

Iranian Foreign Minister Said That Iran Is Not Helping Either Side Involved in Ukraine Crisis Because It Is Certain That It Should Be Ended and Iran Avoids Any Steps May Result in Escalation

IRAN NEWS

Managing Director of Khorasan Railways Company Said That India-Russia Corridor, Through Sarakhs Was Activated at 12-Midnight, July 12, as the First Transit Train Passed Through Iran

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Majlis Urges Sweden To Stop Rights Violations Against Nouri

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The deputy speaker of Iran's Parliament expresses grave concerns over 'human rights violations' against Hamid Nouri, an ex-Iranian official who has been jailed in Sweden since 2019, calling on Stockholm to stop the abuses and compensate for the losses inflicted on him.

Ali Nikzad on Wednesday criticized the Swedish government for detaining the Iranian national "without conducting comprehensive investigations" and based on empty charges leveled against him by a few members of the notorious Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO) terrorist group.

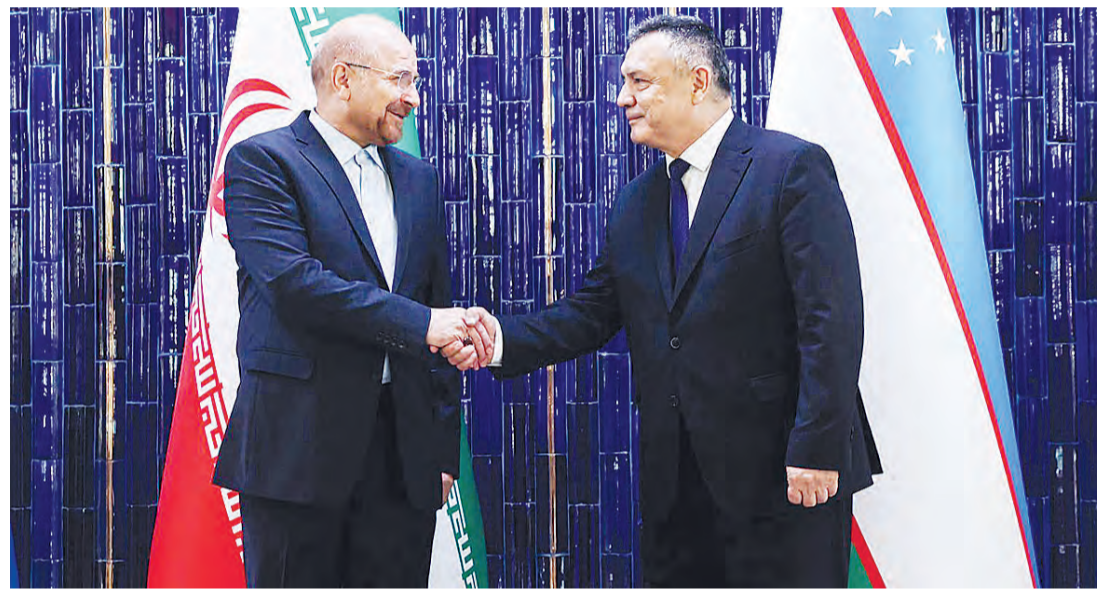
In detaining Nouri, he said, Sweden failed to act on its responsibility to inform Iran's Embassy of the development based on the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and let his family know about his situation.

Stockholm has denied Nouri family visits, despite the fact the family members have visited the European country twice since 2019, Nikzad added.

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Majlis Speaker in Uzbekistan To Broaden All-Out Ties

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK



TEHRAN - Majlis Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said that the country has high potentials and capacities in various fields despite cruel U.S. sanctions imposed against Iran.

He made the remarks in his meeting with the Speaker of the Legislative Chamber of Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan Nurdinjon Ismoilov in Tashkent on Wednesday and hoped that the visit would be a turning point in broadening parliamentary ties between the two nations and governments of Iran and Uzbekistan.

The two countries of Iran and Uzbekistan enjoy high capacities to expand their bilateral ties in all fields, Ghalibaf emphasized. Developing cooperation and interaction with neighboring and regional countries in various social, political, cultural, trade and security fields is the main policy of the 13th government under President Raisi, he added.

Currently, 'geostrategic' conditions in the world and geopolitics in the region are very sensitive and it seems necessary that neighboring and regional states enhance the level of their cooperation with one another through unity, amity and empathy.

Iran attaches great importance to its relationship with the Republic of Uzbekistan so that Uzbekistan has great and unique capacities in terms of economy as well as historical and cultural records, he said, adding that cooperation between Iran and Uzbekistan creates many opportunities for the two countries to develop bilateral cooperation, especially strengthening transit and transportation relations.

Emphasizing multilateral parliamentary cooperation, Ghalibaf said that the two countries must establish constructive and influential cooperation in Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

Ismoilov, for his part, said that the two countries of Iran and Uzbekistan have been equipped with high facilities for developing their relations in scientific, economic, cultural, transport and energy fields.

He said that both Iranian and Uzbek officials are interested in developing bilateral ties so that the two countries can expand their relations in all fields, especially in the area of transport.

Earlier Qalibaf had said that Iran has targeted \$200b worth of trade with neighboring states. Speaking in a meeting with Iranian businessmen and producers in Tashkent, capital city of Uzbekistan, Qalibaf called for designing a logistic hub for facilitating trade ties between Iran and Uzbekistan.

He referred to the Iranian government and parliament's foreign policy with regard to increasing interaction with neighbors, saying that Iran is after activating the private sector in these fields.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Qalibaf pointed to transit, visa problem, and preferential tariff as issues that are pursued by the Iran-Uzbekistan joint commission.

He also lauded Iran's capacities in engineering services and knowledge-based fields.

Earlier, speaking during a press conference before his departure, the Iranian Parliament speaker said that parliamentary relations are undoubtedly of special significance in the relations between the two nations.

He said that Iran and Uzbekistan are very close both geographically and culturally, but the relations between the two countries have not developed in a way to match this closeness.

Qalibaf said that during his stay in Uzbekistan, he would have meetings with the heads of the country's two parliaments and a number of the Iranian businesspersons working in Uzbekistan.

He expressed hope that the visit to the Central Asian country will help President Ebrahim Raisi's administration's foreign policy of prioritizing neighboring and Islamic countries.

Iran Calls on Taliban to Ensure Borders Security

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Foreign Ministry Spokesman stated that Iran can understand the situation in Afghanistan but Iran expects the authorities of Afghanistan's governing body to ensure the security of borders.

Speaking in his weekly press conference on Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kana'ani briefed on the latest Iranian foreign policy developments and answered a number of questions put forward by the journalists.

Noting that the security of Iran-Afghanistan borders is very important for the expansion of trade relations, Kana'ani stressed that the situation in Afghanistan is understandable, but Iran expects the authorities of Afghanistan's governing body to ensure the security of common borders and to respond positively to Iran's efforts and goodwill to hold joint meetings to create security.

Kana'ani made the remarks referring to the recent conflicts that broke out between the border guards of Iran and Afghanistan. Answering a question about the French President's allegations (that accused Iran of resorting to delaying tactics and returning to previous positions in the Doha negotiations), the senior Iranian diplomat stated that Iran's position in the negotiations on lifting the sanctions is clear.

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ViewPoint Muslim World Needs Unity

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

Muslim World Needs Unity

On Saturday and Sunday Muslims in any part of the world and in the Islamic Republic of Iran, too, celebrated one of the most auspicious and important eids of Islam no matter they were Shiites or Sunnis and they once again showed unity in marking the Islamic values but Muslims need to show more unity in other issues in the world like fighting world arrogance, imperialism and defending Palestinians' rights.

On Saturday and Sunday and on Eid al-Adhad, many Muslims by gathering in Mecca for hajj pilgrimage ceremonies celebrated this auspicious eid and Muslims who were unable to be present in Hajj pilgrimage marked the day in their hometowns.

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei on Friday and before Hajj ceremony issued a message for all Muslims attending this ceremony in Mecca and in his message he called for unity among Muslims for overcoming problems.

He sent a message to the 2022 Hajj pilgrimage, inviting Muslims around the world to turn away from what leads to "disunity and division" while also talking about Islamic awakening and resistance.

In a message, Ayatollah Khamenei named the Hajj pilgrimage as a manifestation of Muslims' "unity and harmony", noting that "The unity of the Muslim nation is one of the two basic foundations of the Hajj Pilgrimage."

Pointing to the "extensive" efforts of enemies to "weaken the two life-giving elixirs of Islamic unity and spirituality", he named "promoting a western lifestyle" as a tool that enemies typically use.

Ayatollah Khamenei further noted that this Islamic self-awareness has led to the creation of a "wondrous, miraculous phenomenon" of "Resistance".

He went on to name Palestine as one of the manifestations of resistance as it has been able to "bring down the rebellious Zionist regime from its state of aggression and howling to a defensive, passive stance."

Hailing the "proud model of power and political Islamic governance in Islamic Iran", Ayatollah Khamenei said the "stability, independence, progress, and honor" of the Islamic Republic is attracting the thoughts of "every conscious Muslim."

According to the Leader, "the sovereignty of Islam in the legislative and executive branches of governance, reliance on the vote of the people in the country's most important administrative matters, [and] complete political independence and a refusal to rely on any oppressive powers" are among the basic principles in the Islamic Republic.

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Rupee Settlement Will Help India Trade With Iran

MUMBAI (Dispatches) - The Indian central bank's decision to let importers pay with rupees and exporters be paid in rupees is likely to make trade easier with Iran, Russia and South Asian neighbors, and will help a long term goal to internationalize the currency, experts said.

On Monday, the Reserve Bank of India said it had put in place a mechanism for international trade settlements in Indian rupees (INR) with immediate effect.

The RBI said that "in order to promote growth of global trade with emphasis on exports from India and to support the increasing interest of global trading community in INR, it has been decided to put in place an additional arrangement for invoicing, payment, and settlement of exports/imports in INR."

"This step can be particularly useful for neighboring countries, and also those countries willing to use the rupee as a base currency for trade diversification in their settlement rules," said Rahul Bajoria, chief India economist at Barclays.

Engineering Export Promotion Council chairman Mahesh Desai noted the new mechanism "would facilitate trade with countries under sanctions, like Iran and Russia."

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Shamkhani to Visit Azerbaijan for Bilateral Ties

TEHRAN (MNA) – Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Rear Admiral Ali Shamkhani is set to visit Baku on Friday.

Shamkhani will visit Baku at the invitation of his Azeri counterpart. He is also set to meet with the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev to discuss Iran-Azerbaijan ties and the latest regional and international developments.

