister Rishi Sunak -- whose popularity has slumped after offering only limited support to help households in a fiscal statement last month -- said he welcomed the continued growth.

However, some analysts think the economy will shrink over the three months to June, reflecting reduced COVID-related health spending and an extra public holiday to mark Queen Elizabeth's Golden Jubilee, as well as reduced household disposable income.

Record Wheat Crop, High Stocks to Help India Meet Rising Global Demand

NEW DELHI (Dispatches)

- Bumper harvests and overflowing grain bins will help India to meet wheat import needs of the world's top buyers as Russia's Ukraine invasion hits supplies from the Black Sea region, a top government official said.

India, the world's second biggest wheat producer, is prepared to meet any extra demand for wheat from buyers in south Asia and Southeast Asia, and also from countries further afield in Europe, West Asia and North Africa. Ukraine is a major producer of grains but exports have been disrupted since the Russian invasion in February.

"The Indian market has sufficient stocks, and India is in a comfortable position to meet requests from wheat importing countries," Sudhanshu Pandey, the most senior civil servant at the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, told Reuters in an interview.

India's new season wheat harvest is underway, with this year's production pegged at a record 111.32 million tons - making it the sixth season in a row that the country has produced a surplus.

India needs at least 25 million tons of wheat each year to run a food welfare program.

Last year, the government bought a record 43.34 million tons of wheat from domestic farmers, substantially higher than the amount it needs for the welfare program.

This year government purchases are likely to fall because private traders are offering farmers a higher price for wheat than the government's price of 20,150 rupees (\$265.35) a tonne, - leaving a bigger surplus for export.

"We have to meet our own requirement for the PDS and then the rest is available for global exports," Pandey said referring to the public distribution system, or food welfare program that supplies around 25



millions tons of subsidized wheat to the poor.

Pandey said if there is enough wheat for the poor, the Indian government is "happy" to see farmers getting attractive prices from private traders who have been actively buying from growers to meet rising global demand.

Wheat stocks at government warehouses totalled 19 million tons on April 1, he said, significantly higher than a target of 7.46 million tons.

Pandey said the government was encouraging wheat exports by asking port and railway authorities to give priority to outbound wheat cargoes.

India's wheat exports hit 7.85 million tons in the fiscal year to March, an all-time high and a sharp increase from 2.1 million tons in the previous year.

Pandey said India's sugar exports are expected at a record 8.2 million tons in the current 2021-22 season, higher than last year's 7.2 million tons.

Indian sugar mills have already contracted to export around 7 million tons in 2021-22, he said.

Still, India's sugar inventories on Oct. 1, 2022, when the next season begins, are expected at around 7 million tons, Pandey said, against 8.2 million tons on Oct. 1, 2021.

"This year's (sugar) production is at a record of almost 35 million tons, and our domestic requirement is about 26-26.5 million tons, so you can very clearly see that we have a surplus from the current year's production. And then we have stocks of 8.2 million tons from last year," Pandey said.

Explaining New Delhi's efforts to cut its reliance on expensive vegetable oil imports, Pandey said the long-term solution lies in raising India's domestic output, and the government is working on a plan to encourage farmers to grow more oilseeds.

Over 13m Poultry Birds Culled in France Due to Bird Flu

PARIS (Dispatches) - More than 13 million poultry birds have been culled in France since the end of November, an official at the agriculture ministry told Reuters on Monday, as France's worst bird-flu crisis grew rapidly.

France has recorded a rare upsurge in outbreaks of the highly contagious virus, believed to have been brought to the country by migrating wild birds. Cullings have spiked since the virus reached the largest French poultry-producing regions.

By April 8, 1,230 outbreaks had been recorded on farms since the first was detected on Nov. 26, according to a farm ministry website. That represented a rise of more than 10% in eight days.

The spread of bird flu has raised concern among governments and the poultry industry due to the devastation it can cause to flocks, the possibility of trade restrictions and a risk of human transmission.

The extremely aggressive and highly contagious H5N1 strain has been spreading quickly in Europe in recent months, prompting massive culls in several countries, notably Italy.

U.S. Bases...

FROM PAGE 1

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has recently reiterated that Israel is the root cause of insecurity in the region, warning regional countries that the presence of the Tel Aviv regime poses a threat to all.

