

Health Ministry Announced on Monday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to **141,717** With **33** More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

The Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami Said That Turning on the Cameras That IAEA Operate Beyond the Safeguards Agreement Depends On Reaching the Nuclear Deal

VOL. XXVIII, No. 7550 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

TUESDAY JULY 26, 2022 - MORDAD 4, 1401

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Tehran-Yerevan Trade Volume on the Rise

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Mr. Alirez Payman-Pak in meeting with Armenian trade delegation discussed ways to enhance the current trade volume which is expressing upward trend.

The workgroup for joint technical and economic cooperation of Iran and Armenia was in Tehran in presence of Payman-Pak and Armenian deputy economy minister.

In the meeting, Payman-Pak said that both sides reached agreement in the field of production and distribution of construction materials and food stuff chains, adding that both sides worked on resolving their banking problem and Mellat Bank of Iran is in talks to finalize the deal.

Pointing to cooperation in mineral sector between Iran and Armenia, he said that an Iranian company is purchaser of Armenia's concentrate as the two countries can cooperate and invest in the issue of exploration of mineral resources. **See Page 7**

Tehran Slams Grossi's Unfair Approach to Its Nuclear Program



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Iran says an agreement on the revival of the Iran nuclear deal and removal of sanctions against Tehran could be reached in case the United States makes a political decision, emphasizing that the Islamic Republic will neither act "emotionally" nor "hastily" in this regard.

"We are definitely thinking about an agreement and we are interested in its conclusion in the near future. Nevertheless, we will definitely not act emotionally and that the finalization of the accord hinges upon a political decision by the United States," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kan'ani said at a press briefing in the capital Tehran on Monday.

"Iran has not left the negotiating table," he stressed, adding, "The process of negotiations in [Vienna] lasted for several months, and entered a new phase in [the Qatari capital city of] Doha following a respite. In spite of comments that US authorities occasionally make regarding the negotiation process and the psychological pressures as well as its unilateral demands from Iran to quickly make a decision and warnings that time is running out, Iran will neither act emotionally nor hastily in this regard and will not sacrifice the interests of the country and the nation."

Kan'ani went on to elaborate on the ongoing measures taken to revive the nuclear deal between world powers and Iran, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and pointed to efforts made by the foreign ministers of regional countries, including Oman, Qatar, and Iraq, as well as European states like Italy and France to bridge the differing viewpoints.

The senior Iranian diplomat reiterated that the Islamic Republic is serious about reaching a good, durable and strong agreement. "We have demonstrated a great deal of flexibility. The Islamic Republic of Iran has so far presented various constructive initiatives; and we believe that we would be close to an agreement if the US, as the main [opposite] side in determining the process of negotiations, acts constructively and with good faith like Iran," Kan'ani remarked.

"Getting either close to or far away from the agreement depends on the political decision of the US government," the spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry said.

Kan'ani also reacted to the recent remarks by the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Grossi about Iran's civilian nuclear activities.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and for many years, especially during recent years, has allowed the watchdog's inspectors all out of an interactive and constructive stance to visit facilities in question several times," he said.

"Most of the missions of the IAEA's inspectors are related to Iran's nuclear sites. This interactive and voluntary approach was meant to resolve the sticking point that previously existed and we thought could impede the achievement of an agreement. Unfortunately, Iran's constructive actions have not been met with a constructive and mutual response on the part of the IAEA and its director general," Kan'ani said.

"Unfortunately, Mr. Grossi has time and again taken an unprofessional and unfair approach vis-à-vis Iran's nuclear program, especially in recent months. His views are not helpful and constructive. He is interested in raising an issue about Iran's nuclear issues now and then. We believe that the IAEA director general should adopt a constructive and interactive approach in response to Iran's constructive cooperation with the agency. We do not view Grossi's remarks as technical and professional and we advise him to observe the principle of neutrality and fairness and to avoid politically-motivated statements," he stated.

Grossi told Spain's El Pais newspaper in an interview published on Friday that Iran's nuclear program is "galloping ahead" and the IAEA has very limited visibility on what is happening.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Kan'ani noted that there has been no change in the Islamic Republic's practical and political stance on the Ukraine conflict.

He categorically dismissed recent Western media allegations in the wake of the official visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to Tehran, saying, "The Islamic Republic of Iran is opposed to military options against regional countries."

"Iran believes that disputes and differences should be resolved through a political solution and that there is no change in Tehran's political position toward Ukraine.

"We instead believe in the political solution, and we are not standing by one side to oppose the other," Kan'ani underscored.

FM: Iran supports any diplomatic effort to settle Ukraine conflict, ready to mediate
Ukraine has been at war with Russia since President Vladimir Putin declared a military operation in the neighboring country in late February, following Kiev's failure to implement the terms of the Minsk agreements and Moscow's recognition of the breakaway regions of Donetsk and Luhansk.

The Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson also pointed to the talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia, saying, "Five rounds of negotiations were held between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which were hosted by the Iraqi government in Baghdad that had very good and encouraging results." **See Page 7**

Pakistan Likely to Buy Iranian LPG

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Pakistan is likely to strike a deal with Iran for purchase of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in Pakistani rupees as Tehran is already considering Pakistan's proposal, well informed sources in Commerce Ministry told Business Recorder.

The 21th Session of Pak-Iran Joint Economic Commission (JEC) is scheduled to be held from August 16-19 in Islamabad wherein this issue will also come under consideration.

The issues of Pak-Iran Gas Pipeline, joint projects between OGDCL, National Oil Refinery (NIOC) and pending issues between NTDC, CPPA-G and Iranian company Tavanir will also come under discussion, in addition to promotion of barter trade and payment mechanism.

Sharing details on Pak-Iran Gas Pipeline, the sources said that both sides have emphasized their commitment towards early solution of IP project under GSPA and agreed to take necessary measures.

In this regard, Petroleum Division has communicated that the government of Pakistan is committed to implement the project. **See Page 7**

Iran to Launch New Homegrown Satellite Into Orbit

TEHRAN (PressTV) - A top commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says the country will launch a new satellite into orbit by the year-end.

Brigadier General Amir-Ali Hajizadeh, commander of the IRGC's aerospace division, made the announcement on the sidelines of the 12th Malek Ashtar Festival in Tehran.

He said the new home-grown satellite will be launched into space using the country's Qa'em satellite carrier.

"By God's will, we will launch the new satellite carrier Qa'em into space by the year-end," Hajizadeh said, hailing it as a "continuation of [the country's] achievements" in the field of aerospace technology.

He noted that the enemy today admits to Iran's military capabilities while asserting that the Islamic Republic, its armed forces, and the IRGC have a "valuable position and real superiority".

It is the third military satellite Iran will put into orbit. The country launched its second satellite, dubbed Nour (Light)-2, into orbit in March 2022 and the first one in April 2020. **See Page 7**

Chabahar Port Allows Iran To Emerge as Hub for Regional Trade

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - The commencement of operations at the Chabahar Port has emerged as a silver lining for Iran as the port is located at an ideal strategic location connecting the Indian subcontinent with both Afghanistan as well as Central Asian countries such as Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to emerge as a hub of regional trade through promoting maritime trading operations.