Iran Will Not Back Down From Its Rightful Position

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Stating that the Islamic Republic of Iran will not back down from its rightful and logical positions, President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi advised the Americans to see the facts and learn from the past instead of repeating the failed experience of maximum pressure on the Iranian nation.

Speaking in the cabinet meeting on Wednesday in response to the recent claims of the Americans regarding the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Raisi said, "The Americans have said that Iran should return to the JCPOA, while the Islamic Republic of Iran has never withdrawn from the JCPOA and it was America who violated the JCPOA".

The President added, "Today, it is a question not only for the Europeans, who are allies of the Americans in the negotiations, but also for all the nations around the world why the United States did not adhere to its commitments in the JCPOA and withdrew from it?"

Referring to the unjust U.S. sanctions against the Iranian nation, Raisi said, "Americans have repeatedly said that the pressure they imposed on the Iranian nation was unprecedented and maximum, but the spokesperson of the U.S. Department of State officially announced that these pressures did not work at all and failed miserably".

Stating that the Islamic Republic of Iran will not back down from its rightful and logical positions, the President advised the Americans to see the facts and learn from the past instead of repeating the failed experience of maximum pressure on the Iranian nation.

Raisi added, "Americans must have realized during the last 43 years that it is not possible to speak to the Iranian people with the language of coercion. It is strange that they still want to speak with the same literature that will definitely not bring them any results".

The President said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has always acted completely rationally in negotiations with the P5+1 and P4+1 and stated its reasonable demands.



Even today, the negotiation team has not raised any demands outside of the frameworks, and is acting according to standards in continuation of the path that has been taken so far".

Referring to the visit of American officials to the region, Raisi emphasized, "If the visits of American officials to the countries of the region are to strengthen the position of the Zionist Regime and normalize the relations of the Regime with some countries, then their efforts will not bring about security for the Zionists in any way".

The President addressed the Americans, saying, "If you want to know the effect of your actions in the region, look at the stances of nations closely to see how much hatred of the Zionists and the crimes of this regime has increased in their hearts".

Raisi also emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran is closely monitoring all developments in the region and is not oblivious to any movement, and noted, "We have repeatedly told those who have brought messages from the Americans that if the slightest movement is made against the territorial integrity of Iran, it will be met with our decisive reaction".

In another part of his speech, the President mentioned improving welfare infrastructure in the field of higher education and emphasizing the necessity of developing, renovating and equipping student dormitories, especially married student dormitories, calling for detailed planning for the participation of the public and philanthropists as well as cooperation of foundations and institutions involved in the construction of these dormitories.

Joint Efforts Needed to Combat Dust Problem

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Health Minister Bahram Einollahi said that effective combat against dust problem is in need of joint efforts of all regional countries.

Einollahi in a meeting with ambassadors of Azerbaijan Republic, Cuba, Syria, India, Qatar, Switzerland, Oman, Pakistan, Venezuela and Lebanon titled Joint Cooperation in Health Field expressed delight to be hosting those friendly countries envoys, arguing that safeguarding nations' health is a shared responsibility.

He said that no country all by itself can achieve full competence in achieving the entire health indexes, as it is needed that countries with different capabilities need to make joint efforts side by side of each other to achieve that objective.

The health minister said that the same thing is true about combating the newly aggravated dust problem as all regional countries and even beyond must cooperate to resolve that problem.

Turning to the coronavirus pandemic problem, Einollahi said that the COVID-19 pandemic was a red alert for the mankind during the past two years and showed how a small virus can confine the entire world nations in their own homes.

He said that despite the inhumane maximum sanctions, the Iranians by relying on their own scientists' capabilities, besides importing vaccines, also six different brands of our own vaccines as well, are now capable of exporting COVID-19 vaccines to any country that might need them.

Iran's Army to Set Up 5 New Drone Units

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The commander of Iran's Army Ground Force unveiled plans for the establishment of five new military units operating with unmanned aerial vehicles.

In comments at a conference in Tehran on Wednesday, Brigadier General Kiomars Heidari said a series of the most advanced drones are in service at the Army Ground Force.

Pointing to the sophisticated UAVs that the Army's "Drone Base 313" has taken possession of, including cruise drones and the Heidar drones, the commander said the Ground Force has submitted a proposal for the establishment of five drone units.

The general also noted that founding the five new drone units would not require any extra forces.

He highlighted the structural changes in the Army Ground Force proportional to the operational needs, saying efforts are underway to extend the range and increase the accuracy of weapons.

Construction Operation of 1.383m National Housing Movement Units Begins

TEHRAN (MNA) - The operation started for the construction of 1,383,513 units of National Housing Movement throughout the country by the fourth Iranian calendar month Tir (began on June 22), Ministry of Transport and Urban Development announced.

Of the mentioned units, 954,238 units are in different stages of physical progress, and the ground has been broken for the construction of 429,275 units.

As announced in a meeting to review the strategies for organizing the housing market, the first series of National Housing Movement units will be delivered to the applicants in the second half of the present Iranian calendar year (September 23, 2022-March 20, 2023).

The mentioned meeting, held on June 15, was attended by Transport and Urban Development Minister Rostam Qasemi and Vice President for Economic Affairs Mohsen Rezaei.

On June 11, the minister said, "With the support of the parliament and the credit provided for the facilities of National Housing Movement, we will proceed according to the schedule".

After National Housing Action Plan (started in 2018), National Housing Movement is the government's second major program to provide affordable housing units for the low-income classes.

The operation for the construction of 209,212 residential units of National Housing Movement began in early February.

The ceremony to begin the mentioned operation and also to launch some development projects in the housing sector was attended by the transport and urban development minister.

National Housing Movement to construct four million housing units in four years is one of the major plans of the current government in the housing sector.

Russo-Iranian Cooperation In Modern Tech Goes Back To Before Ukraine War

TEHRAN (IFP) – Iran says cooperation between Iran and Russia in the field of some modern technologies goes back to before the commencement of war in Ukraine.

"No change has taken place in this area at the recent juncture," spokesman Nasser Kan'ani said on Tuesday, referring to technological cooperation between the two sides. The remarks came a day after US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan claimed that Washington had received "information" indicating that Iran was preparing to provide Russia with "up to several hundred UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles), including weapons-capable UAVs on an expedited timeline."

Kan'ani repeated Iran's position of opposition to war. "The Islamic Republic's position concerning the Ukraine war is completely clear, and has been announced repeatedly in an official manner," he said.

Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian reiterated the stance during recent remarks he made to Croatian newspaper Večernji list, in which he considered the war to be rooted in the Western military alliance of NATO's expansion towards Russia's borders and its provocations against Moscow.

"However, we do not consider warfare to be the solution, and believe that Ukraine's crisis should be resolved through the course of dialog and negotiation," the top diplomat told the daily.

Adding to his remarks, Kan'ani said the claim laid by the American official against Iran comes while the United States and Europe have for years been turning the occupying and invading forces, including those in the West Asia region, into "a stockpile of their various deadly weapons."

"It is certain that without these armaments, continuation of the Zionists' more than seven decades of atrocity and occupation would not be possible," the spokesperson noted.

Pakistan Calls for Operating Barter Mechanism With Iran Soon

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Pakistani President Arif Alvi has called for acceleration of operation of barter mechanism with the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to expand and facilitate trade exchange.

Alvi made the remarks in his meeting with Iran's Consul General in Karachi, Hasan Nourian on Tuesday.

In the meeting, the Pakistani president congratulated the Iranian nation and government on Eid-al-Adha – the Muslims' feast of sacrifice and worship – on July 10.

Alvi stressed the necessity of taking constructive measures to expand bilateral economic cooperation in the joint border crossings. Iran's consul general, too, said that the increase in exchange at border points is stressed by the Islamic Republic. Reminding the recent telephone conversation between Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Nourian said Tehran is determined to develop all-out ties with Islamabad.

FM, Vatican Officials Explore Ways of Expansion of Ties

TEHRAN (IFP) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian held talks and exchanged views with the Vatican's Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin and Secretary for Relations with States, Archbishop Paul Gallagher.

During the talks, the two sides exchanged views on issues of mutual interest and concerns regarding international and regional developments.

The officials of the two countries, while reviewing the bilateral relations, agreed on preparing a mechanism to promote joint cooperation. They also emphasized the importance of interfaith dialogue that was discussed during a visit by (the Iranian Islamic seminaries head) Ayatollah Arafti to the Vatican.

The foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Vatican's Secretary for Relations with States, while exchanging views on ways to strengthen global and regional peace and stability, emphasized the need for political solutions to crises.

In the meeting held with the Vatican officials, the Iranian foreign minister elaborated on the latest developments in sanctions lifting negotiations and emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran is serious about reaching a good and lasting agreement.

He added that Iran has presented important initiatives and shown flexibility during the talks, but it is necessary for the American side to realistically prepare the conditions to finalize the agreement.

Officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Vatican also exchanged views on regional issues and stressed the necessity of establishing stable peace and security, especially in the West Asian region.



The Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran has played an important role in protecting the Izadi Christians of Iraq and the Christians of Syria against Daesh criminal terrorists, with endeavors by Martyr General Qassem Soleimani, and in line with its global responsibility in dealing with

terrorism, an issue appreciated by the Vatican.

Amirabdollahian also emphasized that as much as the Islamic Republic of Iran opposes the war in Ukraine and supports a political solution to end it, it also opposes the war in other parts of the world.

The Iranian foreign minister also emphasized that Iran is especially concerned about any worsening of the situation in northern Syria and has made significant efforts to prevent a new crisis there.

In the meeting, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Vatican emphasized their joint views regarding the illegality of political use of extra-territorial sanctions as a tool.

Meanwhile, Amirabdollahian outlined the Islamic Republic of Iran's approach in favor of political solutions to the crises in Yemen, Ukraine and Afghanistan.

The Iranian foreign minister also explained to the Vatican officials the Islamic Republic of Iran's democratic plan to hold a referendum among genuine Palestinians, including Muslims, Christians and Jews.

The situation in Lebanon was also assessed by Amirabdollahian and Vatican's Secretary of State.

Amirabdollahian also invited the Vatican Secretary of Relations with States to visit Tehran.

Tabriz Helps to Develop Cultural Relations Between Iran, Japan

TABRIZ (IP) - The capacities of cultural and artistic communication between Iran and Japan were discussed in a meeting in Tabriz, and the professor of Architecture and Art of Tokyo University delivered a speech as well.