"Efforts should be made to prevent those who create crisis from gaining a foothold in the region," Amir-Abdollahian said in a Saturday phone call with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

The report added that high-resolution documented photos are available on the presence of the Israeli regime's aircraft and espionage equipment in the U.S. bases in some regional countries, which confirm the intelligence gathered in the field on Israel's anti-Iran activities in the region.

According to the report, senior officials of countries where Israeli undercover experts have been present are aware of the Israeli military and intelligence presence in their countries but prefer to keep mum on this issue.

The project follows started the Zionist regime was transferred from the United States European Command (EUCOM) to US Central Command (CENTCOM), which aims to pave the ground for Tel Aviv's intelligence and military conspiracies in the region following the US withdrawal from the West Asia region.

Of course Iranian officials as well as the country's senior military commanders have repeatedly warned those who provide bases for the Israeli forces and emphasized that Iran is monitoring any move of Israeli forces or spies in any part of the region and will give due response to any atrocity against the country.

So it is better the regional countries not to turn into havens for Israeli spies and forces because it will be a threat for even their own national interests in the long term and the Islamic Republic of Iran will not let the Zionists to have evil intention against its territory and recent reports and confirmations even by the Western media show that Iran has always been right in any missile or military actions beyond its borders to stop the Zionist s' crimes and it will not let its territory be threatened by any country no matter what the West or some lackey governments claim.

Iran Halts...

FROM PAGE 1

Khatibzadeh referred to some videos and comments making the rounds with the aim of Iranophobia and Afghanophobia. He added his is meant to provoke the sentiments of the people of Iran and Afghanistan.

In recent weeks, unverified videos purporting to show Afghan refugees being tortured in Iran have been published on social media, angering many Afghans. Iran has denied the accusations.

Iran hosts millions of Afghan refugees. Last week, Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said the number of Afghans in Iran has jumped to 5 million, from nearly 4 million before the Taliban took power last August.

Official Hails Iran-Hungary Scientific Cooperation Grounds



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Head of the Iranian Parliament research center Babak Negahdari hailed the scientific cooperation grounds between Iran and Hungary and stressed development of cooperation in this field.

Speaking in a meeting with Hungarian Ambassador to Iran Zoltán Varga-Haszonits, Negahdari referred to the long-term diplomatic relations between the two countries and hoped for developing all-out relations in the near future.

He also called for activating cooperation in economic, trade, industrial, and scientific fields.

He described presence of about 2,500 Iranian students in Hungary as an indication of scientific cooperation ground.

Meanwhile, Varga-Haszonits hoped for developing relations with Iran.

He called for exchanging experiences in the field of research.

Scheffler Wins First Major at Masters

Augusta (Dispatches) - Top-ranked Scottie Scheffler captured his first major title by winning the Masters in dominating fashion, holding firm down the stretch to seize the green jacket after Tiger Woods completed his amazing comeback from severe leg injuries.

Scheffler fired a final-round one-under par 71 to finish 72 holes on 10-under 278 and defeat four-time major winner Rory McIlroy by three strokes with Australian Cameron Smith and Ireland's Shane Lowry sharing third on 283.

LICENCE HOLDER: SOKHAN GOSTAR INSTITUTE	
Switchboard: (+98) (21) 44253448 Public Relations Tel: (+98)(21) 44253450 Editorial Board: 44253449 Public Relations Fax: (+98)(21) 44253395 Advertising Department: Tel/Fax: (+98) (21) 44253335-9/44253234 Website: http://www.irannewsdaily.com	E-Mail Address: info@irannewsdaily.com ISSN 1024-6053 P.O. Box: 15875-8551 Address: No 13, Pajouhesh St., Golestan II St, Golestan St. Marzadaran Blvd., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran Printed by: Honar Sarzmin Sabz Distributed by: Cities of Iran Cultural and Artistic Institute Managing Director: Fereydoon Taherpour Asl

Greeks Seek Ban on Marseille Fans for PAOK Match

Athens (Dispatches) - Greek authorities on Monday called on UEFA to ban Marseille supporters from the Europa Conference League match at PAOK Thessaloniki on Thursday.

"The General Police Directorate of Thessaloniki submitted a written request to the competent authorities for a ban on organised and individual movement of Marseille fans, in view of the match with PAOK at the Toumba Stadium," a press release from the Ministry of Citizen Protection said.