Chabahar is located in south-eastern Iran at the mouth of the Gulf of Oman and is blessed with an ideal strategic location connecting the Indian subcontinent with both Afghanistan as well as Central Asian countries such as Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

The Chabahar Port offers significant reductions in both cost and shipping times for goods and cargo for trade between India and Afghanistan, as well as for trade between the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia. **See Page 7**

Saudi-Led Coalition Violates Ceasefire In Yemen 103 Times

TEHRAN (MNA) - Yemeni news sources on Monday announced that the Saudi coalition violated the UN-brokered ceasefire 103 times in the last 24 hours.

Saudi-led coalition violated the ceasefire in Yemen 103 times in the past 24 hours by launching heavy airstrikes on Al Hudaydah province, SABA news agency reported.

A news source in the Operations Chamber of Yemeni Popular Forces pointed to the cases of violations of the UN-brokered ceasefire in Yemen in the past 24 hours such as the flight of surveillance planes over "Heys" and "Maqbaneh" creation of military fortifications in mountainous areas of Hudaydah province.

The ceasefire in Yemen, which has been repeatedly violated by the Saudi coalition, was finally extended for another two months following the UN consultations to renew it.

Earlier, the Chairman of the Yemeni Supreme Political Council Mahdi Al-Mashat said that the ceasefire in Yemen has almost been eradicated due to the repeated violations by the Saudi aggressor coalition.

Saudi Arabia, in the form of a coalition of several Arab countries, including UAE and with the help and green light of the United States as well as support of Zionist regime, have launched large-scale attacks against defenseless Yemeni since March 26, 2015.

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Iran Prioritizes Enhanced Ties With Azerbaijan

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian underlined that Iran favors to have comprehensive relations and cooperation with Azerbaijan Republic.

Amirabdollahian underscored President Ebrahim Raisi government's high priority in foreign diplomacy attached to boosting relations with neighboring states, and especially Muslim countries. He said that Azerbaijan Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran have lots of unused potentials for broadening relations, and it is among the embassy's responsibilities to find them and use them in order to expand bilateral relations.

President Calls for Attention On Family Institution

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Emphasizing the place of the family institution in the progress and excellence of the society, President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi called on all the related institutions to implement their legal duties in order to facilitate the marriage and family formation of young people.

Speaking in the meeting of the cabinet, Raisi referred to the family day, and described the importance of promoting the culture of "family formation" as an important matter and facilitating the marriage of young people as one of the priorities of the 13th Administration and stated, "Special attention to the institution of the family in policies and practical measures will undoubtedly have many good achievements and positive consequences for the society".

The President said that according to the "Population and Family Protection" law, all institutions are required to seriously support the institution of the family and present operational plans in this area, and emphasized that, "In addition to promoting the culture of family formation, all institutions should do their best to resolve problems and obstacles, especially in the field of housing and employment".

Explaining the intellectual foundations and practical plans of the domination system to weaken the institution of the family and promote inhumane concepts in this field as fake indicators of civilization, Raisi said, "Degenerate Western policymakers



promote anti-family concepts in the world by using media tools and wealth, but the followers of divine and Abrahamic religions should follow the resistance and strength of the family institution against this moral degeneration more than in the past".

In another part of his speech, after listening to the report of the Minister of Agricultural Jihad regarding the increase in the production of strategic crops such as wheat, corn and barley and providing the grains needed by the country, Raisi said, "The basic policy of the government is to ensure food security by relying on the hardworking farmers of the country and the Ministry of Agricultural Jihad, the Plan and Budget Organization and the Central Bank must fulfil their obligations regarding the purchase of these strategic products on the due date".

At the beginning of his speech, Ayatollah Raisi once again expressed his regret for the flood incident in Estahban in Fars province and offered his condolences to the families of citizens who lost their lives in this incident, and urged the related authorities to look into the aspects of the incident and prevent similar incidents from happening.

Iran Ready to Develop Cooperation With UNESCO

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian stressed that the foreign ministry is ready to help promote cooperation with cultural sectors and international mechanisms aimed at cultural affairs, including UNESCO.

Amirabdollahian made the remarks in a meeting with the Secretary General of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) Mohammad Reza Majidi.

During the meeting, Majidi informed Amirabdollahian of the latest activities of the APA secretariat and the schedule of upcoming parliamentary meetings.

He also shared his views and opinions in the field of cooperation between Iran and UNESCO on cultural heritage and tourism with the Iranian top diplomat.

The Iranian foreign minister described parliamentary diplomacy as an accelerator and a complement to state diplomacy.

Tehran Air Quality at Critical Levels Again

TEHRAN (IFP) - Hospitals and emergency centers have been put on standby as the air quality index in the Iranian capital Tehran reached 327, meaning it is dangerous for everyone and may prompt emergency condition alerts.

Abd Maleki, a senior member of the Tehran Province's Governorate, on Monday said the decision was made after an emergency meeting on Sunday evening to provide citizens with emergency healthcare services amid the thick smog in the air.

He advised sensitive groups, including the elderly, cardiac, pulmonary and respiratory patients as well as children to stay at home, away from crowded places like the subways.

On Monday Tehran is the second most polluted city in the world after the Chilean capital Santiago.

He also called on the citizens and those who are exposed to pollution to use face masks in open spaces.

Many provinces in Iran have been continuously hit by sandstorms, the main source of pollution, since March.

Authorities blame the dust storms emanating from neighboring Iraq and Syria as well as dam construction activities in Turkey for the pollution that has reached hazardous levels.

Iran Can Play Key Role in China's "Belt and Road"



TEHRAN (IFP) - The Chinese ambassador to Iran says the Islamic Republic can play a major role in Beijing's Belt and Road initiative, a hundreds of billions of dollar project aimed at reviving the ancient Silk Road trade route.

Chang Hua made the comment in a tweet after his visit to the northern Iranian province of Guilan and the Bandar Anzali free trade zone in the province.

The Belt & Road initiative was first proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2016. The plan, which was immediately supported by Iran, predicts a network of rail, road and marine transport that connect Asia, Africa and Europe.

Iran considers the initiative a key opportunity to revive its ancient role as the connecting transport link between Asia and Europe and has been developing key north-south and east-west transport networks with neighboring countries.

Tehran also hopes the plan can be a launching pad for implementation of its Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement with China.

Choosing Time of Astana Peace Talks Sign of Iran's Alert Diplomacy

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Deputy foreign minister for political affairs said wise choosing of venue of Astana Peace Talks in Tehran, a few days after the unsuccessful regional tour of U.S. President Joe Biden was a sign of Iran's alert and superior regional dialogue diplomacy.

Ali Bagheri Kani said that among the characteristics of the foreign diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran there is grasping the appropriate opportunities, adding that Iran has no limits for expansion of relations with its neighboring countries today.

