

The Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Remained Unchanged at **141,386** With Another **Zero** Death Day Over The Past 24 Hours, Iran's Health Ministry Announced on Wednesday

# IRAN NEWS

Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Condoled the Martyrdom of an Iranian Border Guard on the Milak Border Crossing, Calling on Afghan Rulers to Punish the Perpetrators And Prevent Its Repetition

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## Certain UNSC Members Abuse Their Powers

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Iran's permanent representative to the UN says certain states are abusing their powers in the Security Council as a means to pursue their "short-sighted political agenda."

"A candid review of the Security Council's practices reveals that the Council's authority and powers have been repeatedly abused by certain States," Majid Takht Ravanchi said addressing an open debate on "Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council".

Takht Ravanchi said that those states, "in pursuit of their short-sighted political objectives, particularly against developing countries, regard this body as their preferred tool to exert pressure on other countries."

Those states, by conducting such actions, both violate the UN Charter and show disrespect to the Council's authority and powers, he added.

"Such conduct not only breaches the UN Charter and fundamental principles of international law, but also demonstrates disrespect for the Council's authority and powers, jeopardizing its integrity and efficiency."

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## Installing New Centrifuges In Line With Strategic Action Plan

TEHRAN (MNA) - The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said that Iran's measure to install new centrifuges at the Fordow nuclear facility is in line with Parliament's Strategic Action Plan.

Referring to news about Iran's measure to install new centrifuges at the Fordow nuclear facility, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said that this issue has been pursued within Parliament's Strategic Action Plan to Lift Sanctions and Protect Iranian Nation's Interests, which was approved in late 2020.

Mohammad Eslami also added that in line with this law, AEOI will follow the steps according to the plans.

Earlier on June 8, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said that Iran has declared its plan to install two new cascades of advanced IR-6 centrifuges at the uranium enrichment facility in Natanz, in the central Iranian Province of Esfahan.

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## Caspian Sea Heritage For Littoral States



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Ebrahim Raisi said on Wednesday that the Caspian Sea is a capital and a heritage for its littoral states. President Raisi made the remarks prior to his flight to Turkmenistan to attend the 6th summit of the Caspian Sea littoral states.

The president was taking part in the summit at the invitation of his Turkmen counterpart.

In his remarks, the president said over 270 million people use this sea. About his Turkmenistan visit, President Raisi said issues of the Caspian Sea legal regime convention, transportation, trade, and environment are to be discussed at the summit.

Also, the non-acceptance of the presence of foreigners in the Caspian Sea on which the littoral countries have agreed will be reviewed, the president underlined.

As he noted, bilateral meetings with other counterparts are planned in Turkmenistan.

The president also said Iran and Turkmenistan have enjoyed good ties during the past three decades.

Meanwhile, he also said that the pandemic had caused obstacles to bilateral cooperation in recent months.

Fortunately, today the trade and economic exchange between Tehran and Ashgabat have enhanced, he added.

Meanwhile in Ashgabat, Raisi said that Iran-Turkmenistan relations are expanding rapidly on the basis of extensive cooperation and mutual trust.

He made the remarks in a meeting with the Chairman of the People's Council of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow on Wednesday on his trip to Ashgabat to attend the summit of Caspian Sea littoral countries.

Felicitating the anniversary of the 30th year of establishing diplomatic relations between Tehran and Ashgabat, the Iranian president praised the efforts of Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow (the former Turkmen president) in expanding Tehran-Turkmenistan ties.

Stating that there is a favorable capacity for increasing the cooperation between the two countries, President Raisi noted that the current Iranian government has a special program for the development of relations with neighborly countries.

Berdimuhamedow, for his part, appreciated the efforts of the Iranian government in the past few months to strengthen and expand relations with his country, calling for boosting Tehran-Ashgabat cooperation in the fields of politics, culture, economy, as well as trade.

"Turkmenistan seeks to open a new chapter in relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran," he stressed.

## Agreement Within Reach If U.S. Shows Serious Willingness

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran says an agreement in the new round of talks over the 2015 nuclear deal will be within reach if the United States shows serious willingness and act realistically.

"I believe that if the American side is in possession of serious resolve and acts realistically, an agreement is within reach at this stage and at this round of the negotiations," Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said.

The United States left the deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in 2018. It then returned the sanctions that the accord had lifted.

Since last year, Vienna has been hosting many rounds of talks among the JCPOA's remaining parties to examine the prospect of the deal's revival.

Amirabdollahian's remarks came on the same day as the parties gathered in the Qatari capital of Doha to pick up where they left in the Austrian capital.

A fresh round of negotiations over the removal of anti-Iran sanctions starts in the Qatari capital of Doha, in a high-stakes diplomatic process aimed at breaking the stalemate in the revival of the 2015 Iran deal.

The European Union is tasked with coordinating indirect negotiations between Iran and the US during the process. Iran does not sit down with the U.S. as it is no longer a party to the deal.

"We are serious and would, under no circumstances, cross our redlines," which have been drawn in line with the objective of "meeting the country's national interests to the maximum," the foreign minister asserted.

"The agenda is clear," he said, reiterating that Iran was prepared for the return of all the concerned parties to the 2015 agreement "if this round of the talks is accompanied with realism on the part of the U.S. and the three European states."

Since the United States' departure from the JCPOA, the UK, France, and Germany—the US's allies in the deal—have been cooperating with Washington's sanction regime against Iran as closely as possible.

## ViewPoint

### By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

## Double Standard In Western Style

The West's double standard approach regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran has no end and every time in every event or meeting shows itself and this time, this double standard approach was seen during the meeting of the leaders of the G7 in Germany where the participants in a statement, once again, listed some baseless claims and charges against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Western countries in recent months, weeks and days have urged Tehran to return to the negotiation table for sealing the fate of the JCPOA but at the same time have claimed some baseless charges against Tehran and it is a mere double standard approach regarding Tehran.

Hours after issuing the statement in Germany, Iran's new Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Man'ani refuted the claims and said Tehran vehemently denounces as "baseless, one-sided, and unjust" an anti-Iranian statement by the Group of Seven industrialized states.

The statement was issued during a meeting of the group's sevenfold members—Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States—in Germany on Tuesday.

It urged "restriction of Iran's nuclear program," faulted Iran's "ballistic missile activities," and accused it of "human rights violations."

Kan'ani said the country "strongly condemns" the passages of the statement.

The statement, he said, "deliberately ignores" the United States' departure from a 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and others as well as Washington's subsequent re-imposition of illegal sanctions against the Iranian people.

The Iranian official reprimanded the countries that had issued the statement for their cooperation with the U.S. in imposing sanctions and their refusal to confront the coercive economic measures.

He also spurned any accusations directed towards Iran's peaceful nuclear energy program, saying the statement "deliberately" ignores the Islamic Republic's ban on all nuclear weapons.

Kan'ani reminded that the G7 countries were facing Iran with "factitious accusations," while they, themselves, were in possession of the world's "biggest nuclear arsenal."

The spokesman, meanwhile, blasted the statement for trying to portray Iran's comprehensive cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' nuclear body, in a bad light.

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## Iran Slams Europe's Fabricated Human Rights Standards

TEHRAN (IP) - Secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights slammed Europe for its fabricated human rights standards.

Media sources report about the 2,000 African migrants who were trying to enter Spain's Melilla but were beaten by the security forces such that about 20 of them were killed and a number of others were wounded.

Kazem Gharibabadi wrote in a tweet on Wednesday: "The EU's fabricated human rights standards will never lead to real promotion & protection of the rights of people. What is it, the Masque of the Red Death?"

"African migrants seeking a better life end up dead at the Spain-Morocco border," Gharibabadi said.

In April also more than 90 irregular migrants were reported to have died in another tragedy in the Mediterranean.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi in a tweet then alluded to the double standards adopted by European countries on the refugee issue.

He added: "Europe has proven its ability to host 4 million refugees from Ukraine generously and effectively. It must now urgently consider how to apply this to the refugees and other migrants knocking on its doors."

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## Minister Stresses Reinforcement of Insurance System

TEHRAN (IP) - The Iranian Minister of Health says controlling measures have been taken in the Food and Drug Administration, and the ministry is just waiting for the insurance companies to be strengthened

On the sidelines of the weekly cabinet session on Wednesday, the Iranian Minister of Health, Bahram Einollahi, said almost all of the Iranian people came under insurance services, except a few people, for free. "At the same time that the insurance companies are strengthened, they must cover the medical needs of the people," Einollahi said.

## U.S., NATO Blamed For Destruction In Afghanistan

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

**TEHRAN - President Ebrahim Raisi says two decades of the military presence of the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) brought nothing to Afghanistan but bloodshed and destruction.**

Raisi made the remarks in a meeting with visiting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee of Pakistan General Nadeem Raza in Tehran on Tuesday.

"It is imperative that the Taliban form a broad-based government in Afghanistan in a way that all ethnic groups participate in it to bring peace and development to the country," he said.

The Iranian chief executive thanked the Pakistani government and army for their cooperation to improve security on the common border areas and said, "Good relations between the two countries' armed forces have created relatively appropriate security conditions on the border between the two countries."



The Pakistani general, for his part, described Iran as a close friend of his country and noted that numerous diplomatic visits of Pakistani officials to Iran in the past month proved Islamabad's keenness to boost relations with Tehran.

In a phone conversation with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian late last month, Pakistan's new Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said Islamabad is determined to strengthen cooperation with Iran, particularly in the economic sector, expressing hope for a removal of obstacles in the way of enhancing ties.

The top Pakistani diplomat said the two countries enjoy good relations as well as cultural and historical commonalities.

## Iran Entered Doha Talks To Get Sanctions Removed

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iranian Government Spokesman Ali Bahadori Jahromi said Wednesday that Iran has always taken an active approach and initiatives to get the sanctions removed that are why it is continuing to negotiate in Doha.