Speaking on Tuesday evening in this meeting, Professor Riichi Miyake, professor of Architecture and Art at Tokyo University of Science referred to the duration of the relationship between Iran and Japan, saying: "Based on my own observations, since 1970, the change has been quite evident and the relations between the two countries are at a favorable level."

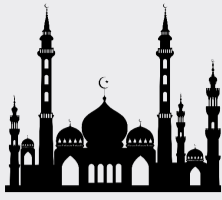
Speaking about the position of some Iranians in Japanese literature, the professor added: "In Japanese literature, there has been a lot to talk about Iranians, and we try to show the common cultural points between the two countries with art and artists."

Riichi Miyake considered the historical and cultural characteristics of Tabriz and the cultural places of the city as a good opportunity to expand the cultural and artistic relations between Iran and Japan.

Speaking to Iran Press News Agency on the sidelines of the meeting, Miyake said relations between Iran and Japan have weakened due to the US sanctions as well as COVID-19 pandemic.

The Japanese professor stated that Iranians are very emotional and creative, and more activities should be done to expand cultural relations between Iran and Japan.





PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:10
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:41
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:17
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:00

34. We have already sent down to you verses making things clear, an illustration from (the story of) people who passed away before you, and an admonition for those who fear ((Allah)).

Surah 24, Light (34)

Minister Vows to Curb Inflation in Upcoming Months

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Ehsan Khandouzi vows the inflation to be curbed in the upcoming months and reiterated that all bodies are focused on controlling the inflation.



salaries and implementation of the subsidy project and for this reason the country saw such a rise in inflation last month.

Khandouzi reiterated that due to some measures taken by the government, the inflation will decline in the upcoming two months and therefore inflation outlook will move towards curbing definitely in the upcoming months.

He also urged the Central Bank to give promises in accordance with its actions and plans but he promises the inflation will be curbed soon.

Khandouzi reiterated some academic issues and economic theories do not usually work in the country and they do not fit the national economy's condition and one cannot rely on the theories and should study the reasons behind their success or failure in the country.

He admitted that in Iran's economy there is a gap between the experiences and policy-making policies and sometimes academic issues and economic theories do not match with the policymaking policy and the gap between the independent policymaking and educational system should be amended and holding apprenticeship courses is a must which is implemented in most countries in the world.

He concluded that some economic topics which are taught in the educational systems and classes are not usually suitable for our national economy and therefore the country cannot rely on them.

Khandouzi said that the Central Bank should plan and vow the people according its plans but he as the spokesman of the economic headquarters of the government reiterates that curbing inflation is the main priority of the government and plans and focus of all state organs are focused on curbing all three factors of inflation and promised control of the inflation in upcoming months.

Despite the Central Bank's claims on the improvement of the economic condition because of slow down of the liquidity growth, the inflation in last Iranian month rose 12.2% which is a dangerous sign about the economic condition, and continuation of this inflation trend in the upcoming months may shoot up the inflation rate to 70% by the yearend.

Khandouzi said that three factors play key roles in inflation that one is liquidity growth which is gradually being controlled and the other factor is monetary and banking irregularities in economy that the government will curb it.

He went on to say that the other factor behind the inflation is rise in the production costs and this cost soared in the early months of the year due to different issues like overseas factor, imported inflation, rise in the price of the animal feeds, rise in

AUT Researchers to Smartize Mine Lines of Chadormalu Co.



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Vice Chancellor for Research and Technology of Amirkabir University of Technology (AUT) Dr. Mohammad Karimi in an interview said that the project for smartizing mine processing lines of Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company is being carried out by researchers of AUT in collaboration with Ardakan University.

Karimi said that implementation of this project which is carried out upon the request of the CEO of Chadormalu Company is a new and efficient initiative in the national mining industry and this needs upgrading in the era of fourth industrial revolution whose theme is somewhat smartization and using artificial intelligence for improving the processes in the production lines.

Stating that this process will be implemented gradually in the Chadormalu mine production line, he said that the goal behind this action is to produce products with higher quality, cheaper, more endurance and with more productivity.

Karimi stipulated that the CEO of Chadormalu Company entered this project recklessly because smartization is one of the most important international issues and Chadormalu Company has tried to be a pioneer in this field. He noted that smartization will help managers a great deal for decision-making to improve products and economize the process.

It is worth mentioning currently all mining operation in Chadormalu is carried out smartized in its dispatching unit that all of its design and operation was carried out by Yazd University graduates with support of the company and this process of smartization is to be expanded to all units and production line of the company.

South Pars 5th Refinery Supplies 6 mb of Gas Condensate in Q1



TEHRAN (Shana) -- The director of the fifth refinery of South Pars Gas Complex said the plant supplied 6 million barrels of gas condensate in the first 3 months of the current calendar year, which began on March 21.

Mohammad Shafi Moazeni said South Pars Gas Complex is now the largest supplier of the country's gas, which produces more than 75% of the country's natural gas by operating 12 refineries and one refinery that is being prepared for startup.

He added that by taking significant and innovative measures, relying on local savvy and abilities and supporting manufacturers and knowledge-based companies, in the first three months of this year, more than 6.169 million barrels of gas condensate was produced in the fourth and fifth phases of South Pars.

The official further said that 566 tons of ethane and 27,226 tons of propane were also produced during this period.

The director of the fifth refinery of the South Pars Gas Complex also noted the production of other products in the refinery, and said: "More than 31,986 tons of butane, 725,806 tons of gas condensate and 11,342 tons of granulated sulfur were also produced during this period.

Iran Trade With Uzbekistan Records 103% Growth

TEHRAN (MNA) – Spokesman for Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said that 776,137 tons of non-oil goods, valued at \$517 million, were exchanged between Iran and Uzbekistan last year (From Mar. 22, 2021 to Mar. 20, 2022).

Seyyed Rouhollah Latifi made the remarks on Tuesday and stated that trade volume exchanged between the two countries of Iran and Uzbekistan registered a 103 percent growth as compared to the last year's corresponding period.

Turning to the trade and economic ties between Iran and Uzbekistan concurrent with the visit of Iranian Parliament Speaker to this country, he said that Iran exported 714,491 tons of non-oil goods, valued at \$402 million, to the Republic of Uzbekistan, showing a 146 percent hike as

compared to the same period of last year.

Elsewhere in his remarks, IRICA spokesman pointed to the import of products from Uzbekistan and stated that 62,000 tons of non-oil goods, valued at \$115 million, were imported into the country from Uzbekistan, recording a 26 percent growth as compared to the last year's corresponding period.

Dairies, agricultural products, construction materials, bitumen, base lubricants, minerals, petro-refinery substances, pipes and profiles, fabrics, flooring, ferrous products, industrial equipment and machinery and furniture were of the main products exported from Iran to the Republic of Uzbekistan in this period, Latifi ended.

Carrying or Holding Currency Without Bills Considered Smuggling

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The judiciary declared that supplying, transporting or storing currency without valid purchase bills constituted currency smuggling.

According to recent government approvals, currency holders must register the amount of foreign exchange assets they have had in the currency trading system in order to avoid being labeled as currency smuggling and its consequences. Also, any foreign exchange purchase and sale must be registered in this system.

The new order by the Social and Crime Prevention Deputy of the Judiciary, sent by SMS according to ISNA news agency, is the latest move by the government to control the volatile conditions of the foreign exchange market in Iran.

Iran, UAE Sign Environmental Document

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) signed a document on environmental cooperation.

The document was signed on Tuesday between Iranian Vice-President and Head of the Department of Environment Ali Salajegheh and UAE Minister of Climate Change and the Environment Mariam Mohammed Saeed Al Mheiri on the sidelines of a top-ranking regional meeting on environmental issues in the Iranian capital.

Speaking during the signing ceremony, the Head of Iranian Department of Environment said that environment is a shared commitment between regional



countries that can bring them closer together.

Salajegheh said that the successful holding of the meeting in Tehran indicated that the friendly and brotherly Muslim countries can cooperate in many issues so as to solve their issues without reliance on alien counties.

The UAE minister, for her part, thanked Iran for hosting the regional meeting.

Some 11 ministers and other senior officials from regional countries attended a regional meeting on environmental issues in Tehran were the participants discussed different environmental problems including the dust storms.

Wire Line Project Starts At Iran Alloy Steel Co.

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – With the first joint technical meeting in the presence of managers and experts of the project and development department of Iran Alloy Steel Company, Iranian Alloy Steel Development Company and foreign manufacturing companies, the project of wire production line at Iran Alloy Steel Company officially started.



According to the public relations of Iran Alloy Steel Company, in the first meeting issues like timetable of implementation of the project, directives for correspondences and method of work during the project and choosing the site of wire production line and its related installations were discussed.

With exploitation of this line which is predicted to be completed in two years, the company will be able to produce different types of alloy wires with the ultimate capacity of 400,000 tons per year with the diameters between 5 to 25 millimeters and it will create some 200 direct jobs.

Annual Export of Polymer Products Rises 23%

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iran exported over \$3.320 billion worth of polymer products in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), registering a 23-percent rise year on year, a board member of Iran National Plastic and Polymer Industries Association (INPIA) said.

Speaking at a press conference on the international conference of promoting exports of polymer products in Tehran on Wednesday, Barmak Ghanbarpour said that polymer industry accounted for 73 percent of the total value of the non-oil exports made by the country's industrial sector in the previous year, IRNA reported.

"Iran's total non-oil export was 48 billion dollars last year, and the share of polymer industries from the total non-oil export is estimated at seven percent," Ghanbarpour said.

According to the official, currently, 8,000 production units are active in this industry which have a total production capacity of 13 million tons.

He noted that the annual import of raw materials for the polymer industry is about five million tons which indicates that there is eight million tons of idle capacity in this industry.

The international conference on promoting the exports of polymer products will be held next Iranian calendar month Mordad (begins on July 23) for the second consecutive year with the aim of exploring issues and challenges in the country's polymer industries and exchanging views on ways of increasing exports.

According to Reza Tofiqi, the secretary of the conference, export-oriented production is the key to the development of industrial units in the polymer industry.

"By learning about new export markets, we also become more active in the domestic markets and this will reduce the production costs and consumer prices and is a great economic advantage," Tofiqi said. The official further mentioned the capacity of the country's petrochemical industry, saying: "The feedstock needed by the polymer industry is provided, to a large extent, within the country by domestic petrochemical complexes."

He pointed out that the international conference on promoting polymer products exports is trying to develop export-oriented investment, saying: "By doing this, we will maintain a significant part of the added value in the country's economy, which will increase the country's gross production and lead to economic development."