"We must use all our potential and practical capacities to achieve maximum interactions with our neighbors and set the foundations for long-term economic ties with all our neighboring countries," added Bagheri Kani.

The deputy foreign minister for political affairs said that great challenges faced by the US unilateralist political and economic policies have now become clear and America is also faced with severe challenges for preserving its global hegemony, while Iran has joined both the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the BRICS Organization, both of which increase our strategic power and our geo-strategic status, while contributing to multilateralism meaningfully.

Busted Israel-Linked Network Planned to Destroy Sensitive Facility

TEHRAN (PressTV) - An espionage network linked to the Israeli regime's spy agency, Mossad, planned to destroy a sensitive facility in the central Iranian province of Isfahan before its members were arrested, according to a report.

The new revelation was made on Sunday by Nour News website, which is affiliated with Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC).

On Saturday, Iran's Intelligence Ministry issued a statement, saying that members of a terrorist group affiliated with Mossad were identified and arrested by Iranian security forces before they could take any action to carry out acts of sabotage.

The ministry added that the terrorists, who were in contact with Mossad agents through one of the neighboring countries, had sneaked into the country from Iraq's Kurdistan region.

Nour News said in its Sunday report that the spy team had marked one of Iran's sensitive facilities in the central province of Isfahan and was planning to blow it up.

The report added that the members of the network

were trained in an African country for months and had simulated the aforesaid operation several times.

It also revealed that Iran's security forces were monitoring the spy team even before it arrived in Iran and all its members and contacts both inside and outside the country were identified by the Intelligence Ministry several months before they entered Iran.

The spy team had even planted highly explosive substances at the target site and the final phase of their operation was just a few hours away when it was busted, it explained.

The arrest of the operational members of this #Mossad network was carried out while even high-explosive materials were planted by this group in their desired location in #Isfahan and only a few hours were left for the implementation of final stage of their terrorist operation.

The Nour News report added that the operation that led to the dismantling of the spy team and apprehension of its members was one of the most complicated operations to be carried out by Iran's intelligence apparatus inside and outside the country.

MPs Demand Enough Guarantees in Case of U.S. Return to JCPOA

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The spokesman of Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission said that the MPs called for enough guarantees from the American side if they wished to rejoin the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran.

Abolfazl Amouei told reporters on Sunday that the commission was briefed on the latest foreign policy developments by Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani who heads Iran's negotiation team in the talks for a possible US return to the deal.

Bagheri Kani elaborated on Ukraine crisis and its impacts on regional and international developments, US President Joe Biden's regional tour, and his failure to achieve goals, as well as Iran's pursuit of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS+ ascension, according to Amouei.

The foreign ministry official also highlighted consolidating Iran's position in international corridors and energy swap in the region as the topics targeted by the foreign ministry.

Elsewhere in the briefing session, Amouei said, Bagheri elaborated on the latest situation with the talks to revive the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the MPs called for receiving enough

assurances from the US if it wished to rejoin the deal.

Amouei also said that the MPs emphasized settlement of the issues related to the safeguards agreements with

the IAEA, pursuit of Iran's economic benefits from a possible deal, and the importance of verification and removal of sanctions.

Official Elaborates on \$40B MoU With Gazprom

TEHRAN (IP) - The CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company explained the strategic relations between Iran and Russia, aiming to develop the oil fields of the two countries.

Gazprom of Russia is one of the largest international companies in the field of oil and gas field development. During the recent visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to Iran, a 40-billion-dollar oil memorandum of understanding was signed between the two countries.

Mohsen Khojsteh Mehr, the CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company, referring to the oil MoU between Iran and Russia worth forty billion dollars, said: "The contract for the development of 7 oil fields worth 4 billion dollars has been signed with the Russians and it is progressing under the sanctions."

Referring to the 40-billion-dollar memorandum of understanding between this company and Russia's Gazprom, Khojsteh Mehr added: "We will not miss any opportunity to attract financial resources in this industry and seek to attract capital from domestic sources including banks and holdings of large industries and external sources including finance from different countries."

CEO of National Iranian Oil Company also said: "One of the plans of National Oil Company to attract foreign investment is to use the capacity of Russian companies."

The CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company has emphasized that Iran and Russia's gas reserves are 70 trillion cubic meters in total and include 30% of the world's gas reserves, and these two countries are the frontrunner in gas energy supply in the world.

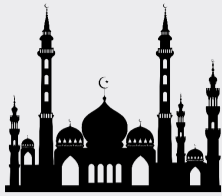
Iran Parliamentary Delegation in Oman

TEHRAN (IP) - Iran's ambassador to Muscat announced the visit of a delegation of the Iran's Parliamentarians to Oman.

According to Iran press, Iran's ambassador to Oman, Ali Najafi, said that a delegation of lawmakers of the parliament of Iran arrived in Muscat today (Monday) and was welcomed by Omani parliamentarians.

The relations between Iran and Oman in recent decades, despite the tensions in the Persian Gulf and the American effort to intensify Iranophobia, have always been based on mutual respect and interests.

Omani officials believe that close relations with Iran are based on realism and consider Iran as a great neighbor. The two countries do not have any territorial and border disputes with each other. Iran's support for Oman has been positively and permanently imprinted in Oman's historical memory.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:10
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:34
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:30
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:08

43. Seest thou not that Allah makes the clouds move gently, then joins them together, then makes them into a heap? - then wilt thou see rain issue forth from their midst. And He sends down from the sky mountain masses (of clouds) wherein is hail: He strikes therewith whom He pleases and He turns it away from whom He pleases, the vivid flash of His lightning well-nigh blinds the sight. Surah 24. Light (43)

Easing Visa Issuance the Major Step for Broadening Iran-Germany Ties

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Mr. Gholam-Hossein Shafei during meeting with visiting Chairman of the Board of the German Federal Association for Economic Development and Foreign Trade (BWA) Michael Schumann on Sunday called for easing visa issuance for Iranian traders and called it the major step for broadening economic ties.

In this meeting, Shafei criticized German government's restrictions on issuing visa for Iranian businessmen, saying that facilitation of visa issuance is a prerequisite for the expansion of trade ties between the two countries, the ICCIMA portal reported.

Stating that Germany has always been Iran's first trade partner in Europe, the ICCIMA head said: "After the nuclear deal, Germany was the first country to restart relations with Iran and the volume of trade between the two sides increased by 60 percent in a short time. But after the withdrawal of the U.S. from the JCPOA, the volume of economic exchanges between Iran and Germany decreased by 50 percent."

He further praised Germany's efforts for maintaining economic ties with the Islamic Republic and said: "I hope your visit can help activate the commercial capacities of both sides further. Especially with the new situation and the war in Ukraine, cooperation between Iran and Germany can have good results for our region and Europe."

Shafei further pointed to the automotive, agriculture, and education sectors as attractive fields for cooperation between the two sides, saying: "We are becoming the hub of automobile manufacturing in the region and we need new technologies in agriculture due to droughts and limited water resources."