Thompson Scores Season High 41 In Warriors' Win

New York (Dispatches) - Klay Thompson scored a season-high 41 points and led a 3-point shooting barrage as the visiting Golden State Warriors defeated the New Orleans Pelicans 128-107 in the regular-season finale for both teams.

Thompson, playing in just his 32nd game after returning from Achilles surgery, scored more than 30 points for the fourth time in his last six games and topped his previous high of 38 points. He made 7 of 14 3-pointers as the Warriors (53-29) made 19 of 33 from beyond the arc.

Golden State won its fifth consecutive game and clinched the No. 3 seed in the Western Conference playoffs. The Warriors will face sixth-seeded Denver in the first round.

The Pelicans (36-46), locked into ninth-place and a play-in home game against San Antonio on Wednesday night, held out Brandon Ingram (hamstring), Jonas Valanciunas (ankle), Herbert Jones Jr. (tibia contusion) and Devonte' Graham (knee). Naji Marshall scored 19 points, Gary Clark had 17, Trey Murphy III 15, Jose Alvarado 12 and Jared Harper 10 for the Pelicans.

Cavaliers 133, Bucks 115

Kevin Love came off the bench to score a game-high 32 points and pull down 10 rebounds as Cleveland beat visiting Milwaukee in the regular-season finale.

The No. 8 Cavs will travel to No. 7 Brooklyn on Tuesday for an Eastern Conference play-in game. Milwaukee (51-31) finished third in the East after the second-place Boston Celtics beat the Memphis Grizzlies 139-110 on Sunday night.

Nets 134, Pacers 126

Kyrie Irving scored 35 points as Brooklyn clinched the seventh seed in the Eastern Conference with a victory over skidding Indiana in New York.

Irving was 15 of 20 from the floor in his sixth home game of the season as the Nets shot 64.2 percent and ended the regular season with a four-game winning streak. Kevin Durant posted a triple-double of 20 points, a career-high 16 assists and 10 rebounds despite 5-for-17 shooting.

Los Angeles Lakers Fire Coach Frank Vogel

Los Angeles (Dispatches) - The Los Angeles Lakers fired coach Frank Vogel on Monday in the wake of the team's failure to reach the playoffs, the team confirmed in a statement.

Vogel, who led the Lakers to the NBA championship in 2020, leaves the club after three seasons.

"This is an incredibly difficult decision to make, but one we feel is necessary at this point," Lakers general manager Rob Pelinka said in a statement.

Speculation over Vogel's future with the Lakers intensified after the team's final regular season game on Sunday, with ESPN reporting that the coach would be fired.

The Lakers finished the 2021-2022 campaign 11th in the Western Conference, missing the postseason with a dismal record of 33 wins and 49 losses.

"I have a tremendous amount of respect for Frank both on and off the court," Pelinka added.

"Frank is a great coach and a good man. We will forever be grateful to him for his work in guiding us to the 2019-20 NBA championship.

"All of us here wish Frank and his wonderful family all the best for the future."

Barty to Start New Chapter With Series of Children's Books

Sydney (Dispatches) - After retiring from professional tennis, former world number one Ash Barty is set to open a new chapter in her life with the release of a series of children's books later this year.

The Australian, who decided to call time on her tennis career at the age of 25 last month, told NewsCorp that she will release a six-book 'Little Ash' series, with many stories based on her real-life experiences and her family.

The book will be published by HarperCollins and begin to hit shelves in July.

"This project has been so much fun and something I have always wanted to do," Barty said on Sunday.

Kings 116, Suns 109

Davion Mitchell posted 18 points and 15 assists, Justin Holiday, Donte DiVincenzo and Damian Jones each scored 19 points, and visiting Sacramento closed its season by beating NBA-leading Phoenix.

Sacramento led throughout, pouncing on a short-handed Phoenix lineup that was missing four starters and building a lead of as many as 19 points. The Kings shot a red-hot 14-of-26 from 3-point range. The only Suns starter to appear in the game was Mikal Bridges, and he played fewer than six minutes in completing a regular season with 82 starts. Landry Shamet



led Phoenix with a season-high 27 points, including 5-of-12 from 3-point range.

Magic 125, Heat 111

R.J. Hampton scored a career-high 21 points, making four of Orlando's franchise-record-tying 23 3-pointers, and the host Magic defeated Sunshine State rival Miami in the final regular-season game for both teams.