China Locks Down City of 300,000 Over COVID

BEIJING (Dispatches) - Hundreds of thousands of people were under lockdown in a small Chinese city Tuesday after just one case of Covid-19 was detected, as Beijing's strict no-tolerance virus strategy showed no sign of abating.

China is the last major economy glued to a zero-Covid policy, crushing new outbreaks with snap lockdowns, forced quarantines and onerous travel curbs despite mounting public fatigue and damage to the economy.

Authorities in several regions have imposed a range of restrictions as they struggle to tamp down fresh flare-ups driven by the fast-spreading Omicron variant.



EU Freezes Russian Assets Worth \$13.8b

PRAGUE (Dispatches) - The European Union has frozen Russian assets worth US\$13.8 billion since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, EU Justice Commissioner Didier Reynders said today.

"For the moment, we have frozen — coming from oligarchs and other entities — €13.8 billion, so it's quite huge," Reynders told reporters in Prague.

"But I must say that a very large part of it is more than 12 billion... coming from five member states," he added ahead of an informal meeting of EU justice ministers held by the Czech presidency of the EU. He refused to name the five countries, but added he expected the other countries in the 27-member bloc to step up their efforts soon.



Kyiv Says Hits Russian Arms Depot in South Ukraine



KYIV (Dispatches) - Kyiv said it had launched a barrage of rockets and missiles on Russian military targets in southern Ukraine and destroyed an arms depot, in attacks that Moscow-backed authorities said had damaged homes.

The bombardment overnight in the Kherson region -- which Russian forces captured soon after they invaded in late February -- come as Kyiv's army tries to claw back territory in the south of the country.

Ukrainian military officials said the strikes had destroyed artillery, armoured vehicles "and a warehouse with ammunition in Nova Kakhovka".

Russian-backed authorities in the city however said Ukrainian strikes had damaged civilian infrastructure and left at least seven people dead, a toll that could not be independently verified.

"There are no military targets here... warehouses were hit, as were shops, a pharmacy, petrol stations and even a church," the head of the city's Moscow-backed administration, Vladimir Leontiev, said on social media.

Images published by the Moscow-backed authorities showed several buildings reduced to ash.

The Ukrainian army has for several weeks been waging a counter-offensive on the southern Kherson front, while Russian troops have been focusing on the country's east.

The deputy head of the pro-Russian authorities in Kherson, Ekaterina Gubareva, accused Ukraine of having used long-range, precision artillery systems supplied by the United States in the strikes in Nova Kakhovka.

Ukraine has pleaded for sophisticated artillery systems from Western allies to fend off Russian forces, arguing only these weapons could turn the tide of the fighting.

Now military analysts are crediting the newly arrived systems -- including Caesars from France and HIMARS from the United States -- with attacks deeper in Russian-controlled territory in Ukraine, including on ammunition depots.

During a visit to Kyiv on Monday, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said that the Netherlands too would send more advanced artillery to the front lines.

The United States however cautioned that Moscow was also receiving a weapons boost, with Iran planning to supply hundreds of drones with combat weapon capabilities to Russia for use in Ukraine, a top U.S. official said Monday.

Russian forces early Tuesday launched "massive" strikes on the southern Ukrainian city of Mykolaiv, with missiles hitting two medical facilities and residential buildings, the city's mayor Oleksandr Sienkevych said.

The regional head, Vitaliy Kim, said 12 people were wounded in those attacks. The epicentre of fighting in Ukraine in recent weeks has however been the industrial east of the country, known as the Donbas, where Moscow's forces have slowly advanced despite fierce resistance and recent Russian strikes have left dozens dead.

Moscow has concentrated its efforts on the region since failing to capture Kyiv after its February 24 invasion.

Two days after Russian bombardment reduced a residential building in the eastern town of Chasiv Yar to rubble, rescue workers were still clearing the debris and retrieving bodies from the wreckage Tuesday. The head of the Donetsk region, which has been partially controlled by Moscow-backed separatists since 2014, said that 34 people had so far been confirmed killed by the attack on Sunday.

Nine people were recovered alive, Pavlo Kyrylenko said. After Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday passed a decree fast-tracking Russian passports for all Ukrainians, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was expected Tuesday to open a representative office for separatist authorities in Moscow.

EU Gives Croatia Final Light to Adopt Euro in 2023

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - EU finance ministers on Tuesday gave Croatia the final green light to adopt the euro single currency on January 1, 2023.

"I would like to congratulate my counterpart, Zdravko Maric, and the whole of Croatia for becoming the 20th country to join the euro area," said Zbynek Stanjura, the finance minister of the Czech Republic, which holds the EU's rotating presidency.

Croatia's switch from the kuna to the euro in 2023 will come less than a decade after the former Yugoslav republic joined the European Union and will set a new milestone in the bloc's further integration.

"This is a time for celebration... and an act of conviction," said Christine Lagarde, the head of the European Central Bank at a signing ceremony in Brussels.

"The whole of Croatia decided and was convinced of the value of joining the euro and the euro area," she added.

In adopting the legal texts necessary for the historic move, the ministers officially set the euro at 7.53450 Croatian kuna. The newest member joins the group at a difficult moment with the euro hovering close to parity with the US dollar, a symptom of a looming cost-of-living crisis in the eurozone economy.



Belarus President Claims West Plotting to Attack Russia

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko claimed today that the West was preparing to attack Russia via Belarus.

Speaking to military graduates and officers, Lukashenko said he discussed the alleged Western plot with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"Strategic plans for an attack against Russia are being developed," Lukashenko alleged, saying the West would seek to target Russia "through Ukraine and through Belarus".

"History is repeating itself," he said, in an apparent reference to the invasion of Russia by Napoleon's troops in 1812 and by Nazi Germany in 1941.

Putin sent troops into Ukraine on February 24.

Belarus, the Kremlin's main ally, has served as a staging ground for the Russian army in its offensive on neighbouring Ukraine.

Western countries have never publicly said they are planning to attack Russia. But Lukashenko pointed to NATO's continued expansion, saying the "newly-minted crusaders" were "forming an armoured fist" to attack Russia.

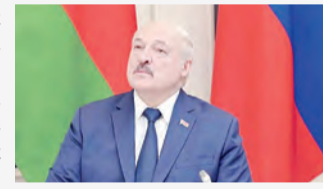
"The events unfolding today around Belarus and Russia call for our utmost vigilance and concentration," Lukashenko said.

He said the West was pushing the world towards "major war" and said the army should "keep its powder dry".

Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova struck a similar note on Tuesday.

She accused the United States and its allies of provoking the Ukraine crisis and risking "an open military confrontation with our country".

"Obviously, such a collision would carry a risk of nuclear escalation," she said in a statement.



Sri Lankan President Flees to Maldives, Protesters Storm PM Office

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled the country on Wednesday and hundreds of protesters stormed the prime minister's office demanding his ouster, as a people's uprising over a devastating economic crisis overwhelmed security forces.

Rajapaksa called the speaker of parliament to say he would resign later in the day and that his ally Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe should be interim president, infuriating Sri Lankans struggling with months-long shortages of food, fuel and power.

The president's flight brought an end to the rule of the powerful Rajapaksa clan that has dominated politics in the South Asian country for the last two decades.

Wickremesinghe's office declared a state of emergency and a curfew with immediate effect, but then cancelled them. His office said the moves would be announced again later.

"Protesters have no reason to storm the prime minister's office," Wickremesinghe said in a statement. "They want to stop the parliamentary process. But we must respect the Constitution. So security forces have advised me to impose an emergency and a curfew. I'm working to do that."

Police stationed outside the prime minister's office fired several rounds of tear gas and a military helicopter briefly circled overhead, but protesters appeared undeterred and finally surged into the compound. Wickremesinghe's team declined to reveal his whereabouts.

"It feels pretty marvellous, people were trying to take this place for about three hours," said college student Sanchuka Kavinda, 25, standing next to a mangled, open gate of the prime minister's office. "No matter what, everyone in this crowd will be here until Ranil also steps down."

In a video statement, the parliament speaker, Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena, said: "The president got in touch with me over the phone and said that he will ensure that his resignation letter will be received by me today."

"I appeal to the public to have confidence in the parliamentary process we have outlined to appoint a new president on the 20th and be peaceful."

State-run TV station Rupavahini briefly suspended transmission after protesters entered the premises. A second government-run TV station, Independent Television Network, also stopped their broadcast, though the cause was not immediately clear.



Hungarian Protesters Block Bridge In Budapest Over Planned Tax Rise

BUDAPEST (Dispatches) - About 1,000 demonstrators blocked a bridge in central Budapest as parliament debated a motion by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government that would increase the tax rate for hundreds of thousands of small firms.

The protesters initially gathered at a main square outside parliament before marching to a nearby bridge over the River Danube, blocking traffic in both directions between the two sides of Budapest amid a heavy police presence.

Nationalist Orban is facing his toughest challenge yet since taking power in a 2010 landslide, with inflation at its highest in two decades, the forint plunging record lows and European Union funds in limbo amid a dispute over democratic standards.

With the bridge blocked for about three hours, choking off on one of Budapest's main traffic arteries, protesters chanting "withdraw it" faced down policemen ordering them to leave.

It was the first major show of popular disquiet since Orban was re-elected in April. Police said a group of demonstrators also blocked some lanes on another bridge further downstream, with Budapest's historic Chain Bridge also closed due to ongoing renovation works.

"It is possible that it will not be worth continuing it (with the higher tax rate)," said 52-year-old Katalin Karolyi, a medical worker, who also has a small business advising a company on dietary issues.

"This will endanger my livelihood, the livelihood of my entire family."

The Hungarian Medical Chamber said the abrupt overhaul could jeopardise the seamless treatment of patients, calling on Orban's government to exempt medical workers from the new rules.

Orban's government submitted the amendments to parliament on Monday, drastically tightening eligibility for the simplified tax regime, which many small businesses opted into due to the low administration and low tax rate it offered.

However, the government says the system was abused by some businesses forcing workers into the scheme to curb their own costs, facilitating a form of covert employment. The opposition Jobbik party has called on Orban to withdraw the legislation.

The new rules are set to take effect in September, pending parliamentary approval. The tax had been due to raise 237 billion forints (\$572 million) this year.

Myanmar's Junta Rolls Out Chinese Camera Surveillance Systems in Cities

SINGAPORE (Dispatches) - Myanmar's junta government is installing Chinese-built cameras with facial recognition capabilities in more cities across the country, three people with direct knowledge of the matter said.