The official noted that ICCIMA is seeking to establish an office in Germany, adding "We are doing our best to increase the volume of trade with Germany. Fortunately, the conditions are better than in the past and it is possible for the delegations to meet in person. I hope that the next meeting of the two countries' joint economic committee will be held as soon as possible to help the development of trade between the two sides."



Shafei then reiterated that ICCIMA ready for hosting German trade delegations or dispatching Iranian delegations, adding that exchange of trade delegation can help the ties between the two states come closer.

He reiterated that banking problem on way of broadening trade ties is considered a serious hurdle but he is sure that private sectors of the two countries can find ways to overcome it.

Schumann for his part stated that currently, 1,300 people from different companies and research institutes in Germany are members of BWA, saying: "Our goal is to find emerging markets across the globe. This association helps German companies to find business partners in the world and supports international companies to operate in Germany."

He noted that one of the important points in activities of BWA is good and full cognizance of trade partners, adding that he believes with in-person meetings and direct talks, capabilities of both sides can be revealed and for this reason he is in Tehran.

Schuman then pointed to the broad historic relations between Iran and Germany and said that unfortunately there is currently a negative picture of Iran among the Germans and it is because of the political and media efforts and one of the goal of visiting Iran is to change this negative picture which has happened because of lack of knowing Iran.

He stated that they were recommended not to visit Tehran due to security issues but now they are in Tehran and in full security and witnessing good hospitality of Iranians and will take back this experience to Germany.

He admitted that Iran and Germany can expand their economic cooperation but because of lack of knowing capacities of Iran, this has not happened. He reiterated that economy can pave the way for restoring ties and broadening it among the nations.

Schuman then invited Iranian companies to attend the Caspian-Europe event in Germany on October 10-11 which will be in the fields of mining and energy, adding that Germany on October 5 will also hold a conference on auto industry.

Tehran to Host Iran Plast In Late September

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iran's 16th International Exhibition of Plastic, Rubber, Machinery, and Equipment (IRAN PLAST) is scheduled to be held at the Tehran Permanent International Fairground during September 21-24, Shana reported.

Like the previous years, this edition of the exhibition will also cover four major areas including raw materials, machinery and equipment, final and semi-finished products as well as services.

As the biggest event in the petrochemicals and plastics industry in West Asia, Iran Plast was held for the first time in 2002 on the initiative of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC) in order to boost the domestic plastics industry market, facilitate the global marketing process and present in global markets.

The exhibition, which is classified among the world's prestigious exhibitions of the plastic industry, seeks to provide a platform for developing the domestic plastics industry market.

A statistical look at the previous editions of the exhibition shows that this event has been following a growing trend despite all the problems and issues created by external factors like the U.S. sections and the pandemic.

Iran, Russia to Establish Joint FTZ

TEHRAN (IP) - The Secretary of the Supreme Council of Free Trade-Industrial and Special Economic Zones said that Iran and Russia are about to establish a joint free trade zone (FTZ).

: Speaking at the introduction ceremony of the Chairman of the Board of Directors and CEO of Anzali FTZ, Saeed Mohammad said: "We are looking for the establishment of a joint free zone with neighboring countries, and agreements have been made in this regard and it will happen in the future."

Saeed Mohammad added: In the negotiations that took place with the special representative of the President of Russia, both sides emphasized the establishment of the North-South Corridor.

"Although Russia has the possibility of transit in Astrakhan and from Lotus, they have obligations to start and we also have obligations to revive the corridor as soon as possible," he added. 219

Vacuum Bottom Traded on IME

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - On Sunday, Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) witnessed trade of 73,000 tons of vacuum bottom on its open auction trading floor.



According to a report by the IME's International Affairs and PR, there were 12,000 tons lube cut, 3,281 tons of polymeric products, 3,134 tons of chemicals, 25 tons of bitumen, 1,200 tons of sulfur, 640 tons of slack wax, 299 tons of base oil and 161 tons of paraffin wax sold on its oil and petrochemical trading floor.

IME's metals and minerals trading floor saw trade of 30,000 tons of cast iron ingots, 300 tons of CRS, 3,700 tons of low-grade copper, 4,500 tons of 1000lb aluminum ingots, 695 tons of zinc ingots, 4,000 tons of copper cathodes and 575 tons of aluminum hydroxide.

Based on this report, the IME also sold 768,710 tons of cement on its cement trading floor.

It's worth noting that the IME also traded 1,938 tons of bitumen on its export pit.

Last was the IME's side market which saw trade of 850 tons of aluminum oxide.

Iran in Oil Swap Deals With Russia, Kazakhstan

TEHRAN (PressTV) - A top advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei says Iran is in deals with Russia and Kazakhstan to swap crude oil produced by them with its own crude oil for the purpose of delivery to customers in the Persian Gulf.

Ali Akbar Velayati said that the oil swap deals with Russia and Kazakhstan is in line with Iran's policies to improve its access to energy supply sources in various parts of the country.

"We receive oil from Russia and Kazakhstan via the Caspian Sea to use it for domestic consumption and then we deliver oil in the same quantity to their customers in the south," Velayati said in an interview with Khamenei.ir.

Iranian Foreign Ministry authorities had announced in early July that Iran would engage in swap deals with Russia and Kazakhstan.

However, there has been no official announcement confirming that swap operations have actually started.

Velayati is a veteran diplomat who served as Iranian foreign minister for more than 15 years from 1981 to 1997. He is Ayatollah Khamenei's top advisor on international issues.

His statement comes days after the National Iranian Oil Company and Russia's state petroleum company Gazprom signed a memorandum of understanding to cooperate on joint projects with an investment of nearly \$40 billion.

Iranian and Russian officials have described the deal as historic and unprecedented but they have not indicated if the agreement would cover swap of crude oil.

The statement also comes amid Russia's efforts to counter a series of American and European sanctions that have targeted its energy exports since it started a military operation in Ukraine in February.

Exports to Turkmenistan Rise 38% in Q1

TEHRAN (MNA) - The value of Iran's export to Turkmenistan increased 38 percent in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), from the first quarter of the previous year, the spokesman of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Ruhollah Latifi said that Iran exported commodities worth \$95 million to Turkmenistan in the three-month period.

In mid-June a high-ranking Turkmen delegation headed by Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers

of Turkmenistan Atdayev Batyr Taganovich attended a meeting with Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Reza Fatemi-Amin to discuss ways of expanding trade ties.

In that meeting the two sides stressed the need for the establishment of a Tehran-Ashgabat trade center.

The attendees also emphasized supporting the businessmen of the two countries in order to facilitate and accelerate trade relations and decided to form a working group to draw a one-year roadmap for future cooperation.

CEO of Chadormalu Co. Hailed By Majlis Representative



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Representative of Sarakhs and Fariman to Majlis Dr. Seyed Ehsan Ghazizadeh Hashemi during the ceremony for opening the financial pockets tenders for steelmaking, casting and steel sheet projects of Chadormalu Company in towns of Ardakan and Fariman said that the action of Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company in implementing the alloy sheet project in Fariman is a turning point in industrializing this region of the country.