Chuma Okeke's 17-point performance included five triples as Orlando snapped a five-game losing streak against the Heat. The Magic shot 23-for-58 from behind the arc -- a new franchise mark for 3-point attempts -- as Hampton went 4-for-7 and center Mo Bamba (21 points, 10 rebounds) made 5 of 9 attempts.

Knicks 105, Raptors 94

Immanuel Quickley and Obi Toppin each capped their season-ending surges in style as Quickley posted a triple-double and Toppin scored a career-high 42 points as New York beat visiting Toronto in the regular-season finale for both teams.

The Raptors are locked into the fifth seed in the Eastern Conference and will open the playoffs against the fourth-seeded Philadelphia 76ers. The Knicks, who ended a seven-year postseason drought last spring, finished 11th in the East, six games out of a spot in the play-in tournament.

76ers 118, Pistons 106

Shake Milton came off of the bench to score a season-high 30 points to lead Philadelphia over Detroit in the regular-season finale.

Tyrese Maxey and Paul Reed each scored 25 points for Philadelphia (51-31) in a game that saw each team rest their best players. Detroit didn't dress its leading scorer in Cade Cunningham, while Philadelphia didn't play the NBA's leading scorer, Joel Embid, or James Harden.



Wawrinka Loses on Return After Year out Injured

Monte Carlo (Dispatches) - Stan Wawrinka lost to Alexander Bublik in the opening round of the Monte Carlo Masters as the three-time Grand Slam champion played his first ATP Tour match in 13 months.

Wawrinka, who won the Monte Carlo title in 2014, was beaten 3-6, 7-5, 6-2 by Bublik on his return from a left foot injury that

forced him to undergo two surgeries last year.

The former world number three has dropped to 236 in the rankings having last played on the main tour in Qatar in March 2021.

The 37-year-old Swiss took his first tentative steps back on court at a second-tier Challenger event in Marbella last month but was defeated in the first round.

Bublik, ranked 36th, will meet Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta or Argentine qualifier Sebastian Baez in round two.

This year's tournament is being played in front of full crowds for the first time since 2019 after the 2020 event was cancelled and the 2021 edition staged behind closed doors.

Premier League Title in City's Hands

Manchester (Dispatches) - Kyle Walker believes Manchester City can take heart from their draw with Premier League title rivals Liverpool.

Sunday's 2-2 draw at the Etihad left reigning champions City one point ahead of second-placed Liverpool at the top of the table with seven games remaining.

"Of course we want to win every game, especially when people come to our own patch, but it's very important not to lose the game," Walker told reporters.

"We can't lose a game (like this) and then be trailing them because good teams like them don't drop too many points. You take a point, you move on and they've still got to catch us. I feel that it's a step in the right direction."

The defender added: "It's in our hands, we're still top of the Premier League. That's an important message we need to hold onto and take into the next couple of games, which are very important." Goals from Kevin De Bruyne and Gabriel Jesus either side of a Diogo Jota strike put leaders City 2-1 up at half-time but Sadio Mane levelled seconds after the restart to change the tone of the match.

City are not in league action again until they are at home to Brighton on April 20.

Before that match, they travel to Spain for the second leg of their Champions League quarter-final against Atletico Madrid on Wednesday and then face Liverpool again, in the semi-finals of the FA Cup.



Merseyside Police Investigate Ronaldo Phone Incident

London (Dispatches) - Merseyside police said they were reviewing CCTV footage to establish if Manchester United's Cristiano Ronaldo committed an offence by knocking a mobile phone out of a supporter's hand after his team's 1-0 defeat at Everton.

Footage emerged on social media of Ronaldo appearing to swipe his hand towards the ground as he walked off the pitch and headed for the tunnel at Goodison Park after Saturday's match.

Eyewitnesses said the 37-year-old had knocked a fan's phone out of their hand and smashed it to the ground and Ronaldo later took to Instagram to apologise for the incident.

A spokesperson for Merseyside Police said the force was liaising with both clubs after reports of an alleged assault.

"As players were leaving the pitch at 2.30pm, it was reported that a boy was assaulted by one of the away team as they left the pitch," the spokesperson said.

"Inquiries are under way and officers are currently working with Everton Football Club to review CCTV footage and are carrying out extensive witness enquiries to establish if an offence has taken place."