In tenders to procure and install the security cameras and facial recognition technology, the plans are described as safe city projects aimed at maintaining security and, in some cases, preserving civil peace, said the people who are or have been involved in the projects.

Since the February 2021 coup, local authorities have started new camera surveillance projects for at least five cities including Mawlamyine - the country's fourth-largest city, according to information from the three people who asked not to be identified for fear of reprisals by the junta.

The new projects are in addition to five cities where camera systems touted as crime prevention measures were either installed or planned by the previous government led by Aung San Suu Kyi, according to the sources and local media.

A junta spokesman did not answer Reuters calls seeking comment. None of the 10 municipal governments, all of which are controlled by the junta, answered calls seeking comment. Reuters was not able to review the tenders or visit the cities to verify the installation of the cameras.

The junta is planning camera surveillance systems for cities in each of Myanmar's seven states and seven regions, said one of the sources who was briefed on the junta's plans on two occasions by different people.

The scale of the junta's efforts to roll out camera surveillance systems has not been previously reported. The tenders have been won by local procurement firms including Fisca Security & Communication and Naung Yoe Technologies Co, the three sources said. The firms source the cameras and some related technology from Chinese surveillance giants Zhejiang Dahua Technology (Dahua), Huawei Technologies Co Ltd and Hikvision, the three sources added.

Fisca and Naung Yoe, both headquartered in Yangon, did not respond to requests for comment. Huawei and Dahua did not respond to Reuters requests for comment. Hikvision said in a statement it has never sold directly to Myanmar government authorities and its customers in overseas markets are distributors and integrators. It also said it had not sold facial recognition technology into the country.

Hikvision did not respond to queries about whether it knows of cases where its hardware capable of running facial recognition software had been sold into Myanmar.

The three sources also said Myanmar procurement firms that won the tenders sometimes use facial recognition software developed by local and regional companies as the Chinese software licenses are costly. They did not name the software companies.

Closed-circuit television (CCTV) or video surveillance systems are used by many cities around the world to discourage crime. Increasingly controversial facial recognition software is also being employed, with the technology gaining ground in the United States for law enforcement purposes. Some sophisticated systems, such as those used in Chinese cities, use artificial intelligence to match real-time images of people against a database of images.

The people with direct knowledge of the Myanmar projects and human rights groups said they fear the new projects could be used to crack down on activists and resistance groups, both of which have been designated as terrorists by the junta in the wake of its coup.

They were not able to provide evidence of the junta's intentions.



James Webb Telescope Reveals Deepest, Sharpest View of Universe

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - U.S. President Joe Biden unveiled the first full-colour image of the cosmos taken by the James Webb Space Telescope, offering what NASA said was "the deepest, sharpest infrared view of the universe" ever taken.

During a ceremony at the White House, Biden said it was "an historic day" as the world's largest and most powerful space science telescope offered a "new window into the history of our universe".

"Today we're going to get a glimpse at the first light to shine through that window," Biden said shortly before the release of the image, which showed bright white, yellow and orange lights that NASA said represented "galaxies once invisible to us".

"Light from other worlds, orbiting stars far beyond our own," Biden said. "The oldest-documented light in the history of the universe from over 13 billion - let me say that again - 13 billion years ago."

The image will be followed on Tuesday by the release of four more galactic beauty shots from the telescope's initial outward gazes.

"We're going to give humanity a new view of the cosmos," NASA Administrator Bill Nelson told reporters last month in a briefing. "And it's a view that we've never seen before."

The \$9bn Webb observatory, named after the man who ran NASA during the Apollo space programme that put humans on the moon in the 1960s, was designed to peer through the cosmos to the dawn of the known universe, ushering in a revolutionary era of astronomical discovery.

It soared off from French Guiana on South America's northeastern coast on December 25, 2021, before reaching its final destination 1.6 million kilometres (one million miles) from Earth less than a month later. NASA is collaborating on Webb with the European and Canadian space agencies.

The highly anticipated release of its first imagery follows a six-month process of remotely unfurling Webb's various components, aligning its mirrors and calibrating instruments.

With Webb now finely tuned and fully focused, scientists will embark on a competitively selected list of missions exploring the evolution of galaxies, the life cycles of stars, the atmospheres of distant exoplanets and the moons of our outer solar system.

Built to view its subjects chiefly in the infrared spectrum, Webb is about 100 times more sensitive than its 30-year-old predecessor, the Hubble Space Telescope, which operates mainly at optical and ultraviolet wavelengths.

Hubble has stared as far back as 13.4 billion years. It found the light wave signature of an extremely bright galaxy in 2016. Astronomers measure how far back they look in light years, with one light year being 9.5 trillion kilometres (5.9 trillion miles).

"Webb can see backwards in time to just after the Big Bang by looking for galaxies that are so far away that the light has taken many billions of years to get from those galaxies to our telescopes," said Jonathan Gardner, Webb's deputy project scientist during a recent briefing. The much larger light-collecting surface of Webb's primary mirror - an array of 18 hexagonal segments of gold-coated beryllium metal - enables it to observe objects at greater distances, thus further back in time, than Hubble or any other telescope.

All five of Webb's introductory targets were previously known to scientists.

Among them are two enormous clouds of gas and dust blasted into space by stellar explosions to form incubators for new stars - the Carina Nebula and the Southern Ring Nebula, each thousands of light years away from Earth.



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Brazil Close to Buy Cheaper Diesel From Russia

BRASILIA (Dispatches) - Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro said that a deal was close with Moscow to buy much cheaper diesel from Russia, in what would appear to be the latest tangible benefit stemming from his friendly relationship with President Vladimir Putin.

Bolsonaro, a far-right former army captain, gave no further details. Neither Bolsonaro's office, nor Brazil's Mining and Energy Ministry immediately responded to requests for comment.

"It makes sense and eventually could happen," a senior Economy Ministry official said on condition of anonymity, declining to give further details.

A senior official from state-run oil company Petroleo Brasileiro SA (PETR4.SA), or Petrobras, which supplies most fuel to the domestic market, told Reuters the idea was not surprising but raised concerns, without going into details.



Chile Currency Plunge, Inflation Rattle Latin America's Copper King

SANTIAGO (Dispatches) - Chile's tumbling currency and runaway inflation are testing the Andean copper giant's economic and financial systems, and complicating President Gabriel Boric's plans to push through a tax reform bill to fund ambitious social programs.

The Chilean peso has plummeted more than 15% over the last month, briefly hitting 1,000 pesos per dollar for the first time ever, a development that has sparked alarms. Yearly inflation hit 12.5% in June, the highest in nearly three decades.

In an interview with Reuters, Finance Minister Mario Marcel said that the country's market-orientated model and free-floating exchange rate meant that while the currency could be more volatile, this didn't necessarily reflect wider strains.

"Because (Chile) has a floating exchange rate, it is more volatile than other Latin American countries, but the difference is that we have an economy that is not dollarized," Marcel said.

"Therefore exchange rate volatility does not generate risks for financial stability as can happen in other countries."

The global economy is facing a rising risk of recession, with concerns over slowing demand from China pulling the global price of copper back sharply from recent highs. Chile is the world's No. 1 producer of the red metal.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has also raised fears over the global supply of grains and energy, pushing up inflation that is rattling countries around the world as rising food and gas prices hurt consumers and stoke unrest.

Marcel said that to soften the blow to citizens from rising prices, the government is providing a subsidy for low-income families and stabilizing prices for fuel and basic goods.

"What we are doing is using the mechanisms we have to stabilize some prices, so we have a fuel price stabilization mechanism," Marcel said. "We have been able to cushion more than countries that have simply eliminated specific taxes."

The economic turmoil comes as the government is trying to push through a tax reform bill that seeks to collect 4.1 points of GDP over four years by implementing tax hikes on top earners and a mining royalty, as well as eliminating tax loopholes.

Young, progressive President Boric said that the plummeting currency was "tremendously worrying" during a press conference last week, attributing the decline to weakening copper prices, as well as uncertainty over a planned new constitution.

"Uncertainty, without a doubt, contributes and that's why it's important that we differing political actors give signals of certainty," Boric told reporters.

Chileans will vote in September to approve or reject a new constitution, which focuses on social rights and the environment. It would replace the current market-led text that dates back decades to the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship. Opinion polls currently suggest it lacks enough support to pass.

Japan's Machinery Orders Fall for First Time in 3 Months

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Japan's core machinery orders slipped for the first time in three months in May, hurting hopes that a pickup in business spending would offset pressure on an economy struggling with surging costs of energy and other imports due to a weak yen.

The decline in core orders comes a day after Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's ruling coalition government increased its majority in the upper house of parliament, strengthening the premier's hand as leader.

Core orders, a highly volatile data series regarded as an indicator of capital spending in the coming six to nine months, lost 5.6% in May from the previous month, posting their first drop in three months, Cabinet Office data showed on Monday.

It was almost exactly in line with economists' median estimate of a 5.5% contraction and followed a 10.8% jump in the previous month and a 7.1% increase in March.

Japanese firms could delay spending due to persistent constraints in the supply of chips and parts and rising energy and raw material prices that have been aggravated by a weakening yen, sending wholesale inflation soaring.

"While businesses have a strong desire to invest, their actual capital spending has not increased a lot on a gross domestic product basis," said Takumi Tsunoda, senior economist at Shinkin Central Bank Research Institute.

"It's because of supply constraints. Machinery makers are saying that chips are not coming in even though they are sitting on orders. Those aren't reflected in the capital spending."

Compared with a year earlier, core orders, which exclude volatile numbers from shipping and electric power utilities, gained 7.4% in May, the data found.

By sector, orders from manufacturers contracted 9.8% month-on-month, weighed by electrical machinery, while those from non-manufacturers saw a 4.1% decline, pulled down by a drop in orders from the transportation and postal sub-sector.

The government kept its assessment on machinery orders unchanged, saying they were showing signs of picking up.

After contracting in the first quarter, the economy is expected to return to growth in January-March, but the rebound is feared to be smaller than initially projected.

The world's third-largest economy faces headwinds from soaring import costs and a heavy-handed pandemic response in China, which could hurt consumption and output in the quarter.



Georgieva Warns Against Complacency on Global Debt Problems

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva is pushing China and other Group of 20 economies to speed up debt relief for a growing number of heavily indebted countries, warning that failure to do so could unleash a damaging "downward spiral."

Georgieva told Reuters it was crucial to jumpstart the largely stalled Common Framework for debt treatments that was adopted by the G20 and the Paris Club of official creditors in October 2020 but has failed to deliver a single result thus far.