He added that this region has required infrastructures like water, electricity, gas, road and railway with considering all environmental observations and it has required capacities for offering productions in the country and capabilities for access to the international markets like to the CIS countries.

He expressed hope any contractor wins the tender, it advances with full speed and energy by using the modern technology and finishes the project in the shortest time.

Then the CEO of Chadormalu Company Eng. Taghizadeh emphasized the role of industrial and mining units in economic development of the country.

He added that the main task and assignment of the industries is to help creation of sustainable employment, producing strategic products to cut dependence and creating wealth. Taghizadeh then hailed good cooperation of officials of Yazd and Khorasan Razavi provinces and their representatives to Majlis and expressed hope that Chadormalu Company with implementing some 30 development projects can take a long stride in economic boom in the country.

Shahid Hasheminejad Gas Refinery Yielding 1,500 t/d of Sulfur

TEHRAN (Shana) - The CEO of Shahid Hasheminejad Gas Refining Company said the plant was currently producing 1,500 tons of sulfur per day.

According to the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC), Yahya Feizi said: "Smoothing the arrival of investors into the domestic sulfur market with the approach of preventing the sale of raw sulfur and converting this item to a higher added value is one of the important measures of the refinery to comply with the Leader's instructions regarding economic resilience and attention to domestic production."

In addition to its main mission of producing and supplying gas, Shahid Hasheminejad Gas Refinery produces by-products such as sulfur, and its bentonite sulfur fertilizer has been very well received by farmers in the market. On the other hand, with the launch of Shahid Soleimani Sulfur Complex in the operational area of Khangiran, we are witnessing the arrival of a huge number of private sector investors in this area."

The CEO of Shahid Hasheminejad Gas Refining Company stated that several private companies with an investment of 3,000 billion Rials and €2 million have received molten sulfur and produce items such as sulfur granules, sulfur pastilles, bentonite granules and bentonite pastilles, which has created jobs for 150 people.



Three People Killed in Philippine University Shooting

MANILA (Dispatches) - Three people were killed Sunday in a rare shooting at a university in the Philippine capital Manila, officials said, in what appears to have been a targeted assassination.

The incident happened at Ateneo de Manila University as law students and their families arrived for a graduation ceremony that was to be attended by the Supreme Court chief justice.

Rose Furigay, a former city mayor in the restive southern province of Basilan and whose daughter was among the graduates, was killed, authorities said.



Sri Lanka President's Office Reopens After Crackdown

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Sri Lanka's besieged presidential office reopened on Monday, police said, days after anti-government demonstrators were flushed out in a military crackdown that triggered international condemnation.

Widespread public anger over the island's unprecedented economic crisis saw protesters storm and occupy the colonial-era building earlier this month.

Soldiers were forced to rescue then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa from his nearby residence on the same day, with the leader fleeing to Singapore and resigning days later.



Ukraine Works to Resume Grain Exports



KYIV (Dispatches) - Ukraine pressed ahead with efforts to restart grain exports from its Black Sea ports under a deal aimed at easing global food shortages but warned deliveries would suffer if a Russian missile strike on Odesa was a sign of more to come.

President Volodymyr Zelenskiy denounced Saturday's attack as "barbarism" that showed Moscow could not be trusted to implement a deal struck just one day earlier with Turkish and United Nations mediation.

The Ukrainian military, quoted by public broadcaster Suspilne, said the Russian missiles did not hit the port's grain storage area or cause significant damage. Kyiv said preparations to resume grain shipments were ongoing.

"We continue technical preparations for the launch of exports of agricultural products from our ports," Infrastructure Minister Oleksandr Kubrakov said in a Facebook post.

According to the Ukrainian military, two Kalibr missiles fired from Russian warships hit the area of a pumping station at the port and two others were shot down by air defense forces.

Russia said on Sunday its forces had hit a Ukrainian warship and a weapons store in Odesa with its high-precision missiles.

The deal signed by Moscow and Kyiv on Friday was hailed as a diplomatic breakthrough that would help curb soaring global food prices by restoring Ukrainian grain shipments to pre-war levels of 5 million tons a month.

But Zelenskiy's economic advisor warned on Sunday the strike on Odesa signalled that could be out of reach. "Yesterday's strike indicates that it will definitely not work like that," Oleh Ustenko told Ukrainian television.

He said Ukraine could export 60 million tons of grain over the next nine months, but it would take up to 24 months if its ports' operations were disrupted.

As the war entered its sixth month on Sunday there was no sign of a let-up in the fighting.

The Ukrainian military reported Russian shelling in the north, south and east, and again referred to Russian operations paving the way for an assault on Bakhmut in the eastern Donbas region.

Its air force command said three Russian Kalibr cruise missiles fired from the Black Sea and aimed at the western Khmelnytskyi region were shot down early on Sunday.

While the main theatre of combat has been the Donbas, Ukraine's military said its forces have moved within a firing range from Russian targets in the occupied eastern Black Sea region of Kherson where Kyiv is mounting a counter-offensive.

"Several transport infrastructure objects in the temporarily occupied territory have been taken under fire control, which significantly limits the manoeuvrability and logistics of the enemy's troops," the southern military command said in a Facebook post.

It said it had also destroyed a Russian S-300 anti-air battery in the region.

The strikes on Odesa drew condemnation from the United Nations, the European Union, the United States, Britain, Germany and Italy.

Russian news agencies quoted Russia's defense ministry as saying that a Ukrainian warship and U.S. supplied anti-ship missiles were destroyed.

"A docked Ukrainian warship and a warehouse with U.S.-supplied Harpoon anti-ship missiles were destroyed by long-range precision-guided naval missiles in Odesa seaport on the territory of a ship repair plant," it said.

On Saturday, Turkey's defense minister said Russian officials told Ankara that Moscow had "nothing to do" with the strikes.

Bolsonaro Officially Launches Re-Election Bid

RIO DE JANEIRO (Dispatches) - Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro kicked off his candidacy for re-election at a party event in Rio de Janeiro on Sunday with a speech focused on God, guns and family, as the right-wing leader attempts to claw back the commanding lead established by his main rival, former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

The right-wing Liberal Party (PL) tapped Bolsonaro as its nominee for the Oct. 2 vote before an audience of several thousand in Rio's Maracanazinho stadium, a move considered the official beginning of Bolsonaro's candidacy under Brazilian law.

The nomination comes as the president continues to launch baseless attacks on the reliability of the nation's electronic voting system, casting doubt on whether he would accept defeat. While the president did not touch directly on those matters on Sunday - focusing instead on socially conservative

stances popular with his base - his speech was heavy with praise for the armed forces who he said shared his concerns.

"The army is on our side," he told cheering supporters. "It's an army that doesn't accept corruption, doesn't accept fraud. This is an army that wants transparency."