"Iran has always taken an active approach and initiatives to get the sanctions removed, and Borrell's visit to Iran was in line with that aim," Ali Bahadori Jahromi, Iranian Government Spokesman said in his weekly press conference on Wednesday in response to a question on the start of indirect talks with Washington in the Qatari capital of Doha on Tuesday.

"The continuation of negotiations to resolve the problem of unilateral oppressive sanctions was accepted by both sides," the spokesman added.

He also noted that "The Doha trip and Qatar talks are in line with the continuation of negotiations so that Iran, as before, will hold talks directly with the European Union in Doha. We hope that with the passage of the new US administration from the current path, positive and acceptable changes in the process will be achieved."

## Iran Becomes 1st Mideast State to Indigenize Cloud Seeding Radar Tech

TEHRAN (IFP) - For the first time in the Middle East, Iranian scientists have successfully indigenized the advanced technology used in cloud seeding radars as part of efforts to address the issue of water scarcity in the country.

In an article published on Wednesday, Fars news agency reported that the "complicated and sensitive" technology has been subjected to sanctions, and that the main "formula" to build the radars cannot be found at any scientific centers of the world.

However, scientists with an Iranian knowledge-based company, named Basamad Mowj Gha'em, managed to gain access to the tech after years of research hard work, it said.

The pieces of hardware used in the Iranian version of the radars are even more efficient compared to foreign models, the report added.

Cloud seeding is a scientific process that improves a cloud's ability to make rain or snow and helps control other weather events.

Along with other states in the Middle East and those in North Africa, Iran — a semi-arid country — is heading fast toward severe water shortages.

Downpour levels have also sharply plummeted in Iran over the past years, leaving many regions suffering from drought.

## Minister Rejects Rumors of Planned Ban on Instagram, WhatsApp

TEHRAN (IFP) - Iran's minister of information and communications technology dismisses rumors of a government decision to ban widely-used WhatsApp and Instagram social networking services.

Eisa Zarepour said that the claims that the government was planning to ban Instagram and WhatsApp were mere "rumors," and that "no such decision had been taken in any section of the country."

He added, however, that the ministry under his watch was not in charge of the Internet filtering issue.

"I don't know why such rumors are spread across the country since they work to get the public worried," the minister said.

Earlier, Iranian lawmaker Gholamreza Nouri elaborated on the fate of the much-criticized Internet Protection Bill, whose future remains uncertain amid widespread criticism of the measure.

Many believe the bill, if adopted, could pave the way for vast Internet censorship in the country.

Fueling that speculation, Nouri said the adoption of the bill could lead to a ban on popular applications such as WhatsApp and Instagram, sparking new concerns among the people.

### Tehran Backs Russia's Proposal for Caspian Sea Cooperation Mechanism



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said that Tehran supports Russia's proposal for formation of a cooperation mechanism among Caspian Sea littoral states.

Amirabdollahian made the remarks while addressing a foreign ministerial level meeting of Caspian Sea littoral states in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

He said that the meeting in Ashgabat would help further strengthen cooperation among the five littoral states of the Caspian Sea.

The foreign minister said that determining the seabed and sub-seabed borders of the Caspian Sea are still remaining.

Although it is more than four years that the five countries signed the legal convention of the sea, negotiations are still underway in this regard, he said.

Amirabdollahian reiterated that Iran favors collective cooperation mechanisms to maintain peace and security in the Sea which he said is of special importance for all littoral states.

He said that the areas of trade and transportation are two arms of growth in the Sea that need to be paid special attention by the five littoral states.

## Tehran, Doha Consultations Strengthen Regional Stability

TEHRAN (MNA) - Deputy Foreign Minister for the Political Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani described continuous consultations between Tehran and Doha as strengthening stability of the region.

Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs met and held talks with Qatari Acting Foreign Minister Ahmed bin Hassan Al-Hammadi and Deputy Foreign Minister for Regional Affairs Mohammed Al-Khalifi in Qatari capital of Doha on Tuesday evening.

During the meeting, the two sides emphasized the need for expanding bilateral relations between the two countries.

Bagheri Kani pointed to the recent trip of Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi to Qatar and also visit of Emir of Qatar to Iran which shows determination of leaders of the two countries to diversify and improve joint cooperation.

Bagheri Kani also stressed that continuous consultations between the two countries strengthen stability in the region.

Iran's deputy foreign minister thanked Qatar for hosting this round of negotiations on the removal of anti-Iranian sanctions.

Qatari Deputy Foreign Minister, for his part, pointed to the commonalities between the two countries and emphasized the need for the growing relations between government of Qatar and Iran in all fields.

## Footprints of Moles Seen in Assassinations in Iran

TEHRAN (IFP) - Iran's enemies have Iranian spies and moles who have sold themselves out and who help foes carry out assassinations inside the country, an Iranian lawmaker says.

Jabbar Kouchakinejad, a member of Parliament for the city of Rasht, told Fars news agency on Wednesday that homegrown spies had helped Iran's enemies.

"In the assassinations that have taken place [in Iran], the fingerprints of the enemy's spies and moles in the country can be seen, since these people plan to cause disturbances and insecurity through

these blind assassinations," Kouchakinejad said.

"It is really regrettable that some act to sell out their homeland in pursuit of personal gain," he added. "Such people are prepared to do anything to meet their personal interests, and the information that they pass on to the enemy is not accurate because, firstly, they haven't gotten to know our nation well, and, secondly, they are only after pursuing and meeting their interests with some information."

He said the homegrown spies also sought a goal of driving a wedge between the Iranian people and government.

## IRCS Provides Relief to Earthquake Victims in Afghanistan

KABUL (IP) - Iranian Red Crescent Society's Vice-President said that the country provides humanitarian aid for earthquake victims in Afghanistan.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society's Vice-President for Health, Treatment, and Rehabilitation, Peyman Namdar, met with the Deputy Ambassador of Iran to Afghanistan, Hassan Mortazavi.

During the meeting on Tuesday, Peyman Namdar stated that the Iranian Red Crescent Society pays attention to human values in the aid field and is far from political issues.

The IRCS vice-president for health, treatment, and rehabilitation added that after learning about the dimensions of the earthquake in Afghanistan, he went to the earthquake-stricken areas with an IRCS team and aid.

Thousands have been left homeless or injured by the magnitude 5.9 earthquake in Paktika and Khost provinces the last Wednesday, which state media said killed 1,150 people. An aftershock on Friday took five more lives.

During the meeting, the Iranian deputy ambassador to Kabul for his part appreciated the efforts of the Iranian Red Crescent Society team in providing humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society has so far dispatched five humanitarian aid packages, including food, medical supplies, tents, and other necessities, to the Afghan people, and the IRCS rescue team is also present in the earthquake-stricken areas.

IRCS' new consignment of aid, which entered Afghanistan from the Milak border crossing in Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan Province, arrived in Paktika Province on Tuesday.

## Europe Indebted to Iran for Fighting Drug Trafficking | Tehran, Damascus Confer on Developing Joint Cultural Cooperation

TEHRAN (IFP) - European countries owe Iran a lot for blocking the transit of drugs destined for Europe, the head of the Iranian anti-narcotics police says, noting the Islamic Republic confiscated over 1,200 tons of illicit narcotics last year.

Majid Karimi, however, slammed Europe for depriving the Islamic Republic of the latest technology to fight drug trafficking in line with sanctions spearheaded by the US, while they directly benefit from Iran's anti-drugs measures.

"If the Islamic Republic of Iran stops the fight (against drugs) for only a month, the European countries will have to gather every gram of the huge hauls of drugs from their streets," he warned.

Iran is a major transit route for drug trafficking from its eastern neighbor Afghanistan to European countries and has been praised by international organizations, including United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for its role in cutting supply lines to the West.

Afghanistan has been among the world's major suppliers of opium and heroin. Drug smuggling from Afghanistan gathered pace during the 20-year occupation of the county by US-led forces.

Thousands of Iranian forces have been killed in the fight against drug trafficking over the past 40 years.

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) Peyman Jebelli and Syrian Culture Minister Lubana Mshaweh discussed developing joint cultural cooperation, especially in the field of cinema.

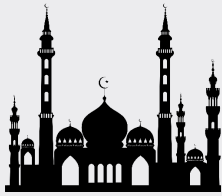
The two sides reviewed activating cooperation through signing MoU and the efforts to jointly make movies.

Jebelli hoped for his visit to Syria to become a turning point in creating cultural convergence between the two nations.

Meanwhile, Mshaweh stressed the importance of setting a timetable for implementing agreements.

He also emphasized Syria's willingness to use Iran's cinematic experiences.





## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:08
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:45
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:06
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	05:52

18. And Allah makes the Signs plain to you: for Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom.  
19. Those who love (to see) scandal published broadcast among the Believers,  
will have a grievous Penalty in this life and in the Hereafter: Allah knows, and ye know not.  
Surah 24. Light (18 - 19)

## Tehran, Warsaw Explore Mechanisms to Broaden Economic Ties

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN – Iran and Poland in a trade meeting explored mechanisms to broaden economic relation which is not in a satisfactory condition.**

Iran Chamber of Commerce hosted the trade meeting where Iranian businessmen and Polish counterparts, as well as Vice-President of Iran Chamber of Commerce Mr. Hossein Salahvarzi, Vice-President of Polish Chamber of Commerce and Head of Iran-Poland Council Mr. Andrzej Pilat, Deputy Head of Embassy of Poland Mr. Wojciech Unolt were present.

Addressing the participants, Mr. Salahvarzi pointed to the good and historic relations between Iran and Poland and expressed hope that trade activities between the two countries would continue strongly. He pointed to dispatches of trade delegations and signing several agreements, adding that unfortunately since 2017, the trade exchange between the two states has declined considerably due to the sanctions and expressed hope there would be enough determination between the private sectors of the two countries for return to the heyday level.

He reiterated that if the existing issues in the field of financial exchanges between Iran and Poland are improved through creating a special mechanism between the two states and Iran and Poland can reach agreement on restoring preferential tariff, then the level of economic cooperation will broaden.