"This is a topic we cannot have complacency on," she said. "If trust is eroded to a point that there is a downward spiral, you don't know where it would end," the head of the International Monetary Fund said in an interview late last week ahead of this week's meeting of finance officials in Indonesia.

Georgieva said she spoke with Indonesian President Joko Widodo, who holds the rotating presidency of the G20 this year, during last month's Group of Seven meeting in Germany and urged him to push for greater unity on debt before the G20 leaders summit in November.

"G20 leaders don't want to be in a situation in which that issue dominates the conversation just because we are not making progress," Georgieva said.

Western officials are stepping up criticism of the G20 Common Framework process after nearly two years of glacial progress blamed largely on foot-dragging by China, the world's largest sovereign creditor, and private sector creditors.

Argentina to Honor Economic Goals Agreed With IMF

BUENOS AIRES (Dispatches) - Argentina's new economy minister said Monday the country would honor fiscal deficit goals and other commitments made under a deal struck with the IMF to refinance a debt of some \$44 billion.

Under the agreement negotiated by Silvina Batakis' predecessor Martin Guzman, who resigned suddenly nine days ago, Argentina committed to reducing its fiscal deficit from 3.0 percent of GDP last year to 2.5 percent in 2022,

1.9 percent in 2023 and 0.9 percent in 2024.

"The goals agreed with the IMF are maintained," Batakis said in Buenos Aires at her first press conference since taking office a week ago.

"It is an agreement we signed as a state and we must comply." In 2018, under the government of conservative President Mauricio Macri, the International Monetary Fund granted its biggest-ever loan of \$57 billion to Argentina.

The country received \$44 billion of that amount and Macri's successor Alberto Fernandez refused to accept the rest. As the country struggled to repay its debt, a refinancing agreement was reached this year after protracted negotiations.

Guzman resigned suddenly on July 2 amid a power struggle between Argentina's president and vice president, sparking fresh uncertainty in Latin America's third largest economy.

The peso fell sharply last Monday against the U.S. dollar after Batakis' appointment.

On Monday, the 53-year-old said there was a need to "give order and balance to the public finances," and vowed that "we will not spend more than we have."

Among her proposals: to reduce energy subsidies, which in 2021 amounted to \$11 billion or 2.3 percent of GDP, by applying a sliding scale to prices for gas and electricity based on income.

In 2020, the Argentine economy contracted 9.9 percent before rebounding the following year by 10.3 percent. For this year, the IMF predicts growth of 4.0 percent.

At the time the refinancing agreement was reached, Argentina's inflation was projected to reach 52 percent in 2022 -- already one of the highest in the world.

Since then, the war in Ukraine has sent prices soaring worldwide, and Argentina marked year-on-year inflation of 60 percent in May.

"The agreement was signed before the rise in global inflation," said Batakis, adding a new estimate for 2022 was being compiled.

"It is a methodological issue we are evaluating, not a shifting of the goal," she insisted. A survey by Argentina's central bank of projections for 2022 inflation put the rate at some 76 percent.

China Auto Industry Cuts 2022 Outlook as Commercial Demand Slumps

SHANGHAI (Dispatches) - A slump in commercial-vehicle demand led China's automobile industry association to downgrade its sales forecast, as anti-pandemic measures weighed on the economy and its car market, the world's largest.

The industry will sell 27 million cars this year, up 3% on 2021, the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers forecast, cutting its outlook from the 27.5 million sales and 5.4% growth it predicted in December.

Weak demand for commercial vehicles, such as buses and trucks, drove the downgrade, data from the association showed. It now expects a 16% fall in sales of commercial vehicles to 4 million units.

Overall growth of around 3% compares with the 4.4% achieved in 2021 and the 1.9% fall of 2020. The auto sector has been hit hard in recent months by efforts to combat COVID-19. The government has at times put many parts of the country, including Shanghai, under stringent lockdown.

Authorities have tried incentives to revive demand, with the central government last month halving purchase tax to 5% for cars priced at less than 300,000 yuan (\$45,000) and with engines no larger than 2.0 litres.

Many policies have been aimed at encouraging sales of new-energy vehicles (NEVs). In May and June, some local governments began offering subsidies for trade-ins of gasoline vehicles for electric cars.

Some cities have also expanded quotas on car ownership.

Such policies helped create an annual rise in sales seen in June, following four months that showed falls. The industry sold 2.5 million vehicles in June, up 23.8% on a year earlier, the association said.

But the incentives had hardly helped commercial-vehicle demand, which was awaiting recovery of activity in logistics and infrastructure, sectors that needed more state support, Xu Haidong, the association's deputy chief engineer, said at Monday's regular press conference.

June sales were also up 34.4% from May, with sales of NEVs - among them electric, plug-in petrol-electric hybrids and hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles - climbing 129.2% from a year before.

While it cut its annual projection for overall sales, the association revised up its forecast for NEVs, saying 5.5 million units would probably be sold, up more than 56% and compared with last year's 47% growth. Passenger car sales for the year would likely rise about 7%.

Although June sales were buoyant, there are concerns that demand will once again be hit as COVID cases tick up with the arrival of the BA.5 Omicron subvariant in China and cities impose new restrictions.

China's auto industry will also face persistent challenges of chip shortages and rising raw material costs, especially for electric-vehicle batteries, said Chen Shihua, deputy secretary-general of the association.

OECD Sees Global Corporate Tax Overhaul on Course for 2024



PARIS (Dispatches) - The biggest overhaul of cross-border tax rules in a generation is now on course to take effect in 2024, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said on Monday in an update on the project for G20 finance ministers.

The shake-up, which has been shepherded by the OECD and which nearly 140 countries agreed to last year, aims to take better account of the emergence of big digital companies, such as Apple and Amazon that can book profits in low-tax countries.

The first pillar of the two-track reform aims to reallocate 25% of profits from the world's largest multinationals for taxation in the countries where their clients are regardless of the companies' physical location. The second pillar aims to set global minimum corporate tax rate of 15%.

Both pillars were originally due to be implemented next year, although that was always seen as highly ambitious given the difficulty of agreeing complex changes to many countries' tax laws.

"We will keep working as quickly as possible to get this work finalized, but we will also take as much time as necessary to get the rules right," OECD Secretary General Mathias Cormann said in statement.

"These rules will shape our international tax arrangements for decades to come," he added.

The OECD said in a report for G20 finance ministers this week in Bali that the new timetable for the first pillar set a hard mid-2023 deadline for sign-off on the multilateral legal framework underpinning it so it can enter into force in 2024.

Meanwhile, it said most countries were planning legislation to adopt the global minimum tax rate so that it also enters into force in 2024.

Iran's Envoy, New Director-General Of UNIDO Meet

TEHRAN (IP) - Acting Head of Mission and Charge d'Affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the International Organizations Based in Vienna and the new Director-General of UNIDO met to discuss expanding cooperation in industrial development.

Mohammad-Reza Ghaebi, Acting Head of Mission and Charge d'Affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the International Organizations Based in Vienna,

met with Gerd Muller, the new Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), on Tuesday and exchanged views on strengthening bilateral cooperation in the field of industrial development.

The director-general of UNIDO welcomed developing technical relations between the two sides and underlined the will of this organization to use the various investment capacities in Iran and transfer modern knowledge.



Oil Majors Face Output Slump, Deep Losses If Russia Stops Kazakh Pipeline

LONDON (Dispatches) - Western energy majors will cut output and lose billions of dollars if Russia, as is feared, suspends a pipeline that is almost the only export route for oil from land-locked Kazakhstan, company sources, traders and analysts say.

The closure of the CPC pipeline that carries oil from Kazakhstan to the Black Sea Russian export terminal in the port of Novorossiisk would shut in more than 1% of global oil supply, exacerbating what is already the most severe energy crunch since the Arab oil embargo in the 1970s.

The pipeline, which runs through Russian territory and is owned by a consortium of Western, Asian, Russian and Kazakh companies, has been in the spotlight since Russia on Feb. 24 invaded Ukraine in what Moscow calls a "special military operation".

Last Wednesday, a court in Novorossiisk ordered CPC to suspend operations for 30 days, citing concern about oil spill management.

A Russian court on Monday overturned the ruling against CPC and instead fined it 200,000 roubles (\$3,300).

The sources, however, said they still thought major disruption likely. Pipeline co-owner Russia has said all stoppages are driven by technical issues.

Storm damage in March has already interrupted flows through the 1.3 million barrels per day (bpd) oil artery, operated by the Caspian Pipeline Consortium.

Major oil companies, including Chevron, Exxon Mobil, Shell and Italy's Eni, in addition to several Russian and Kazakh firms have stakes in the CPC. Western companies also hold stakes in Kazakh oilfields.

The CPC pipeline is the route for nearly all Kazakh oil exports.

Three sources at Western oil companies operating in Kazakhstan, asking not to be named because of the sensitivity of the issue, said they expected a prolonged CPC pipeline suspension.

One trader at a Western major said such an outage would result in a decline of 50 million tonnes of oil per year (1 million bpd) because land-locked Kazakhstan has limited alternative export routes.

Many Western companies have exited operations in Russia, with oil majors among the first to leave in the days after the conflict began. Western sanctions have disrupted Russian exports and pushed up energy prices.

In response, Russia made steps towards seizing oil and gas projects Sakhalin 1 and 2, where Shell and Exxon have stakes.

A Western executive familiar with CPC operations said Sakhalin was "a definite sign of things to come for CPC".

Shortly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, international oil prices spiked to their highest levels since the records of 2008.

They have since eased to just above \$100 a barrel as the market anticipates economic weakness will lower demand, although selling has been limited by concerns of tight supplies that would be exacerbated by a cut in CPC output.

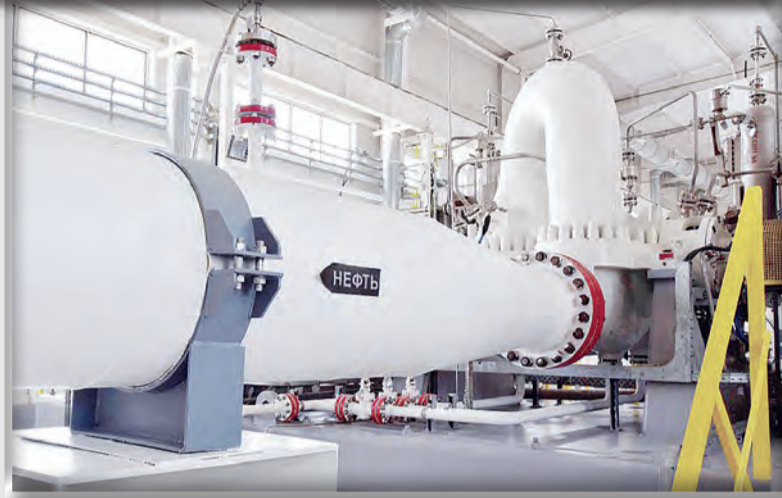
"Losing one million barrels per day in an already tight environment can lead to an unsolvable problem for the oil market," Amrita Sen from Energy Aspects in London said.