With his image battered by inflation, Bolsonaro is down almost 20 percentage points in some polls to Lula, who governed the nation from 2003 through 2010 and lifted millions out of poverty thanks to aggressive social spending during a period of rapid commodity-driven growth.

Lula's star has fallen in recent years due to high-level corruption probes - he spent over a year and a half in jail due to a graft conviction that was later overturned - but he remains a relatively popular figure among Brazilians.

For Bolsonaro fans here, however, waving Brazilian flags and bedecked in the national soccer jersey, the possibility of a Lula comeback is unconscionable.



Almost 700 Migrants Rescued Off Italian Coast, Five Dead

ROME (Dispatches) - Almost 700 migrants, including five dead bodies, were rescued yesterday off the southern coast of Italy, a coastguard statement said today, as flows of migrants crossing the Mediterranean increase during favorable sea conditions.

Most of the 674 migrants were found on a fishing boat 124 miles off the coast of Calabria, the boot of Italy. Others were rescued in the water.

Search and rescue operations were carried out by a merchant vessel and Italy's coastguard and finance police.

The migrants were transferred to port cities in Sicily and Calabria this morning, the statement added. The five dead bodies were brought to the morgue in the hospital of the Sicilian city of Messina.

More than 34,000 asylum seekers and migrants have landed in Italy since the start of the year, up from some 25,500 in the same period last year, data from Italy's interior ministry shows.

Mediterranean countries on major migrant routes into Europe expect more than 150,000 arrivals this year as food shortages caused by the Ukraine conflict threaten a new migration wave from Africa and the Middle East. On Sunday morning, Norwegian-flagged ship Ocean Viking spotted an overcrowded rubber boat in the international waters off the coast of Libya and rescued 87 people, including 57 unaccompanied minors, it said on Twitter.

Separately, on Saturday German NGO search and rescue ship Sea-Watch rescued over 400 migrants, including several young children and two pregnant women, travelling on four overcrowded boats. According to Sea-Watch, flat seas and lack of wind have helped arrivals of migrants to the Italian coasts.

In Lampedusa, over 400 migrants have disembarked since last night, after a further 350 people yesterday, challenging the migrant reception center on the island, which is dealing with over 1,000 people.

Wildfires Burn Coastal Homes, Forests in Greece

ATHENS (Dispatches) - Greek firefighters battled wildfires on the island of Lesbos for a second day as well as new fires in the western Peloponnese and in northern Greece, evacuating nearby settlements as a heatwave set in.

A wildfire that started in mountainous forests on Lesbos in the Aegean Sea near Turkey on Saturday, burning properties at the beach resort of Vatera, was still raging, forcing the evacuation of two more villages - Vrissa and Stavros.

In mainland Greece a new wildfire threatened homes at Krestena in the western Peloponnese, forcing the evacuation of Gryllos village.

"The flames have encircled Krestena, there are reports of damaged homes, we need help," Anastasios Karnaros, a town council member, told Greek broadcaster Open TV.

Temperatures hit 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) in parts of Greece on Sunday as a heatwave that has hit other parts of Europe spread east and was expected to last for most of the coming week, according to meteorologists.

In the north of the country, a wildfire continued to ravage a pristine forest near Dadia, a natural habitat for black vultures, burning for a fourth day as authorities struggled to contain its destruction.

"We are dealing with difficult terrain and access with winds changing direction," Civil Protection Minister Christos Stylianidis, coordinating efforts from the air and on the ground, told state TV ERT.

Vatera, an 8 km (five mile) long sandy beach in the southern part of Lesbos, is a popular tourist spot. Lesbos was at the forefront of Europe's refugee crisis six years ago. The wildfire there burned homes and injured one firefighter.

Greece is suffering a second consecutive summer of wildfires this year.

A wildfire in mountains near Athens last week damaged homes and forced hundreds of people to flee, with authorities calling this summer one of the toughest in the Mediterranean.

Last year, wildfires ravaged about 300,000 acres (121,000 hectares) of forest and bushland across Greece during the country's worst heatwave in 30 years.



Critics Slam Bosnia's Election Law Plan

POTOCARI (Dispatches) - Plans by Bosnia's high representative to amend the country's election law and the federation entity's constitution have been denounced by

critics, who say it is segregationist and akin to legislating "apartheid".

Earlier this week, local media broke the news that the Office of the High Representative (OHR), an international institution responsible for implementing Bosnia and Herzegovina's peace agreement, is holding consultations with the international community to impose a new law regarding how delegates are chosen for the House of Peoples of the Bosniak-Croat Federation entity's parliament.

But analysts say with these changes, the OHR would give the Croat nationalist party HDZ (the Croatia Democratic Union) and nationalist secessionist Serb SNSD party (the Alliance of Social Democrats) a disproportionate degree of political influence and further deepen discriminatory ethnic divisions.

According to the reported reforms, Bosnia's "constituent people" - Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs - will lose representatives in the House of Peoples if their ethnic population in any federation canton amounts to less than three percent of the same ethnic population in the Federation entity.

For example, the Una-Sana canton located in western Bosnia with a Croat population of 1.9 percent, would lose its delegate for the Croat caucus, and the position would instead go to a canton with a large Croat population.

This translates to HDZ getting more delegates - at least 14 out of 17 seats in the Croat caucus - as the nationalist party rules in cantons with larger Croat populations.

With complete control over the Croat caucus, a member from the HDZ will now be guaranteed a seat as either the president or as one of the two vice-presidents of the Federation in a team with a Bosniak and a Serb selected from their respective caucuses.

Regardless of whether HDZ has a president or a vice-president for the Federation, all three ethnic constituencies are required to form the government, making the HDZ indispensable.



WHO Calls for Action To Provide Migrant and Refugee Healthcare



GENEVA (Dispatches) - Millions of refugees and migrants face poorer health outcomes than their host communities, which could jeopardize reaching the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for these populations.

The warning from the World Health Organization (WHO) comes in its first ever report on the health of refugees and migrants, published last week.

It calls for urgent action to ensure people on the move can access healthcare services that are sensitive to their needs. "Whether by choice or by force, to be on the move is to be human and is part of human life. Whatever a person's motivation, circumstance, origin or migratory status, we must unequivocally reiterate that health is a human right for all, and that universal health coverage must be inclusive of refugees and migrants," said Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO Director General, in the forward to the report.

Globally, there are around one billion migrants, or roughly one in eight people. Disease, famine, climate change and war have forced people to flee their homelands, and the conflict in Ukraine has helped push the number of displaced people worldwide to more than 100 million for the first time in history.

At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to disproportionately affect the health and livelihoods of migrants and refugees.

The report, which is based on an extensive review of data from around the world, reveals that refugees and migrants are not inherently less healthy than host communities.

Their poorer health outcomes are due to the impact of various sub-optimal health determinants such as education, income, and housing, which are compounded by linguistic, cultural, legal and other barriers.

The report underscores that the experience of migration and displacement is a key factor in health and wellbeing, especially when combined with other factors.