Salahvarzi then pointed to the advantages and grounds for cooperation between Iran and Poland, adding that considering good potentials of Poland in the agro industries and agro machineries, rail transportation and locomotive manufacture, there are good grounds for cooperation. He noted that Iran can take advantage of Poland's experience in the marine transportation.

He also said that mining sector is another ground for cooperation between the two states, adding that Poland is importer of organic chemical materials and considering that many companies in Iran are active in this field, Iran can be a supplier to Poland. He added that three are some talks between both countries on oil and energy and expressed hope both countries can reach acceptable level of cooperation in this field.

Then Vice-President of Polish Chamber of Commerce and Head of Iran-Poland Council Mr. Pilat, for his part, pointed to the relation between Iran and Poland which has been growing non-stop since 2001, adding that this trend has declined in recent two years because of the pandemic and some other issues. He further said that he is sure that Iran is a good trade partner for Poland in the region as Poland will be a good trade partner for Iran. He emphasized that the ties between both countries have good potentials to be



improved, adding that the biggest problem is in the field of financial exchanges. He added that unfortunately both sides lost the financial mechanism which had been created some four years ago and expressed hope the presence of this delegation in Tehran would be a prelude for resumption of this mechanism.

Pilat stressed that the economic relation between Iran and Poland should continue without intermediary and regardless of the political problems, adding that direct and face to face relation is the best way for advancing the goals. He stressed that Poland wants to have a deep relation with Iran.

Meanwhile Polish Diplomat Mr. Wojciech, for his part, pointed to the deep and strong political relation between Tehran and Warsaw and recent meetings of Iranian and Polish officials in recent weeks, and said that the economic cooperation between the two states has increased with full speed.

He then pointed to the initiatives taken by his country regarding its relation with Iran for more cooperation with EU, admitting that there are some problems like the revival of the JCPOA that Poland has no role in them and Warsaw supports resolving the problem through talks.

He said that in the future, Poland will have an attractive offer to Iran, but did not reveal its detail.

Meanwhile Head of Iran-Poland Joint Chamber of Commerce Mr. Rahim Moulaei, for his part, said that soon chambers of commerce of the two countries are to hold a specialize exhibition on Poland, adding that broadening trade and tourism relations as well as planning and creating the ground for traders of the two countries are of the main tasks of the Iran-Poland Joint Chamber of Commerce.

He pointed to the necessity of developing tourism industry between the two countries, expressing hope that direct flight between Tehran and Warsaw would be launched because with the probable revival of the JCPOA, the economic relation would increase. He added that Iranian economic activists are ready to cooperate with Polish companies with an eye on developing exports.

Moulaei stated that the special office of Polish Chamber in Iran will be inaugurated on July 20, adding that in line with developing halal trade, Iran seeks connecting Europe through the corridor of Europe.

## Finland Hails Iran Health System Development



TEHRAN (IRNA) - The ambassador of Finland to Tehran hailed Iran's health system development, saying that his country is ready to expand health diplomacy with Iran.

Kari Kahiluoto made the remarks in a meeting with Iranian Deputy Health Minister Mohammad Hossein Niknam on Wednesday.

The Finnish ambassador in the meeting announced his country's preparedness to broaden ties with Iran, saying that Helsinki can expand ties with Tehran in all areas of health sector.

He added that Iran is a rich and successful country in the field of health and that the development of bilateral cooperation should be completely activated.

Niknam, for his part in the meeting, hailed Finland's health system, calling for experience exchanges between the two countries in the field and expansion of cooperation between pharmaceutical and medical equipment companies of the two countries.

## Iran to Hold Exclusive Exhibition in Kazakhstan

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran is to hold an exclusive exhibition in Kazakhstan to display the export capacities and develop trade.

The exhibition will be held at the Almaty International Exhibition (Atakent-Ekspo) on July 1-3. The event is organized in collaboration with the Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI).

The following exhibition will display various fields including petrochemical products, construction material, technical services, machinery, oil and gas industries, cosmetics, tourism, home appliances, furniture, carpet, food items, and auto and auto parts.

The exhibition is expected to boost trade between border provinces including Golestan Province and find new markets.

## Knowledge-Based Firms to Collaborate in Developing Oil Fields

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iranian Oil Ministry is going to use the capabilities of the country's knowledge-based companies to implement a program for improving the recovery factor of 750 oil fields across the country.

In this regard, the ministry will be collaborating with Iran National Innovation Fund (INIF) as the government body in charge of supporting knowledge-based companies, Shana reported.

To brief the companies and investors about the details of the mentioned program, INIF is going to host a meeting in which the project will be presented by the officials of National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) to financial institutions, traders active in money and capital markets and other investors.

In this meeting, while introducing the generalities of the project, investment opportunities in this field will be explained to investors and they will also be introduced to the representatives of the knowledge-based companies that are going to work on the project.

Over the past two decades, the Iranian Oil Ministry has become more and more determined to collaborate with knowledge-based and research-based companies, universities, and research institutes to advance its development goals.

To pursue its new goals, the Oil Ministry has signed numerous memorandums and agreements with domestic knowledge-based firms and research institutions in recent years and such entities now play a significant role in making the country's oil and gas industry more and more self-reliant.

## Goal-Oriented Planning, Main Reason for Rising Non-Oil Exports

TEHRAN (MNA) - Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Alireza Peyman-Pak has said comprehensive planning and focus on neighboring countries have been the main reasons for the significant increase in the country's non-oil exports in the past nine months.

"One of the main issues that should be considered in export development is being program-oriented and having a strategy," Peyman-Pak told the national TV.

As reported by the TPO portal, the official noted that the government has set a goal for increasing the country's non-oil exports to \$75 billion by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (starts in March 2025), adding: "We have set the minimum increase in exports at \$75 billion."

He mentioned the prioritization of export destinations based on the country's resources and said: "In recent years, the markets of Southeast Asia and Africa have been neglected considering all available opportunities, and now by prioritizing Africa, we have been able to increase the exports to this continent by 100 percent, but the number is still low."

Peyman-Pak further noted that one of the government's policies to promote exports is to dispatch trade delegations along with officials on their visits to other countries, saying: "During the current government administration all ministers and officials that have visited other countries have been accompanied by trade delegations."

We recently dispatched a trade delegation to Russia which was the largest delegation exchange in the history of the two countries' relations, he added.

Referring to the \$605-million positive trade balance of the country in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), the TPO head said: "This happened in a situation when we had economic reforms, the Ukraine war, and the Shanghai quarantine, and we were able to increase the trade balance." He also stated that the exports to Turkey have increased by 100 percent.

Peyman-Pak also mentioned the reason for the recent decrease in exports to Iraq, saying that the main reason for the decline in exports to Iraq was the increase in the prices of Iranian goods due to the elimination of the subsidized currency allocations for some goods.

## Return of Iran Oil to Market Prevents Deepening Global Economic Recession

TEHRAN (Shana) - The former director of international affairs of the National Iranian Oil Company says the return of Iran's crude oil to the market could prevent further deepening of the global economy.

Hojjatullah Ghanimi-Fard said that the demand for crude oil in the European Union has decreased due to tensions between Russia and Ukraine and in China due to several periods of the coronavirus pandemic. "China and India actually imported more oil from Russia after tensions between Russia and Ukraine, and Russia has sent some of its oil to Asia after failing to sell it to certain European countries and the United States."

Asked which of India and China had the largest share of oil imports from Russia after tensions between Russia and Ukraine, he said: "In terms of percentage, India had more imports from Russia compared to a year earlier, but in terms of the volume of imports, China imports more oil from Russia than other countries like Saudi Arabia. For example, the latest official Chinese statistics for last month (May) show that Russian oil exports to China increased by 55% compared to the same period last year to about 1.98 million barrels per day, but Saudi exports increased by 9% to 1.84 mbd indicating that Russia stands first as the crude oil exporter to China."

The former adviser to the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) noted that based on economic relations in the oil market, if crude oil imports from one country decrease, oil imports from another country or other countries with similar crude oil will increase. "After the collapse of the former Soviet Union, Iran acquired a part of the Eastern European market and replaced Russian crude, but after a few years of being able to increase its production, Russia regained its markets and Iran stepped in other markets."

Ghanimi-Fard stressed that Iranian oil can be replaced after the lifting of sanctions due to the existing demand in the oil market, adding: "Although in the current situation the demand for oil is not very high and high oil prices are due to psychological factors in the market and concerns about the state of oil supply in the future, delays in a country's production and exports can push oil prices higher than they are now, so more supply can help calm oil prices and prevent a recession in the global economy due to rising prices."

"Whenever the price of oil jumps in the world without economic growth being a reason and this price jump is not corrected in the short term, demand will decrease due to the reduction of consumption by ordinary consumers and various industries," he said. "With reduced consumption in various industries, economic growth will gradually decline and then the world economy will be accompanied by a recession."

The former adviser to the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) said that the way out of a global economic recession is the full return of Iranian, Venezuelan and Libyan oil to the market. "For example, the return of Iranian oil to the market will reduce prices and prevent a decline in demand, and eliminate the global recession that many predict will occur later this year or early next year."

## Qatar World Cup; Opportunity to Illustrate Iran Worthy Image

TEHRAN (MNA) - The head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) says the 2022 Qatar World Cup is an opportunity to illustrate the Iranian culture and the brilliance of Iranian artists and a worthy image of Iran in Qatar.

Addressing the second meeting of the coordinating committee for the presence of Iran's cultural teams in the Qatar World Cup, the head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) stressed the role of this organization as a facilitator for the participation of cultural institutions in the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Mohammad Mehdi Imanipour added that the true purpose of holding such meetings is to create

coordination between the related apparatus to bring each of the programs to a desirable end.

Given the very rich and significant capacity of Iran in the field of culture, the 2022 World Cup in Qatar is a ground for introducing Iranian culture and the brilliance of Iranian artists, he stressed.