JP Morgan analysts predicted last week oil prices could jump to an all-time high of \$190 per barrel if a combined 3 million bpd of output from Russia and Kazakhstan was hit by sanctions and related issues.

Kazakhstan produces some 1.6 million bpd of oil, and exports about 80% of that volume, mostly through the CPC.

Of the remainder, 15% leaves the country also via Russia, and around 5% goes to China and various destinations via rail and the Caspian Sea, Kazakhstan's Energy Ministry data shows.

Last week, Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev told his government to diversify oil supply routes.



But that would take time, Camille Chautard, analyst at Moody's ratings, said.

Oil majors have studied the viability of alternative routes in recent months, the three sources said, including to China and trans-Caspian shipments to Azerbaijan and Georgia. All of those options are challenging.

The pipeline to China can take oil from east and central Kazakhstan, but most of the large fields are in the West.

On the Caspian Sea, exporters face tanker shortages and have little capacity to take more oil. "To be honest, I don't think we can re-route anything," one Western trader familiar with CPC operations said.

Chevron would be particularly exposed to any pipeline closure because it has the biggest Western stake in Kazakh production at around 380,000 bpd, or more than 12%, of its total output.

Recent temporary disruptions should not have a material impact on the company's credit standing, but an eventual "prolonged disruption would be very material to Chevron's production volumes," Elena Nadotchi from Moody's said.

If Chevron's investments in Kazakhstan were impaired or lost, that could lead to a ratings downgrade, she said.

A long-term closure would also threaten Chevron's future growth plans. The U.S. major planned to boost output by 40% at Kazakhstan's largest field Tengiz to around 1 million bpd.

Credit Suisse analysts estimate that Chevron, which controls 50% of Tengiz, would have seen free cash flow rising to \$3.0-\$3.5 billion by 2024 following the expansion and to \$4.0-\$4.5 billion by 2026 on the basis of oil prices of \$60 per barrel.

In May, Chevron flagged the risk of sanctions to its output but said measures had not yet had a material impact.

The Chevron-led Tengiz consortium TCO, which also includes Exxon, declined to comment on specific details if the CPC pipeline was shut.

Exxon is the second largest foreign producer in Kazakhstan with output of 213,000 bpd of oil and 234 million cubic feet of gas. It is followed by Eni with some 145,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day, Shell with around 100,000 boed and TotalEnergies with some 80,000 boed in 2021.

Shell, Eni and Total declined to comment, as did Exxon, saying TCO was best-placed to respond.

Muslim World...

FROM PAGE 1

This trend in the Islamic world, continued Ayatollah Khamenei, is a source of worry for arrogant powers as they will "employ all their resources" to confront it. He went on to name soft warfare, inducement, intimidation, and the criminal Zionist regime among the tools used by enemies to fight Islamic awakening.



Noting that enemies' efforts "have failed in most cases", he added, "the arrogant West has become weaker by the day in our sensitive region and, more recently, throughout the whole world."

The Islamic Revolution Leader stressed that the failure of the U.S. and the Israeli regime can be seen clearly. "The distress and failure of the United States and its criminal accomplice, the usurper [Zionist] regime in the region, can clearly be seen."

The Supreme Leader is totally right because lack of unity among Muslims have emboldened the Zionists and the U.S. to take more aggressive steps against Muslims and the Zionists' atrocities against the Muslims especially in the Middle East are on the rise.

To overcome such hegemony and atrocities, Muslims worldwide need to remain united in fight against this tyranny like what they do in Hajj and stoning the Devil because so far the Zionists have made most of the rift and division among the Muslims to continue its atrocities and as the Supreme Leader has reiterated, without unity it will be difficult to fight the Zionists.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is a role model for fight against the world arrogance and fought for safeguarding the independence, and the establishment since the overthrow of the Shah regime in 1979 has progressed significantly and now it can be proud to say it can be a role model for other Muslim states.

The Palestine cause should be an issue for uniting Muslims against the Zionists and as long as they ignore this cause, the Zionists will continue their dominance over the Muslims states who have pro-West or weak governments.

Unfortunately, normalization of ties with the Zionist regime is the exact sign for treason against the Palestinians and will help this fake regime to survive and Muslim nations should not let it happen.

So on the occasion of this auspicious eid, Muslim states and their rulers are recommended to show their unity in fight against the Zionists and Americans' dominance otherwise they will have to suffer more insults and hegemony and it will be a blow to Muslims worldwide because Islam has always encouraged Muslims to fight for their rights without bowing down to oppressors.

Majlis...

FROM PAGE 1

The Iranian Parliament "wants the Swedish government to take action to prevent further violations [of Nouri's rights], be accountable and make up for the spiritual and material damage inflicted on him at the earliest," he said.

The senior lawmaker also urged the Iranian Judiciary and Foreign Ministry to use all in their power to pursue Nouri's case and secure his release.

Nouri was arrested upon arrival in Sweden at Stockholm Airport in November 2019 and was immediately imprisoned. He has been held in solitary confinement for over two years.

Swedish prosecutors have requested the maximum penalty of life imprisonment for Nouri, accusing the former Iranian judiciary official of prisoner abuse in 1988.

His accusers, who are MKO terrorists, allege Nouri was involved in the execution and torture of MKO members in 1988. Nouri vehemently rejects the allegation.

Iran's June Oil...

FROM PAGE 1

The country's average heavy crude price was \$105.14 from the beginning of 2022 up to the report's publishing date, in comparison to \$64.31 in the previous year's same period.

OPEC statistics show that despite the U.S. sanctions, Iran's oil production has been increasing gradually and the country has been able to compensate for the output decline.

Earlier this month, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Director for Supervising Oil and Gas Production Hormoz Qalavand said that the company is now ready to return to the maximum level of oil production.

"This would be rapidly done if the country needs to increase export, or domestic refineries need more feed", Qalavand stressed.

Uzbekistan-Iran Science and Innovation Forum To Be Held in Tashkent

TEHRAN (IFP) - A high-ranking delegation of Iranian science and tech officials, accompanied by 40 knowledge-based companies, will be visiting Tashkent next week at the official invitation of Uzbekistan's authorities as part of efforts by the two countries to take effective steps toward the development of scientific and technological cooperation.

During the visit, senior officials of the two countries will join formal meetings aimed at paving the way for the expansion of scientific cooperation and technological exchanges between the two sides.

In addition, Uzbekistan's Ministry of Innovative Development is planning to host the first session of the Iran-Uzbekistan Science and Innovation Forum on July 20, along with B2B meetings between Iranian and Uzbek knowledge-based companies.

On this date, an exhibition will be held to put on display the technological products of the participating Iranian and Uzbek firms with the aim of enabling the two sides to get to know each other's capacities and achievements in fields such as agriculture, animal husbandry, health, medical equipment, and so on, and to get engaged in technological exchanges and bolster their trade relations.

The following is the excerpt of an interview with Mr. Mahdi Ghal'e Noei, the head of the Center for International Science and Technology Cooperation at Iran's Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, which sheds more light on Iran's innovation and tech ecosystem and the goals of the upcoming key visit:

It's been some time since an ecosystem has come into existence in Iran based on a professional workforce from universities at home or abroad, which has led, thanks to its various elements, to the growth and development of science and technology in the country. Naturally, the workforce needs a set of instruments in order to be effective.

Iran Calls on Taliban...

FROM PAGE 1

"Iran's clear message is that we are committed to the process of multilateral diplomacy to resolve disputes," he added.

Kanaani went on to say that Iran has fully fulfilled its responsibilities and commitments, and it was the U.S. government that left the agreement illegally and unilaterally and outside of its responsibilities, it refused to implement its commitments.

It was the JCPOA European governments that, despite agreeing to accept the responsibilities of the US withdrawal and compensate for this illegal withdrawal, did not take any action in fulfilling their commitments, he added.

The one who is in the position of demanding and questioning is Iran, and Iran does not grant this right to the parties to be in the position of questioning and threatening, the senior top diplomat continued.

Noting that the Islamic Republic of Iran adheres to the process of negotiations and the negotiations are going on as before through the exchange of messages, Kana'ani stressed that the time and place of the future negotiations will be determined soon.

In response to a question regarding the statements of the Zionist regime official (who said that they still could take actions action to confront Iran's nuclear program and take measures against it), Kanaani said that it is a bitter irony that a regime that is not a member of any of the non-proliferation treaties and international monitoring in the nuclear field and has a black history of violating international laws and regulations and a long history of violating the rights of nations and occupation, comments on Iran's peaceful nuclear activities.

"The nuclear activities of the Islamic Republic of Iran are completely clear and legal, and it is a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and all of Iran's activities are carried out under the agency's supervision. Any activity of Iran in this field is carried out under the supervision of the agency. Having a nuclear arsenal and not being a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Zionist regime has no right to comment on Iran's peaceful activities," Kana'ani emphasized.

Rupee Settlement Will...

FROM PAGE 1

Trade between India and Russia has come to a virtual standstill due to sanctions imposed on Russia over the war in Ukraine.

The new steps allow Indian exporters and importers to use special Rupee Vostro Accounts to settle trade denominated in rupees, and banks will need the RBI's approval to use the settlement system.

"We see this as a first step towards 100 per cent convertibility of rupee," Mr Desai said, noting it would also reduce currency fluctuation risks for importers and exporters.-

Rui Vitoria Takes Over Egypt National

CAIRO (Dispatches) - Egypt has named Rui Vitoria, formerly of Portugal's Benfica, as the coach for its national team after Hahab Galal was sacked, according to a statement today. "The Egyptian Football Association has reached a final deal with Portuguese Rui Vitoria to lead the Egyptian national team for the next four years," the association wrote on Twitter. Egyptian media reports said the Portuguese coach, who led Benfica to the Primeira Liga title in 2016 and 2017, would earn €2.4 million annually under the contract.