A recent analysis of more than 17 million participants from 16 countries across five WHO regions found that migrant workers were less likely to use health services, and more likely to have an occupational injury, when compared with non-migrant counterparts.

Furthermore, a significant number of the world's 169 million migrant workers globally are employed in jobs that are dirty, dangerous and demanding.

They are at greater risk of occupational accidents, injuries, and work-related health problems than non-migrant workers. The situation is also exacerbated by their often limited or restricted access to, and use of, health services.

The report also found that while data and health information about the health of refugees and migrants is plentiful, it is also fragmented and not comparable across countries and over time.

WHO said although migrant populations are sometimes identifiable in global datasets used for SDG monitoring, health data are often missing from migration statistics.

Additionally, migrant status variables are frequently missing from health statistics, making it difficult to determine and track progress for refugees and migrants with regards to the health-related goals.

"It is imperative that we do more on refugees and migrants' health but if we want to change the status quo, we need urgent investments to improve the quality, relevance and completeness of health data on refugees and migrants," said Dr Zsuzsanna Jakab, WHO's Deputy Director-General.

"We need sound data collection and monitoring systems that truly represent the diversity of the world population and the experience that refugees and migrants face the world over and that can guide more effective policies and interventions."

Hyundai Subsidiary Has Used Child Labor At Alabama Factory



LUVERNE (Dispatches) - A subsidiary of Hyundai Motor Co has used child labor at a plant that supplies parts for the Korean carmaker's assembly line in nearby Montgomery, Alabama, according to area police, the family of three underage workers, and eight former and current employees of the factory.

Underage workers, in some cases as young as 12, have recently worked at a metal stamping plant operated by SMART Alabama LLC, these people said. SMART, listed by Hyundai in corporate filings as a majority-owned unit, supplies parts for some of the most popular cars and SUVs built by the automaker in Montgomery, its flagship U.S. assembly plant.

In a statement sent after Reuters first published its findings on Friday, Hyundai (005380.KS) said it "does not tolerate illegal employment practices at any Hyundai entity. We have policies and procedures in place that require compliance with all local, state and federal laws." It didn't answer detailed questions from Reuters about the findings.

SMART, in a separate statement, said it follows federal, state and local laws and "denies any allegation that it knowingly employed anyone who is ineligible for employment." The company said it relies on temporary work agencies to fill jobs and expects "these agencies to follow the law in recruiting, hiring, and placing workers on its premises."

SMART didn't answer specific questions about the workers cited in this story or on-the-job scenes they and other people familiar with the factory described.

Reuters learned of underage workers at the Hyundai-owned supplier following the brief disappearance in February of a Guatemalan migrant child from her family's home in Alabama.

The girl, who turns 14 this month, and her two brothers, aged 12 and 15, all worked at the plant earlier this year and weren't going to school, according to people familiar with their employment. Their father, Pedro Tzi, confirmed these people's account in an interview with Reuters. Police in the Tzi family's adopted hometown of Enterprise also told Reuters that the girl and her siblings had worked at SMART. The police, who helped locate the missing girl, at the time of their search identified her by name in a public alert.

Reuters is not using her name in this article because she is a minor.

The police force in Enterprise, about 45 miles from the plant in Luverne, doesn't have jurisdiction to investigate possible labor-law violations at the factory. Instead, the force notified the state attorney general's office after the incident, James Sanders, an Enterprise police detective, told Reuters.

Mike Lewis, a spokesperson at the Alabama attorney general's office, declined to comment. It's unclear whether the office or other investigators have contacted SMART or Hyundai about possible violations. On Friday, in response to Reuters' reporting, a spokesperson for the Alabama Department of Labor said it would be coordinating with the U.S. Department of labor and other agencies to investigate.

Pedro Tzi's children, who have now enrolled for the upcoming school term, were among a larger cohort of underage workers who found jobs at the Hyundai-owned supplier over the past few years, according to interviews with a dozen former and current plant employees and labor recruiters.

Several of these minors, they said, have foregone schooling in order to work long shifts at the plant, a sprawling facility with a documented history of health and safety violations, including amputation hazards.

Most of the current and former employees who spoke with Reuters did so on the condition of anonymity. Reuters was unable to determine the precise number of children who may have worked at the SMART factory, what the minors were paid or other terms of their employment.

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Saudi Crown Prince to Visit Greece to Sign Energy Deal

ATHENS (Dispatches) - Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman will visit Greece on July 26 to meet Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, the Greek foreign ministry said on Friday, in his first visit to an EU country since the 2018 killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

The ministry said the pair were due to sign bilateral deals, without giving details. A Greek diplomatic source said the

deals were in the fields of energy, military cooperation, and an undersea data cable, among others.

Greece and Saudi Arabia agreed in May on the main terms to set up a joint venture to lay the data cable that will link Europe with Asia. The "East to Med data Corridor" will be developed by MENA HUB, owned by Saudi Arabia's STC and Greek telecoms and satellite applications company TTSA.



India Extended 37 Line of Credit Worth \$14b To 5 Countries in Neighborhood

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India extended a total of 37 Lines of Credit worth USD 14.27 billion to Bangladesh, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka for 162 projects, the government told Lok Sabha on Friday. In reply to a question, Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan said another 222 Lines of Credit (LoC) worth USD 14.07 billion covering 357 projects have been extended to 42 countries in Africa.

The minister also provided a list of some of the projects that were implemented in the neighboring countries as well as in Africa as part of India's financial assistance. "A total of 37 Lines of Credit worth USD 14.27 billion covering 162 projects have been extended to 5 countries in our neighborhood namely, Bangladesh, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka," Muraleedharan said.

"Another 222 Lines of Credit worth USD 14.07 billion covering 357 projects have been extended to 42 countries in Africa. These projects cover varied sectors like roads, railways, power, ports and shipping, telecom, health, education and aviation," he added. The government of India has extended 08 Lines of Credit (LOCs) to Sri Lanka amounting to USD 1850.64 million in sectors including railways, infrastructure, defense, renewable energy, petroleum and fertilizers in the past 10 years.

To a separate question, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said that India is committed to developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all its neighbors under the 'Neighborhood First' policy. "In line with this policy, India continues to assist Sri Lanka in its economic development and also support it in overcoming its economic challenges," he said.

Jaishankar said that in January India extended a USD 400 million currency swap to Sri Lanka under the SAARC Framework and deferred successive Asian Clearing Union settlements till July 6. "A Line of Credit of US\$ 500 million was extended to Sri Lanka for importing fuel from India. In addition, India has extended a credit facility of USD 1 billion for the procurement of food, medicines and other essential items from India," he added.

Jaishankar said humanitarian assistance was also provided to Sri Lanka by gifting essential medicines worth about Rs 6 crore, 15,000 litres of kerosene oil and USD 55 million LoC for procurement of Urea fertiliser. "The government of Tamil Nadu has contributed rice, milk powder and medicines worth USD 16 million, as part of the larger Indian assistance effort," he said.