Holding concerts, street theaters, and local music performances in public spaces and hotels, holding exhibitions of artistic works and the screening of Iranian films in art venues were among the issues raised by Imanipour.

He also expressed hope to use the potential of domestic cultural institutions to demonstrate the worthy image of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Qatar in the best way.



## Bulgaria Expels 70 Russian Diplomatic Staff

SOFIA (Dispatches) - Bulgaria said on Tuesday it was expelling 70 Russian diplomatic staff over espionage concerns and had set a cap on the size of Moscow's representation as tensions between two countries that were once close allies fractured over Ukraine.

The move, announced by the foreign ministry and outgoing prime minister, was the largest expulsion of Russian diplomats by Sofia in recent years and more than halves the size of Moscow's diplomatic footprint in the Balkan country.

An unnamed source told Russia's TASS news agency that Moscow, which in April cut off gas to Bulgaria over its refusal to agree to a rouble payment mechanism despite its heavy dependence, would respond.



## Lebanon to Host Arab League Meeting at Weekend

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - A delegation from Arab League countries will travel to Lebanon for a two-day gathering that includes meetings with the crisis-ridden country's top officials, Beirut's caretaker government said on Tuesday.

Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib said leaders including Arab League Secretary General Ahmed Aboul Gheit would arrive in Lebanon on Friday.

Bou Habib said the final list of attendees had yet to be confirmed but included ministers from several Arab countries who would meet with Lebanon's president, caretaker prime minister and the speaker of parliament.

A government source confirmed Aboul Gheit would meet with President Michel Aoun on Saturday.



## Finland, Sweden Back on Path to NATO Membership



MADRID (Dispatches) - NATO ally Turkey lifted its veto over Finland and Sweden's bid to join the Western alliance on Tuesday after the three nations agreed to protect each other's security, ending a weeks-long drama that tested allied unity against Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The breakthrough came after four hours of talks just before a NATO summit began in Madrid, averting an embarrassing impasse at the gathering of 30 leaders that aims to show resolve against Russia, now seen by the U.S.-led alliance as a direct security threat rather than a possible adversary.

It means Helsinki and Stockholm can proceed with their application to join the nuclear-armed alliance, cementing what is set to be the biggest shift in European security in decades, as the two, long neutral Nordic countries seek NATO protection.

"Our foreign ministers signed a trilateral memorandum which confirms that Turkey will ... support the invitation of Finland and Sweden to become members of NATO," Finnish President Niinisto said in a statement.

"The concrete steps of our accession to NATO will be agreed by the NATO allies during the next two days, but that decision is now imminent," Niinisto said.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg and Turkey's presidency confirmed the accord in separate statements, after talks between the NATO chief, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson and Niinisto.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson tweeted: "Fantastic news as we kick off the NATO summit. Sweden and Finland's membership will make our brilliant alliance stronger and safer."

Stoltenberg said NATO's 30 leaders would now invite Finland, which shares a 1,300 km (810-mile) border with Russia, and Sweden to join NATO and that they would become official "invitees". He told reporters: "The door is open - the joining of Finland and Sweden into NATO will take place."

However, even with a formal invitation granted, NATO's 30 allied parliaments must ratify the decision by leaders, a process that could take up to a year.

Turkey's main demands, which came as a surprise to NATO allies in late May, were for the Nordic countries to stop supporting Kurdish militant groups present on their territory, and to lift their bans on some sales of arms to Turkey.

Stoltenberg said the terms of the deal involved Sweden intensifying work on Turkish extradition requests of suspected militants and amending Swedish and Finnish law to toughen their approach to them.

Stoltenberg said Sweden and Finland would lift their restrictions on selling weapons to Turkey.

Turkey has raised serious concerns that Sweden has been harbouring what it says are militants from the banned Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which took up arms against the Turkish state in 1984. Stockholm denies the accusation.

The Turkish presidency statement said the four-way agreement reached on Tuesday meant: "Full cooperation with Turkey in the fight against the PKK and its affiliates."

It also said Sweden and Finland were "demonstrating solidarity with Turkey in the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations."

## Dozens Missing After Russian Missile Strike on Mall Kills 18

KREMENCHUK (Dispatches) - Firefighters searched the rubble of a Ukrainian shopping mall where authorities said 36 people were missing after a Russian missile strike that killed at least 18, as a regional governor reported another "enemy attack" further east.

The attack in the central city of Kremenchuk and the reported strike in the Dnipropetrovsk region were far from any frontlines. The mall attack drew a wave of global condemnation, with France's Emmanuel Macron calling it a "war crime".

Ukraine said Moscow had killed civilians deliberately in Kremenchuk. Russia said it had struck a nearby arms depot and falsely claimed that the mall was empty.

The governor of Dnipropetrovsk said rescue workers were searching for people under rubble in the region's main city, Dnipro. The official, Valentyn Reznichenko, said Russia fired six missiles, three of which were shot down. Railway infrastructure and an industrial enterprise had been destroyed and a services company was burning.

"Mass enemy attack on Dnipropetrovsk region. Six missiles!!!" he wrote on the Telegram app.



## G7 Says China Must Press Russia to Stop Ukraine War

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN (Dispatches) - G7 leaders urged China on Tuesday to use its influence with Russia to stop its invasion of Ukraine and drop "expansive maritime claims" in the South China Sea, in unprecedentedly tough criticism of Beijing's policies and human rights record.

They called on China to press Russia to pull forces out of Ukraine immediately and unconditionally, citing a ruling by the International Court of Justice that Moscow suspend its military operation, and related U.N. General Assembly resolutions.

In a communique concluding their three-day summit in the Bavarian Alps, the Group of Seven rich industrial democracies took aim at what they called coercive Chinese non-market policies that distorted the global economy.

The Chinese section of the communique, highlighted by the United States, referred to China's "non-transparent and market-distorting interventions" and other forms of economic and industrial directives.

The G7 leaders committed to work together to ensure a level playing field for their businesses and workers.

The communique further voiced serious disquiet about the situation in the East and South China seas and unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion.

"We stress that there is no legal basis for China's expansive maritime claims in the South China Sea," it said.

It also the G7 was now "gravely concerned" - a term not used in their summit a year ago - about the human rights situation in China, including forced labour in Tibet and Xinjiang. China should also honour its commitments to uphold rights, freedom and a high degree of autonomy in Hong Kong, they said.

A NATO summit starting immediately after the G7 summit will tackle China's deepening ties with Russia since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and what is seen as Beijing's growing inclination of China to flex geopolitical muscle abroad.

## Ecuador Talks Falter After Soldier Killed

QUITO (Dispatches) - Negotiations to end more than two weeks of disruptive living cost protests by Indigenous Ecuadorans were dealt a blow when the killing of a soldier prompted the government to suspend participation.

President Guillermo Lasso, in a brief address to the nation, accused Indigenous leader Leonidas Iza of self-serving politics, and said: "We will not negotiate with those who hold Ecuador hostage."

Iza's powerful Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (Conaie), in turn, accused the government of "authoritarianism" and said Lasso would bear the consequences for "his hawkish policy."

The military said a soldier died and five police and seven soldiers were injured in an early-morning attack on a tanker truck escort in the country's east.

It said a group armed with "spears and guns" attacked uniformed personnel protecting a convoy of tankers headed for the so-called ITT block of oil fields in Orellana province, where more than a billion barrels are stored.

Interior Minister Patricio Carillo expressed condolences to the family of fallen soldier Jose Chamarro in a tweet, and described the attackers as "violent demonstrators."

A second day of talks with Indigenous representatives scheduled for Tuesday morning failed to get underway as negotiators from the government did not show up.

Mediator Virgilio Saucicela, president of the National Assembly, announced that the government was "not present" as it was "conducting an analysis" of the early-morning events.

Iza referred to a "brutal attack" but said there was no proof protesters were responsible.

"The country has witnessed all the efforts we have made to establish a fruitful and sincere dialogue," insisted Lasso, a former banker who took office just over a year ago.

"But we will not sit down again to dialogue with Leonidas Iza, who only defends his political interests and not those of his base."

Tuesday's fatality came on top of five demonstrators dead and hundreds of civilians and security personnel wounded in clashes between the security forces and protesters blockading key roads and disrupting supply lines.

Some 150 people have been arrested, according to observers. Crude is the South American country's main export, but production has been halved from about 520,000 barrels per day prior to the protests, the government said.



## UN Estimates War Has Killed 1.5% of Syria's Population

GENEVA (Dispatches) - The UN human rights office said today that 306,887 civilians had been killed in Syria during the conflict since March 2011, or about 1.5 per cent of its pre-war population, in what it said was the highest estimate yet.

Syria's conflict sprang out of peaceful protests against President Bashar al-Assad's rule in March 2011 and morphed into a multi-sided, protracted conflict that sucked in world powers.

The frontlines have been mostly frozen for years but violence is continuing and the humanitarian crisis grinds on with millions still displaced within Syria's borders.

The latest death toll, based on eight information sources and covering the first 10 years of the conflict through to March 2021, amounts to 83 deaths on average each day of whom 18 were children.

"The extent of civilian casualties in the last 10 years represents a staggering 1.5 per cent of the total population of the Syrian Arab Republic at the beginning of the conflict, raising serious concerns as to the failure of the parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law norms on the protection of civilians," according to the report which was mandated by the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Still, the estimate is thought to represent "only a portion of all deaths", the report said, since it only includes those who died as a direct result of the war and not indirect deaths from lack of healthcare or access to food or water. Nor did it include non-civilian deaths.

The top cause of civilian deaths was from so-called "multiple weapons" (35.1 per cent) which includes clashes, ambushes and massacres, a UN report that accompanied the statement showed. The second cause of death was by heavy weapons (23.3 per cent).

UN rights chief Michelle Bachelet said its latest analysis would give a "clearer sense of the severity and scale of the conflict".

The United Nations said last year that at least 350,209 people had been killed in Syria so far. However, Francesca Marotta, in charge of methodology at the UN rights office, clarified today that those figures also included non-civilians.