Switchboard:
(+98) (21) 44253448
Public Relations Tel:
(+98)(21) 44253450
Editorial Board: 44253449
Public Relations Fax:
(+98)(21) 44253395
Advertising Department:
Tel/Fax:(+98) (21) 44253335-9/44253234
Website:
http://www.irannewsdaily.com

E-Mail Address:
info@irannewsdaily.com
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Nani Joins Melbourne Victory

MELBOURNE (Dispatches) - Former Manchester United forward Nani has joined Melbourne Victory on a two-year contract, the A-League club said. The Portuguese winger had signed an 18-month deal with Serie A side Venezia in January but left by mutual consent last week after making 10 appearances for the relegated club. The 35-year-old spent eight years in England with United, where he won four Premier League titles and the Champions League in 2008.

EU Countries Sing Praises in Rebuff To Super League

LUXEMBOURG (Dispatches) - From Spain to Ireland to Italy, European countries gave full-throated support to UEFA over the rebel European Super League at Europe's top court, lauding its open model and social and educational importance.

The comments from the countries at a two-day hearing at the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), underline the high stakes involved for UEFA and other sports bodies with monopoly power and lucrative media rights and seeking to head off challengers.

The countries' endorsement of UEFA, in effect a call to preserve the status quo, suggests the Court would need to take into account the social and economic aspects of the case and not just the legal and antitrust arguments.

UEFA found itself in the docks after the Super League accused it of abusing its power to block rival events and penalize players and clubs.

The Super League collapsed last year barely two days after its announcement as elite English, French and Italian clubs pulled out following an outcry from fans and governments, leaving just Real Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus.

Hungary said UEFA represents the values of the European Sports Model on protecting the physical and moral integrity of players and merit-based competition.

"These are values which UEFA and FIFA follow, both in the organization of sports and the reallocation of revenues," Hungary's lawyer Ester Gyarmati told the 15-judge panel on the second day of the hearing. UEFA's restrictions clearly infringe EU competition law but are justified to safeguard the European Sports Model, Austria's lawyer Franz Koppensteiner said.



Malta's lawyer took a pop at the Super League. "The Super League only took into account the narrow interests of its clubs, it ignores the open nature of competition based on merits," its lawyer Andria Buhagiar said. Romania's lawyer said the case was an existentialist one. "This cartel cannot co-exist with the organization of UEFA and FIFA without leading to the certain death of open competition," its lawyer Emilia Gane said. The European Commission, which acts as the competition enforcer in the 27-country bloc, took a more nuanced stand, saying there should be checks and balances on monopoly power. "The exercise of regulatory functions must be subject to limits, obligations and control to prevent such bodies from distorting competition," its lawyer Carlos Urraca Caviedes. He said the European Sports Model was one way to run a sport but alternative governing bodies could be another. Urraca Caviedes, however, criticized UEFA and FIFA's sanctions against players. "It does not seem sanctions excluding players from participating in Uefa, Fifa are necessary or proportionate to protect those principles," he said. The Court will issue its ruling next year. The case is C333/21 European Superleague Company.



Rybakina Dismisses Russian Product Claims

NUR-SULTAN (Dispatches) - Newly-crowned Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina dismissed Russian claims that she was its "product" as she spoke in Kazakhstan which she represented at the tournament.

Russian and Belarusian players were banned from Wimbledon this year after Russia sent troops to Ukraine but Moscow-born Rybakina was able to play as she had switched her allegiance to Kazakhstan in 2018.

At the weekend Russia appeared to claim her Grand Slam success when Russian tennis Chief Shamil Tarpishev described Rybakina as "our product".

"It's very nice! Well done Rybakina! We win the Wimbledon tournament," Tarpishev said.

Russia's former world number one Yevgeny Kafelnikov reinforced that view in a post on Twitter on Monday.

"Buying a ready to use product from the producer does not take a lot of brains," wrote retired Kafelnikov, who won the French and Australian Opens and an Olympic gold medal.

Rybakina's parents still live in Moscow and she has been reluctant throughout the tournament to elaborate on how much time she spends in Russia.

Barty Does Not Regret Retirement

SYDNEY (Dispatches) - Former world number one Ash Barty has no regrets about retiring from tennis in March aged 25 and also does not plan to start playing golf professionally, ending speculation that she would now focus her career on that sport.

Barty sent shockwaves around the tennis world when she unexpectedly announced her retirement at the peak of her game just two months after claiming a third Grand Slam title at the Australian Open.

She had added fuel to the speculation she would become a professional golfer in April by signing up for a series of exhibition tournaments featuring 23 other celebrities from the world of sport.

"I have no regrets about retiring. Not one. I knew it was the right time for me. It was what I wanted to do," she told The Guardian in an interview on Monday.

"And yeah, it's been incredible. It's been everything that I've ever wanted." Barty, who also won Wimbledon in 2021 and the French Open in 2019, said she had not watched last week's finals at the All England Club, adding that she did not often watch matches even when she was still playing professionally.

Moscow-born Elena Rybakina become the first player from Kazakhstan to win a Grand Slam singles title by beating Tunisian Ons Jabeur in the Wimbledon final on Saturday.

Novak Djokovic lifted his seventh Wimbledon trophy on Sunday by defeating unseeded Australian Nick Kyrgios.

"I didn't watch this year's Wimbledon finals. Sorry to disappoint. Obviously I was wrapped for Ons and Elena Rybakina, who are both brilliant girls," said Barty.

"It was obviously awesome to see Nick, who I've known for over a dozen years, get to the final.

"I hit enough tennis balls in my life. I don't need to see others hitting them as well." Barty plays off a handicap of four at her golf club in Queensland and is engaged to a trainee professional but said that she plays only for fun.

"Golf is a hobby and it always will be. I know what it takes to get to the very top of any sport, and I don't have the desire or want to do the work required," she added.

Kyrgios Needs Sigmund Freud



LONDON (Dispatches) - Three-time Wimbledon champion John McEnroe said today that controversial Australian Nick Kyrgios "needs Sigmund Freud" to sort out the "demons" in his game. Kyrgios carved a sometimes thrilling, often controversial path to the final at the All England Club where he lost in four sets on Sunday to Novak Djokovic. A series of outbursts saw the 27-year-old fined and he was described as "evil" and "a bully" by third round opponent Stefanos Tsitsipas. But there was some impressive and inventive hitting, not least in the final, where he clattered 30 aces and 62 winners in total. "The guy is a genius out there the way he plays," McEnroe told the BBC, adding that Kyrgios needed some advice from the father of psychoanalysis. "He needs Sigmund Freud to come out of the grave and somehow figure out a way to keep this guy going for a couple of years because we could use him. "It's unbelievable, he moves the needle for us in tennis. We need this big time but we don't need him to try half the time." Off court the world number 45, who has admitted to "tanking" during matches, also faces a court hearing in Canberra next month in relation to an allegation of common assault.

"He's a good kid, the players like him, he's well liked in the locker room, he does a lot of charity work," said McEnroe in mitigation. "But he's got demons you know, in a way — we all have this fear of failure and it's a question of how you best deal with it." McEnroe, a seven-time Grand Slam winner, was himself no stranger to controversy in his career, often lapsing into pantomime histrionics on court in a bid to raise his own game. "I would say I'm proud of most of what I did but there are certainly times where I'm like, 'I didn't need to do that,'" said McEnroe. "It only exacerbated the situation and made more people get mad at me or start booing me so it wasn't like it helped me. "It may be at times you blow off some steam. Obviously, you see Kyrgios doing that all the time." The Australian was handed a code violation in Sunday's final during which he also volubly demanded the removal of a spectator who he claimed was drunk and launched a foul-mouthed tirade at his own box. "How do you think his box feels when he's screaming at them? Those are the people that love him most, right?" said McEnroe. "Unfortunately, the people that you love most you take it out on, because you feel closest to them. I think we can all relate to that. But if it wasn't so sad it would be funny in a way. "So that part, hopefully he would look at and go, 'I don't need to do that to my dad or my girlfriend'. "You know he's sitting there and he's obviously tortured in certain ways. (He's) unbelievably talented, very smart... a hell of a player when he wants to be."

Djokovic Doubts U.S. Open Participation

BELGRADE (Dispatches) - Recently-crowned Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic said it is unlikely he will feature in this year's U.S. Open as he continues to refuse to be vaccinated against coronavirus. As things stand, the 35-year-old's unvaccinated status means he will not be allowed into the United States to play in the tournament, which starts next month. The Serb was deported from Australia over his vaccination status in January, preventing him from defending his Australian Open title. "At the moment I can't go to the United States, I'm hoping for positive news, but there's not a lot of time, I don't know, hope springs eternal," he told Serbian broadcasters RTS. "I'd like to play the US Open but if it doesn't happen it's not the end of the world, nor the first Grand Slam I have to withdraw from. "It's important to me to stay healthy, physically and mentally, so I can still play for a long time and the chances to do so will certainly come," he added. The Serbian top seed beat Nick Kyrgios in four sets on Sunday to win his seventh title at the All England Club and 21st Grand Slam crown overall — leaving him just one behind Rafael Nadal. "People asked me, speaking about my records, what was my favourite number and I cited one of my idols, who is no longer with us, Kobe Bryant," Djokovic said in front of a crowd of thousands of fans in Belgrade. "My favourite title is the next one," he added.



Former Olympic Champion Farah Reveals Real Identity

LONDON (Dispatches) - Former Olympic champion Mo Farah revealed in an article published on Monday he was brought to Britain illegally under the name of another child to work as a domestic servant. Farah told the BBC that he was given the name Mohamed Farah by a woman who flew him to the UK from east African country Djibouti aged nine. The 39-year-old, whose father was killed in Somalia when he was four, said his real name is Hussein Abdi Kahin and claimed he was made to look after another family's children in Britain. "The truth is I'm not who you think I am," he said as part of a documentary to be aired on Wednesday. "Most people know me as Mo Farah, but it's not my name or it's not the reality. "The real story is I was born in Somaliland, north of Somalia, as Hussein Abdi Kahin. Despite what I've said in the past, my parents never lived in the UK. "When I was four my dad was killed in the civil war, you know as a family we were torn apart. "I was separated from my mother, and I was brought into the UK illegally under the name of another child called Mohamed Farah." Farah, who became the first British track and field athlete to win four Olympic gold medals, said his children have motivated him to be truthful about his past. "I've been keeping it for so long, it's been difficult because you don't want to face it and often my kids ask questions, 'Dad, how come this?' And you've always got an answer for everything, but you haven't got an answer for that," he said.