# Asthma: Why It Can Be Worse During the Summer



LONDON (Dispatches) - Summertime is officially here. This can mean outdoor sports, backyard barbecues, and family vacations.

However, for many people, summer also means more symptoms of asthma.

So, what exactly is asthma and why is it sometimes worse during the summer?

“By definition, asthma is a reversible airway obstruction,” Dr. Zab Mosenifar, FCCP, FACP, the medical director of the Women’s Guild Lung Institute at Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles, told Healthline.

Experts say if you have asthma, triggers from the environment can make it difficult to breathe. Anyone can have it, but some people may be at higher risk.

“Asthma is more common in people who live in congested environments because they have a higher exposure to pollutants. Also, asthma mortality is higher for different socioeconomic groups for very complicated reasons of social issues, lack of proper healthcare, lack of access to medical care, and so on,” Mosenifar said.

“Typical symptoms of asthma include intermittent cough, wheezing, chest tightness, and shortness of breath,” Dr. Jimmy Johannes, a pulmonologist and critical care medicine specialist at MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center in California, told Healthline. “Many things can look like asthma so an evaluation by a physician is often important to confirm the diagnosis.”

And if you don’t have asthma now, that doesn’t mean you’re immune from developing it later.

“Asthma can often spontaneously resolve over time. Asthma can also spontaneously develop later in life,” Johannes said.

People with asthma can have more sensitive airways.

“And when you have sensitive airways any kind of pollutants, or any kind of drastic change in temperature — either on the high side or the low side — creates a reaction in the airways. That’s what causes symptoms,” said Mosenifar. “Environmental triggers play a big role. In the summertime, the temperature rises and there are more pollutants and fume particles in the air,” he added.

Johannes agreed that summer can bring with it a variety of triggers that could make asthma symptoms more prominent. “Often pollen counts are higher in the summer, which for some people can lead to worse asthma and allergy symptoms. Further, higher humidity and heat can by themselves make it feel harder to breathe,” he said. “The sun interacts with industrial and vehicle emissions to make ground-level ozone, [which] in the summer months can contribute to worse asthma.”

If environmental factors play such an important role in asthma, one thing you can do to minimize your symptoms is to be aware of your environment.

“My recommendation normally is to try and stay indoors. Asthmatics do best if the temperature is 68 to 71 degrees [Fahrenheit]. I recommend that people go exercising indoors, or late in the day if they have to go out. Stay away from pollens, particularly between April and July, in some parts of the country,” said Mosenifar.

Experts note that during the first summer of the COVID-19 pandemic, more people stayed indoors and this resulted in fewer asthma-related hospital visits.

Smoking, while not limited to summertime, can also cause major aggravation in asthma symptoms. Combined with high temperatures, pollen, and pollution, smoking and secondhand smoke put added strain on your body that could cause asthma attacks.

# More Intense Workouts May Help Curb Hunger



LONDON (Dispatches) - A study has found that intense exercise causes greater levels of the molecule Lac-Phe to be found in blood.

Have you ever noticed that after some workouts you are absolutely famished, yet after others, you have no interest in food at all?

It turns out there may be a physiological reason for this having to do with how different types of exercise affect the production of chemicals within your body. And, researchers say appetite suppression after exercise may be due to a particular molecule that they have dubbed “Lac-Phe.”

However, it wasn’t just any type of exercise that triggered the most production of this molecule. More intense workouts were linked to larger amounts of Lac-Phe in the blood, while easier sessions were associated with lesser amounts of the substance.

This finding led the team to speculate that increased Lac-Phe production during more vigorous exercise could suppress appetite and thus lead to reduced excess body fat.

Dr. Melissa M. Markofski, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Health and Human Performance at the University of Houston, who was not involved in the study, explained, “When we exercise at a high enough intensity, there is a substantial increase in lactate. This lactate is metabolized (broken down) by the body, and products (broadly referred to as metabolites) of the lactate are formed. One of these products (metabolites) is Lac-Phe.”

In this particular study, the researchers found that this molecule showed up in greater amounts in the blood of mice, racehorses, and humans after exercise, said Markofski.

Additionally, when they injected Lac-Phe into obese mice who were not exercising, these mice ate less and lost body fat compared to obese mice who did not receive the injection or those who were already lean.

“This lead the researchers to conclude that one of the benefits of exercise may be an increase in Lac-Phe and a suppression of the appetite, leading to a reduction in excessive body fat,” she said.

These findings are “potentially noteworthy,” according to Markofski, since the study identified a metabolite which may be important in body weight regulation. It also supports which type of exercise may cause the greatest production of Lac-Phe.

Makofsky noted that, among the types of exercise included in the study, the greatest increase in Lac-Phe was seen in a session of all-out sprints on a stationary bicycle. The next highest occurred after moderate-intensity weightlifting. The lowest concentration was found after a 90-minute ride on a stationary bicycle.

“This indicates that high intensity exercise — such as bicycling, running, swimming, weightlifting — will result in the greatest increase of Lac-Phe,” she said.

She cautions, however, that the effects on human appetite were not studied, so it remains to be seen whether Lac-Phe will cause fat loss the way it appeared to do so in mice.

If you are looking to become leaner, Sandra Arévalo, National Spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, says, according to the findings of this study, you will need to engage in more intense exercise. This is the level that is required to release more Lac-Phe, which could potentially control hunger.

Markofsky further described high intensity exercises as being those where you can’t carry on a conversation. Arévalo listed running, cycling fast, dancing fast rhythms like salsa or reggaeton, swimming fast laps, and weight-bearing exercises as good examples of intense exercises.

However, it is important to engage in these activities safely.

“Before starting any exercise routine, it’s best to check with your doctor to get clearance,” Arévalo advised.



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## Nike Profits Dip on Lower Sales in North America, China

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Lower sales in North America and China dented Nike's quarterly results as the sports giant projected modest revenue growth amid the strong dollar, rising inflation and other headwinds. The Oregon company — which has enjoyed strong pricing at times during the pandemic but also faced Covid-19 factory lockdowns in Asia that have crimped its inventories — reported lower profits for its fiscal fourth quarter.

For the quarter ending May 31, Nike reported profits of US\$1.4 billion, down five per cent from the prior year on a one per cent dip in revenues to US\$12.2 billion.



## Russia in Historic Default as Ukraine Sanctions Cut Off Payments

LONDON (Dispatches) - Russia defaulted on its international bonds for the first time in more than a century, the White House and Moody's credit agency said, as sweeping sanctions have effectively cut the country off from the global financial system, rendering its assets untouchable.

The Kremlin, which has the money to make payments thanks to oil and gas revenues, has rejected the claims, and accused the West of driving it into an artificial default.

Earlier, some bondholders said they had not received overdue interest on Monday following the expiry of a key payment deadline on Sunday. Moody's credit agency later on Monday said that the missed coupon payment constituted a default.

"Further defaults on coupon payments are likely," Moody's analysts wrote.

Russia has struggled to keep up payments on US\$40 billion of outstanding bonds since its invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24.

"This morning's news around the finding of Russia's default, for the first time in more than a century, situates just how strong the actions are that the US, along with allies and partners, have taken, as well as how dramatic the impact has been on Russia's economy," the US official said on the sidelines of a G7 summit in Germany, which US President Joe Biden is attending.

Russia's efforts to avoid what is its first major default on international bonds since the Bolshevik revolution more than a century ago hit a roadblock in late May when the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) effectively blocked Moscow from making payments.

A formal default would be largely symbolic given Russia cannot borrow internationally at the moment and doesn't need to thanks to plentiful oil and gas export revenues. But the stigma would probably raise its borrowing costs in future.

"With Russia going into sovereign default the international community has moved into a new, more aggressive phase of its sanctions campaign against Moscow," said Adam M. Smith, partner at Gibson Dunn in Washington.

The payments in question are US\$100 million in interest on two bonds, one denominated in US dollars and another in euros, that Russia was due to pay on May 27. The payments had a grace period of 30 days, which expired on Sunday.

"Russia's default — already determined by the failure to pay interest last month — had been largely priced in and bonds have been in the 10-20 cents area for a long time," said Gabriele Foa, portfolio manager of the Global Credit Opportunities Fund at Algebris. "I do not expect creditors to organize and hold talks for a restructuring soon, as these talks are likely not possible amid political tensions." Russia's finance ministry said it made the payments to its onshore National Settlement Depository (NSD) in euros and dollars, adding it had fulfilled obligations.

## Malaysia's Producer Price Index up 11.2pc in May 2022

KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Malaysia's Producer Price Index (PPI) local production, which measures the costs of goods at the factory gate, remained high in May with a growth of 11.2 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) compared with 11.0 per cent y-o-y in April 2022, said the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM).

Chief statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin attributed the growth to the mining index, which increased 20.6 per cent y-o-y against 18.4 per cent y-o-y in April 2022.

He said the agriculture, forestry and fishing index grew by 16.7 per cent y-o-y, mainly led by an increase in the indices of growing of perennial crops (21.2 per cent), fishing (11.3 per cent) and growing of non-perennial crops (7.8 per cent).

"The manufacturing index registered a double-digit increase of 10.1 per cent for the first time since August 2011, underpinned by an increase in indices of subsectors, namely manufacture of vegetable and animal oils and fats (24.5 per cent), manufacture of refined petroleum products (22.9 per cent) and manufacture of basic chemicals, fertilisers and nitrogen compounds, plastics and synthetic rubber in primary forms (13.3 per cent).

"In addition, the indices of water supply increased 1.2 per cent, while that of electricity and gas supply decreased 0.6 per cent," he said in a statement today. On a month-on-month basis, Mohd Uzir said the PPI local production increased 1.2 per cent versus 0.2 per cent recorded in the previous month.

He said the growth was supported by the mining index, which rose 4.0 per cent increase, driven by the rise in the indices of crude oil (4.3 per cent) and natural gas (3.1 per cent). Meanwhile, the manufacturing index increased by 1.0 per cent due to the growth in



## China Vows Timely Policy Measures to Cope With Economic Risks

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China will roll out tools in its policy reserve in a timely way to cope with more economic challenges, as COVID-19 outbreaks and risks from the Ukraine crisis pose a threat to employment and price stability, a state planner official said on Tuesday.

Activity in the world's second-largest economy is beginning to recover after widespread COVID-19 lockdowns in April and early May throttled growth, recent data has shown, but headwinds such as a property market downturn, weak consumer spending and the risk of more COVID outbreaks persist.

The government will implement its existing support measures while improving its policy toolbox, Ou Hong, deputy secretary general at the National Development and Reform Commission, told a news conference. New policy support, depending on the circumstances, can be rolled out in a timely manner, he said.

"We are fully confident of overcoming the difficult challenges in economic operation and we have the ability to cope with all kinds of unexpected changes to ensure stable, healthy and sustainable economic development," Ou added.

Ou acknowledged that COVID-19 outbreaks and the Ukraine crisis since March have threatened to undercut growth and driven up unemployment and inflation.

Zhao Chenxin, a vice director at NDRC, told the same briefing that China would not resort to flood-like stimulus, a stance the government has reiterated in past years due to debt concerns.

China's monetary policy will continue to be accommodative to support economic recovery, People's Bank of China Governor Yi Gang was quoted by state media as saying on Monday.

In May, China's cabinet announced a slew of measures covering fiscal, financial, investment and industrial policies to wrestle with the COVID-induced damage to its economy.

## Pakistan Signs Pact With France for \$107m Debt Suspension

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Pakistan and France have signed an agreement for the suspension of loans amounting to \$107 million under the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), the Economic Affairs Division said.

In a press release, the Economic Affairs Division said the amount, initially repayable

between July and December 2021, would now be repaid over a period of six years — including a one-year grace period — in semi-annual instalments.

The agreement was signed by Ministry of Economic Affairs Secretary Mian Asad Hayaud Din and French Ambassador Nicolas Galey, the statement said.

"The government of Pakistan has already signed agreements with the French Republic for suspension of \$261m. Due to the support extended by the development partners of Pakistan, the G20 DSSI has provided the fiscal space which was necessary to deal with the urgent health and economic needs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan," the statement added.

The total amount of debt that has been suspended and rescheduled under the DSSI framework, covering the period from May 2020 to December 2021, stands at \$3,688m.

"Pakistan has already concluded and signed 93 agreements with 21 bilateral creditors for the rescheduling of its debts under the G20 DSSI framework, amounting to rescheduling of almost \$3,150m. The signing of [the] above-mentioned agreements brings this total to \$3,257m," the press release said.

It added that negotiations were ongoing for the remaining agreements to be signed under the DSSI framework.

Earlier this month, Pakistan had signed two debt service suspension agreements with Japan and Switzerland for the suspension of \$197.5m in loans.

Of this total amount, \$191.60m was owed to Japanese International Cooperation Agency during the period from January to June 2021 and \$5.89m to the Government of the Swiss Confederation during the period from July to December 2021.

In March, a similar agreement was signed with the Saudi Fund for Development for the suspension of debt servicing of \$846m.

## EU Expects More Russian Gas Cuts, Readies Plan to Curb Demand

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - A "serious disruption" to the European Union's gas supplies from Russia is likely, the bloc's energy chief said as she urged countries to update their contingency plans for supply shocks and use other fuels where possible to conserve gas.

"Since the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine we have known that a very serious disruption is possible, and now it seems likely," EU energy commissioner Kadri Simson said after a meeting of energy ministers.

"We have done much important work to be prepared for this. But now is the time to step it up," she said.

The European Commission will next month present a plan for EU countries to coordinate their preparations for further gas shocks, as Russia has already cut or reduced supplies to 12 of the bloc's 27 member states.

The EU plan will identify measures to reduce gas demand and identify critical sectors where reducing gas demand could disrupt supply chains, Simson said. Earlier on Monday she had said citizens, who are classed as "protected consumers" of gas under EU rules, would be shielded from any curbs on gas use.

Simson said Moscow's latest cuts to European gas deliveries were intended to destabilise Europe's energy market, inflate already-soaring energy prices, and prevent countries from filling gas storage ahead of the winter heating season.

Russia has denied the cuts are premeditated, and attributed the sharp drop in deliveries through its Nord Stream 1 pipeline this month to problems with equipment.

EU countries are largely responsible for their own energy policies, and Simson urged national governments to act now to slash their gas use - including by using less energy - to ensure storage is filled enough to endure any further supply shocks in the coming winter.

EU countries' combined gas storage is nearly 57 per cent full, according to data from Gas Infrastructure Europe. Filling levels vary between countries, however, with storage in Germany 57 per cent full, for example, versus 97 per cent in Poland and 39 per cent in Hungary.

## World Bank to Give Bangladesh \$18b IDA Loans in Next Five Years



DHAKA (Dispatches) - Inflows of foreign assistance will continue to go up, with Bangladesh receiving \$18 billion from the World Bank's soft loan window International Development Association (IDA) alone in the next five years.

The Washington-based lender will provide the country with fresh loans amounting to \$10 billion — \$2 billion a year — during the time and will also release \$8.24 billion in the pipeline, according to a draft of the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) programme for FY23-FY27.

Moreover, its sister organisation International Finance Corporation (IFC) will finance \$4.5 billion for the private sector development, while the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) will give guarantees of \$695 million a year for external loans in energy and manufacturing sectors.

The World Bank has already sought opinions from government and private levels on the proposed Country Partnership Framework, which will replace the existing Country Assistance Strategy, to operate its lending activities in Bangladesh up to 2027 starting from the next fiscal year.

The development lender is expected to meet with representatives of government ministries and agencies on 6 July to finalise the framework.

Bangladesh got \$11.83 billion during FY16-FY22 — \$1.67 billion per fiscal year on average — from the IDA under the Country Assistance Strategy, the most important country-level document tailored to guide the World Bank Group's support to a member country as per the needs.

The loan tenure was initially up to FY20 and later was extended to FY22 because of Covid-19.

In FY11-FY15, the IDA provided the country with \$6.1 billion in soft loans, \$1.22 billion a year.

Bangladesh is also getting commitments for additional loan support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and other multilateral lenders.

For example, the ADB, which earlier committed \$10-\$12 billion as per its Country Partnership Strategy approved in September last year, has now pledged to raise the loan amount by \$2.37 billion in a recent meeting with the Economic Relations Division.



## China Urges U.S. "to Fulfill Its Commitment" to JCPOA

TEHRAN (IRNA) - China's Foreign Ministry spokesman said that his country welcomed the resumption of talks between Iran and the United States on removing sanctions against Iran and stressing that Washington "needs to fulfill its commitment of returning to the JCPOA."

In a press conference on Tuesday, Zhao Lijian said that China

had noted that indirect negotiations would be held between the US and Iran on the Iranian nuclear issue with the EU's facilitation.

"We appreciate the EU's efforts in restarting the negotiation on resuming compliance," the spokesman noted, referring to EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell's trip to Tehran last week which led to the resumption of the talks.



## "Shoot Them Dead":

# Philippine President Duterte in His Own Words

MANILA (Dispatches) - Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who steps down on Thursday, was infamous for his foul-mouthed tirades, off-colour jokes, and threats to kill people.

His unfiltered remarks lashed everyone from drug users and critics to world leaders and even God -- but he remained popular among Filipinos fed up with out-of-touch politicians and corruption.

Here are some of his quotes since taking power in 2016:

### Drug users

"Hitler massacred three million Jews. Now there are three million drug addicts (in the Philippines). I'd be happy to slaughter them."

On September 30, 2016, Duterte likens his deadly crackdown on drug users to Hitler's efforts to exterminate Jews, although vastly underestimating the number of people killed in the Holocaust by the Nazi leader's regime.

### 'Kill them yourself'

"If you know of any addicts, go ahead and kill them yourself as getting their parents to do it would be too painful."

Hours after being sworn into office on June 30, 2016, Duterte visits a dockside slum and urges Filipinos to kill drug users.

### 'Stupid God'

"Who is this stupid God? This son of a whore is really stupid in that sense. You created something perfect and then you think of an event that would tempt and destroy the quality of your work."

Taking aim at the biblical creation story, Duterte questions why God would create Adam and Eve and then expose them to temptation on June 22, 2018.

### 'Shoot them dead'

"My orders are to the police and military, also village officials, that if there is trouble or the situation arises that people fight and your lives are on the line, shoot them dead."

On April 1, 2020, Duterte issues a shoot-to-kill order against coronavirus lockdown troublemakers after a protest over food aid.

### Corrupt officials

"If you commit corruption, whoever you are, I will have you flown by helicopter to Manila and I will toss you out. I have done it before, why would not I do it again?"

Duterte alludes to a past crime in explaining to typhoon survivors how he will take drastic measures against drugs and graft on December 27, 2016.

### Media threats

"Just because you're a journalist you are not exempted from assassination, if you're a son of a bitch."

On May 31, 2016, President-elect Duterte endorses the killing of corrupt journalists.



### Sexual assault

"I lifted the blanket... I tried to touch what was inside the panty."

On December 29, 2018, Duterte recalls how he molested a maid when he was a teenager.

### 'Shoot your vagina'

"Tell the soldiers, there's a new order coming from the mayor. 'We won't kill you. We will just shoot your vagina so that, if there are no vaginas (the woman) would be useless.'"

On February 7, 2018, Duterte says soldiers should shoot female communist insurgents in the vagina.

### Over my dead body

"You know if you really want me -- it's over my dead body. You will only be able to take me to the Netherlands dead. You will have a carcass. I will not go there alive, you fools. But if I see you here, I will have made the first move."

On August 2, 2021, Duterte blasts the International Criminal Court whose prosecutors want to launch a full-blown investigation into the drug war that rights groups say has killed tens of thousands of people.

### Son of a whore

"You must be respectful. Do not just throw away questions and statements. You son of a whore I will curse you at that forum."

Duterte reacts on September 5, 2016, to warnings that he would face questioning by then US president Barack Obama over a war on drugs in the Philippines.

## Double Standard...

FROM PAGE 1

The official further rejected all allegations against Iran's "legitimate and defensive missile program," reminding that the country's missile work can never be subject to any negotiation or compromise.

"It is necessary that the parties that have issued the statement rather be accountable for their sales of billions of dollars of advanced weapons, which is one of the most important factors of instability in our region," Kan'ani asserted.

Addressing the human rights accusations made through the statement, the official said the countries throwing the allegations were the very same states that have closed their eyes to the "flagrant violation" of the Iranian nation's rights as a result of the sanctions.

Of course this is not the first time that the West puts on the table a series of baseless charges against Tehran and this is why Tehran does not trust the West and reacts to West's requests with caution. The Western states think they are owners of the world and other countries, and they try to dictate their wills on other sides, and tabling some nonsense charges is their habit for justifying their acts.

We have not forgotten the claim of weapons of the mass destruction which was raised by the U.S. in 1990s and through this claim the U.S. invaded Iraq and after the end of the invasion, no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq but the invasion almost destroyed this country.

In many cases the West has resorted to such claims to justify their actions which are mainly invasion or imposition of sanctions and now they repeat this habit against Iran.

Tehran has always reiterated that it will not retreat from improving its defense and even offensive military power because it believes without strengthening its military power, the country will be liable to the hostile countries' bullies.

If there is no invasion against Iran in recent years, it is because of Iran's deterrent power which is its strong defensive system and its missile and drone powers. The West dislikes this deterrent power and has tried to weaken it through resorting to baseless charges.

Tehran, as it has reiterated many times, will continue strengthening military power and improving ties with neighboring countries especially with Muslim states and it will give no heed to such baseless claims because Tehran knows it well that a weak country is exposed to bully and invasion.

The Islamic Republic of Iran prefers a quiet and peaceful region and it does not welcome any war or dispute but this is the West which likes war and dispute to cause instability in the region to justify its presence in the region and to sell its weapons to the countries in the region.

So the G7 states are better to stop issuing such baseless claims against Tehran and to focus more on their own domestic matters instead of interfering into other nations' affairs. While the Western countries are suffering with inflation and social unrests, they still continue interfering into other countries' businesses.

Tehran welcomes peace in the world but it does not mean it will retreat from its principles and leaving its missile and drone programs because it makes the country safer against ill-wishes of the hostile countries and as Tehran has reiterated, it will continue its peaceful nuclear program and it needs no A-bomb because the most powerful bomb is the nation's resistance and determination that can thwart any hostile move against the country.

## Certain UNSC...

FROM PAGE 1

The Iranian diplomat also called on the world body to evaluate the efficacy of sanctions and their humanitarian consequences at various stages of conflict and suspend or lift them when necessary.

He noted that sanctions have grave humanitarian repercussions, as the world witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The Security Council must assess the effectiveness of sanctions and their humanitarian repercussions at various stages of conflict and suspend or lift them as needed. Sanctions, as is well acknowledged, have serious humanitarian consequences as we have all witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic, putting civilian populations' health and lives in grave jeopardy. Furthermore, working in an environment where sanctions are prevalent is often difficult for humanitarian actors."

Takht Ravanchi called on the Security Council to continually improve its effectiveness and transparency, adding it also needs to ameliorate its interaction and communication with non-Council members.

"To that end, reforming and evolving the Council into a fully transparent, rule-based, and, above all, accountable body is the most efficient method to ensure its transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness. That is the reason why the Council's 'working methods' are among the five primary topics under consideration in the ongoing Security Council reform discussions."

## Germany Looks to Temporary Foreign Workers to Ease Airport Staff Shortages



BERLIN (Dispatches) - Germany is planning to launch a temporary foreign workers scheme to offset acute staff shortages at the country's airports over the summer months, ministers have said.

The move would allow German airport service providers to recruit several thousand temporary workers from Turkey for several months from July, Bild newspaper reported.

The labor minister, Hubertus Heil, said his government was planning to "enable the entry of urgently needed staff from abroad for temporary work in Germany". "We want to exclude any form of social dumping and exploitation," the Social Democrat politician added.

Employers would have to pay workers collectively agreed wages and provide them with accommodation, Heil said.

Airports across Europe have been struggling to readjust as demand for international travel bounces back from a two-year pandemic hiatus this summer.

One recent study by the German Economic Institute (IW) found German airports were short of 7,200 ground staff and flight attendants after many workers left their jobs during the pandemic and have since found work in other sectors, for example with rail companies or in online retail.

In spite of Germany's kurzarbeit or short-time work benefit scheme, designed to allow a speedier bounceback after a downturn, the number of people working in airport services dropped by 15% between 2018-19 and 2020-21.

Citing government circles, Bild said ministers were planning to meet a shortage of 2,000 to 3,000 staff with a "four-figure" number of temporary foreigners. A spokesperson for the labor ministry said on Monday no further details could be announced while talks were ongoing.

A spokesperson for the interior ministry said temporary foreign workers would not be recruited to work in airport security screening, which requires longer training times and higher levels of security clearance, but more low-skilled roles such as baggage handling.

## UN Meet Sees Blitz of Pledges to Protect Ailing Oceans

LISBON (Dispatches) - A major UN conference on how to restore the faltering health of global oceans kicked off in Lisbon this week with a flurry of promises to expand marine protected areas, ban deep-sea mining, and combat illegal fishing.

UN chief Antonio Guterres set the tone Monday for the five-day meet by warning that the world's oceans are in deep crisis.

"Today we face what I would call an ocean emergency," he told thousands of policymakers, experts and advocates, detailing how seas have been hammered by climate change and pollution.

"The ocean is not a rubbish dump. It is not a source on infinite plunder. It is a fragile system on which we all depend."

Surangel Whipps, Jr., president of the Pacific island state of Palau, asked world leaders to join a moratorium on extracting rare Earth metals from the ocean floor.

"Deep sea mining compromises the integrity of our ocean habitat and should be discouraged to the greatest extent possible," he said, flanked by Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama.

Indigenous leader Debbie Ngawera-Packer, a member of New Zealand's parliament, told conference participants she had submitted a bill calling for such a moratorium in her country's waters.

Companies seeking to mine so-called polymetallic nodules containing manganese, cobalt and nickel say they are a greener source of minerals needed to build electric vehicle batteries.

Scientists counter that seabed ecosystems at depth are fragile, and could take decades or longer to heal once disrupted.

"Mining, wherever it occurs, is well known to have environmental costs," said former US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) chief scientist Sylvia Earle.

"On the land at least we can monitor, see and fix problems, and minimise the damage. Six thousand metres (20,000 feet) beneath the



surface, who's watching?"

A so-called high ambition coalition, meanwhile -- backing a proposal to set aside 30 percent of the planet's land and ocean surface by 2030 as protected areas -- grew to 100 nations, UK minister of state Zac Goldsmith announced in a side event.

Currently, less than 10 percent of global oceans are protected. The "30 X 30" plan could be the cornerstone of a treaty slated for completion at a UN biodiversity summit to be held in December in Montreal.

Nearly a quarter of a billion dollars in government, development bank and philanthropic funding to lock-in protection of marine and land ecosystems in Colombia, announced last week, could be the template for other countries.

"Working with scientists, we decided to get 30 percent of our maritime area as protected, and we did it," outgoing Colombian President Ivan Duque told AFP.

More than half of newly protected marine areas will be "no-take" zones off-limits to fishing, mining, drilling or other extractive activities, he said.

The United States, European Union nations, Mexico, Canada, Japan and India have joined the 30 x 30 drive, while China, Russia, Indonesia and Brazil have yet to do so.

Steps were also taken Monday to fight illegal fishing, another topic on the table at the long-delayed UN Ocean Conference, originally set for April 2020.

In Washington, US President Joe Biden issued a national security memorandum to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and related labour abuses.

The aim is to "make sure that the seafood products that are coming into the US market are caught in accordance with international rules and national rules," a senior administration official told journalists.

A report by the International Trade Commission found that the United States imported \$2.4 billion worth of seafood derived from IUU fishing in 2019.

"The ocean is the most underappreciated resource on our planet," Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta told the conference, flanked by co-host Portuguese President Antonio Costa.

## Installing...

FROM PAGE 1

Reuters said that Iran has begun installing advanced IR-6 centrifuges in one cluster at an underground enrichment plant at Natanz in line with a plan announced long ago but it now also intends to add two more such clusters or cascades, the watchdog said on Wednesday.

"On 6 June 2022, the Agency verified ... that Iran had started to install IR-6 centrifuges in the aforementioned single cascade previously declared by Iran to the Agency," the IAEA said in a report to member states seen by Reuters and confirmed by the agency. It added that the installation of the two extra had yet to begin.



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## PGA, European Tours Unveil 13-Year Joint Venture

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The PGA Tour and European Tour announced a 13-year operational joint venture on Tuesday, uniting in a tighter alliance to combat the new Saudi-backed LIV Golf Series. The new partnership through 2035 follows a strategic alliance unveiled last November that saw co-sanctioning of the Scottish Open, Barbasol Championship and Barracuda Championship events to provide more playing opportunities. There will also be a defined path for players to move from the European Tour to the PGA Tour.

## India Survive Scare in Tense T20 Win Over Ireland

LONDON (Dispatches) - India held their nerve to beat Ireland by four runs as the world's top-ranked Twenty20 side survived a scare in Malahide. The tourists chalked up their second successive victory in the two-match T20 series but it was a closer call than they would have expected. India scored an imposing 225-7 in their 20 overs after winning the toss. After opener Ishan Kishan fell for three, Sanju Samson and Deepak Hooda put on a world T20 record 176-run partnership for the second wicket.

# Nadal Overcomes Scare To Reach Wimbledon Second Round

LONDON (Dispatches) - Rafael Nadal overcame a scare in his Wimbledon opener, fighting back from dropping the third set and falling a break down in the fourth to eventually see off Argentina's Francisco Cerundolo.

Second seed Nadal triumphed 6-4, 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 over 41st-ranked Cerundolo, who was making his All England Club debut.

But the 36-year-old Spaniard, who has already captured the Australian and French Opens this year to stand halfway to the first mens's calendar Slam since 1969, did it the hard way.

After coasting through the first two sets on Centre Court, he surrendered an early break in the third set and then had to claw his way back from 3-1 and 4-2 down in the fourth.

Nadal, the 2008 and 2010 Wimbledon champion, will take on Ricardas Berankis of Lithuania for a place in the last 32.

The Spaniard's bid for a third title at the tournament was boosted earlier Tuesday when 2021 runner-up Matteo Berrettini, a potential semi-final opponent, withdrew after testing positive for Covid.

Meanwhile Nick Kyrgios came out on top in a fiery Wimbledon five-setter and told rowdy critics in the crowd: "That one's for you -- you know who you are."

The Australian defeated British wildcard Paul Jubb 3-6, 6-1, 7-5, 6-7 (3/7), 7-5 on the back of 30 aces and 67 winners.

Kyrgios was unhappy with some fans on a packed and raucous Court Three and demanded they be removed from the stadium even as early as the first set.

"There were a couple of people not shy of criticising me -- that one's for you," said the 27-year-old, ranked 40th in the world. "You know who you are."

Kyrgios, who stunned Rafael Nadal on his way to the quarter-finals at the All England Club in 2014, arrived at the tournament after semi-final runs in grass-court events in Stuttgart and Halle.



However, he was out of sorts in the first set.

As well as his displeasure with a section of the crowd, he also called a line judge "a snitch with no fans". "The crowd was pretty rowdy," said Kyrgios. "He was a local wildcard with nothing to lose. But it was a lot of fun."

World number one Iga Swiatek recovered from a dip in her level in the second set to see off Croatian qualifier Jana Fett 6-0 6-3 in the Wimbledon first round on Tuesday and extend her winning run to 36 matches. The 2018 junior champion, who exited the grasscourt Grand Slam in the fourth round last year, had the honour of opening the second day's play on Centre Court in the absence of the retired Ash Barty who won the 2021 title.

Playing her first match since winning a second French Open title this month, Poland's Swiatek powered through the opening set without losing a game -- registering a 6-0 set for the 17th time this year -- despite a stiff breeze swirling through the main show court.

A litany of unforced errors, including a double fault, however, led to Swiatek dropping serve at the start of the second set, allowing the 25-year-old Fett, ranked 252nd in the world, to get on the scoreboard.

Swiatek, who played with a ribbon in Ukrainian colours pinned to her cap as she did during her Roland Garros campaign, broke back immediately -- only to hand back the advantage in her next service game.

The Pole's struggles with her delivery continued as she had to save five break points to hold serve for the first time in the second set to get to 2-3 and stay in touch with Fett.

## Westbrook Opts Into \$47m NBA Deal With Lakers

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - Los Angeles Lakers guard Russell Westbrook has decided to exercise his \$47.1 million option to return to the club for the 2022-23 season, according to multiple reports on Tuesday.

The 33-year-old playmaker, the 2017 NBA Most Valuable Player and a nine-time NBA All-Star, is entering the final campaign of a five-year contract worth \$206 million.

Westbrook has played for four different clubs over the past four seasons, averaging triple doubles in his final three seasons with Oklahoma City before a 2019 trade to Houston involving Chris Paul.

Westbrook began the 2020-21 campaign with the Rockets but was traded to Washington in December 2020 and stayed with the Wizards until an August 2021 swap to the Lakers.

Last season, Westbrook averaged 18.5 points, 7.4 rebounds and 7.1 assists a game over 78 contests for the Lakers, who went a disappointing 33-49 and missed the playoffs, injuries to stars LeBron James and Anthony Davis having helped scuttle hopes for a post-season run.

Westbrook, James and Davis played together in only 21 games last season, the Lakers going 11-10 in those contests.

The Lakers hope to rebound this coming season under new coach Darvin Ham.

## Fury Denied Entry to USA by Homeland Security

LONDON (AFP) - British boxer Tommy Fury has been denied entry into the United States before a press conference to preview his forthcoming fight against Jake Paul.

Fury, the half-brother of world heavyweight champion Tyson Fury, is set to face YouTube celebrity Paul on August 6.

The 23-year-old posted a video on Instagram on Tuesday, recorded on Monday evening, where he explained his application to enter the United States had been rejected.

"So I just want to come on here and set the record straight before anybody else tries to, me and my team this morning arrived at Heathrow airport ready for the press conference, ready to fly out," he said.

"As soon as I entered the airport I got pulled to one side and I was told by a Homeland Security officer that was there, that my ESTA has been denied and I wasn't able to travel to the USA for a reason that I apparently know.

"I can stand here and say I have done absolutely nothing wrong and I have no clue why I'm not allowed to travel to the USA.

"I've been training for a fight this whole time and that's all I've been doing. I have no clue why they will not allow me to travel today and neither does any of my team or my lawyers.

"So now I'm having to go to the embassies and all this sort of stuff, trying to resolve it and I'm in the middle of training, guys, I don't know why this has happened today - it is a massive shock to me and my whole team."

The issue casts doubt on the rearranged bout, set for Madison Square Garden in August, after a rib injury had seen Fury pull out of their scheduled fight last December.

It was claimed earlier this month that Tyson Fury had also been denied access to the United States over alleged links to alleged crime boss Daniel Kinahan, although the WBC world heavyweight champion has distanced himself from those connections.

Paul responded to the news on Twitter, saying: "Tommy, no matter how hard you try to get out of this fight, I'm going to do everything in my power to not let you weasel your way out.

# Fernandinho Returns to Brazil's Athletico Paranaense



SAO PAULO (Dispatches) - Former Manchester City captain Fernandinho has returned to his first club and signed for Athletico Paranaense, the Brazilian club said.

The 37-year-old midfielder, who left City at the end of last season following a trophy-laden nine-year stint in England, signed a two-and-a-half year contract.

"It is with great satisfaction that I return home... Knowing that I can apply a little bit

of everything I achieved in these years playing in Europe," said Fernandinho in a press conference to unveil his arrival in the southern city of Curitiba.

Born in Parana state, whose capital is Curitiba, Fernandinho began his career at Athletico as a teenager in 2002 before moving to Ukraine to join Shakhtar Donetsk in 2005.

After eight years in Donetsk that saw him win six Ukrainian league titles, four Ukrainian cups and the UEFA Cup, the precursor to the Europa League, in 2009, Fernandinho caught the eye of City scouts.

By then he was already a Brazil international and would go on to win more than 50 caps, helping the Selecao lift the 2019 Copa America and playing in two World Cups.

At City he won five Premier League titles, the FA Cup, six League Cups and played in the 2021 Champions League final.

## Cavendish, Alaphilippe Miss out On Tour de France Spot

PARIS (Dispatches) - Britain's Mark Cavendish and France's Julian Alaphilippe have both missed out on a place in the upcoming Tour de France, their Quick-Step team announced.

Double world road cycling champion Alaphilippe only returned to competition on Sunday, two months after suffering multiple fractures in a heavy fall on the Liege-Bastogne-Liege race in Belgium. Cavendish, 37, last year equalled Eddy Merckx's Tour de France record of 34 stage wins, and had stormed to a second British road race title on Sunday.

Alaphilippe, 30, has worn the race leader's yellow jersey in the last three editions. But the Belgian team have opted for Dutch rider Fabio Jakobsen, who has 10 wins in 2022, and will be supported by Dane Michael Morkov.

Danish riders Kasper Asgreen, winner of the Tour of Flanders in 2021, and Tour newcomer Mikkel Honoré, have also been selected for the three-week race which gets underway in Copenhagen on July 1.

Alaphilippe returned to racing on Sunday in the French championships and helped teammate Florian Senechal to victory.

"I really came to see where I was, to make an effort," said Alaphilippe.

"I can't say that I had a lot of fun but I was better than I thought, so I'm happy."

Quick Step sporting director Tom Steels justified Alaphilippe's absence to "give him more time to recover and rebuild his condition, so that he can be 100 percent for the second part of the season". "We have riders who can support Fabio, riders who can climb, but who can also do something in the breakaways. Kasper, Yves (Lampaert) and Michael (Morkov) will form a strong leading group for Fabio," Steels explained.



## Hamilton Calls For Action After Piquet's Racist Slur

LONDON (Dispatches) - Lewis Hamilton said the "time has come for action" after being the subject of a racially offensive term used by three-time Formula One world champion Nelson Piquet.

Formula One and motorsport's governing body the FIA condemned the 69-year-old Brazilian, who made the comments during a podcast.

"It's more than language," Hamilton tweeted. "These archaic mindsets need to change and have no place in our sport.

"I've been surrounded by these attitudes and targeted my whole life. There has been plenty of time to learn. Time has come for action."

In a separate tweet, Hamilton posted in Portuguese: "Let's focus on changing the mindset."

Piquet, who won the world title in 1981, 1983 and 1987, was discussing an accident between Hamilton and Red Bull's Max Verstappen on the first lap of last year's British Grand Prix when he used the term.

His daughter, Kelly, is Verstappen's partner.

"Discriminatory or racist language is unacceptable in any form and has no part in society," Formula One said in a statement.

"Lewis is an incredible ambassador for our sport and deserves respect. "His tireless efforts to increase diversity and inclusion are a lesson to many and something we are committed to at F1." In a statement, the FIA said: "The FIA strongly condemns any racist or discriminatory language and behaviour, which have no place in sport or wider society.

"We express our solidarity with Lewis Hamilton and fully support his commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in motor sport."