ADB Raises Growth Forecast for Philippines to 6.5 % in 2022

MANILA (Dispatches) - The Philippine economy is forecast to grow faster than initially expected in 2022, following the relaxation of Covid-19 mobility restrictions, the expansion of the Covid-19 vaccination program, and a rebound in investment and household consumption, according to an Asian Development Bank (ADB) report released this week.

The Asian Development Outlook 2022 Supplement says the Philippine economy will grow at least 6.5 percent in 2022, up from the bank's April forecast of 6 percent.

The growth projection for 2023 remains at 6.3 percent. Downside risks to growth in the second half of 2022 may come from sharper-than-expected slowdowns in major industrial economies, possibly sustained elevated global commodity prices, and tighter financial conditions.

"The Philippine economy's growth momentum has accelerated close to its ideal growth path," said the Manila-based bank's Philippines Country Director Kelly Bird.

"Strong domestic demand supported by a pick-up in employment and remittance inflows, private investment expansion, and large public infrastructure projects will underpin the country's recovery from the economic impact of the pandemic," Bird added.

The ADB said wider Covid-19 vaccination coverage, with adolescents among those getting inoculated, and relatively mild health impacts from the Omicron variant have allowed the government to relax restrictions, which, in turn, spurred a resumption in expanded operations for most private businesses. The unemployment rate in the country falls near pre-pandemic levels, which is 6 per cent in May 2022, down from 7.7 percent a year earlier.

The ADB forecasts inflation to quicken to 4.9 percent and 4.3 percent in 2022 and 2023, respectively, on the back of higher global commodity prices, up from ADB's April forecast of 4.2 per cent in 2022 and 3.5 percent in 2023.

The Philippine government's economic team slashed its GDP target band for 2022 to 6.5 to 7.5 per cent from 7 to 8 per cent early this month due to "recent external and domestic developments."



German Manufacturing, Services Sectors Shrink in July

BERLIN (Dispatches) - German business activity unexpectedly shrank in July, a preliminary reading of a purchasing managers survey showed on Friday, as companies were hit by inflation pressures and supply chain disruptions.

S&P Global's flash Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) for services fell to 49.2 in July, from June's final reading of 52.4, while its manufacturing index dropped to 49.2, from 52.0 the previous month.

Analysts had forecast both services and manufacturing this month would be above the 50 mark, which signals growth in activity, at 51.2 and 50.6, respectively.

The flash composite PMI, which tracks both the manufacturing and services sectors which together account for more than two-thirds of the German economy, fell to 48.0, its lowest level in more than two years, from 51.3 last month.

If confirmed in a final reading of the PMI at the end of the month, it would be the first decline in business activity since last December.

"Having enjoyed a growth boost from the previous easing of virus-related restrictions, a collision of various headwinds in July served to push the German economy into contraction territory for the first time in 2022 so far," said Paul Smith, economics director at S&P Global Market Intelligence.

Uncertainty caused by the war in Ukraine, ongoing supply delays and inflation and its pressures were behind "the worst performance of private sector activity since the height of the first pandemic wave in the spring of 2020," added Smith.

"No wonder then company expectations have subsequently dropped into negative territory for the first time in over two years," he added.

South Korea Obliterates China's Biggest Economic Weapon

SEOUL (Dispatches) - World politics has been long dominated by the geographical presence of oil supplies. However, the arrival of cleaner sources of energy has initiated a drop in the popularity of the former. Oil has ruled the markets for more than five decades but that is about to change.

All major economies of the world are on a spree to develop their semiconductor manufacturing capabilities to compete in an increasingly competitive world.

Semiconductors are used in almost everything and the nation that will be controlling its majority supply would eventually end up leading the 21st century. To put it in other words, the semiconductor is the new oil in this digital age.

The semiconductor industry reportedly would be one of the biggest generators of employment in the future owing to high demand. In the U.S, recent analysis shows that jobs in the semiconductor industry have a 6.7x multiplier on overall job creation.

Both the US and the EU have even passed legislation to support domestic semiconductor firms in response to a worldwide chip shortage and growing geopolitical worries around global supply chains.

The CHIPS for America Act features a generous \$52 billion package to support the research, development, and production of semiconductors in the United States, whereas the European Chips Act is a multibillion-euro project to boost the European semiconductor ecosystem. Both pieces of legislation have been passed at a vital time for chip makers as a result of the forced reduction or even halting of production in a variety of industries, including consumer electronics, healthcare, and automotive.

According to analysts and media reports, China is fearful of losing essential supplies amid a US-initiated chip alliance with Asian economies, particularly South Korea. The Chip 4 Alliance, is a partnership envisioned by the US to include South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. All three countries included by the US are pioneers in the semiconductor industry with a Taiwanese technology giant TSMC (Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company) accounting for over 50 per cent of the market share of global chip manufacturing.

According to data from the Korea International Trade Association, China is South Korea's largest trading partner, and in 2021, 48% of the US\$69 billion in chipset exports from South Korea went to China.

Denmark's Decade-Long Experiment With Negative Rates Seen Ending Soon

COPENHAGEN (Dispatches) - Danish banks expect a decade-long experiment with negative interest rates to soon come to an end, after the country's central bank raised its key interest rate, sending it closer towards positive rate territory.

In 2012, Denmark became the first country in the world to impose negative rates, a trend since adopted by other countries to combat both weak inflation rates and changing savings patterns by consumers and businesses.

But as central banks, including Denmark's, now raise rates to curb soaring inflation, lenders are set to break with past years' negative interest rate trend.

"This is the starting point for us to exit the era of negative interest rates very soon," said economist at Arbejdernes Landsbank, Lisette Rosenbeck Christensen.

Denmark's central bank raised its key interest rate by 0.5 percentage points to minus 0.1% on Thursday, following a rate hike earlier in the day by the European Central Bank (ECB) aimed at stifling inflation.

The primary mandate of the Danish central bank is to keep the crown currency stable within a narrow band to the euro. It does that via currency interventions and adjusting its rate in lockstep with the ECB.

"The Danish economy is now very close to leave the period of negative interest rates behind," said Soren Kristensen, chief economist at Sydbank.

On Friday, Nykredit, Denmark's second-largest lender, became the first to entirely remove negative interest rates on private clients' deposits.

"With the latest adjustment from Denmark's central bank and another adjustment expected in September, we at Nykredit have decided that negative deposit interest rates for our private

customers must come to an end," Nykredit's banking director Henrik Rasmussen said in a statement.

Danish lenders Danske Bank, Jyske Bank and Nordea on Thursday also raised rates on large deposits as a result of the central bank hike, but kept them below zero.

Most Danish lenders introduced negative interest rates on clients' large deposits in 2019 to cushion against costs incurred for depositing funds at the central bank at a negative rate.

Lower interest rates generally spur investments by making it cheaper to loan money, while higher rates can put a damper on economic activity.

Banks will benefit from rate hikes, as loans become pricier, but not if the higher rates lead to recession and fluctuating markets, Danske Bank's Chief Executive Carsten Egeriis said on Friday. "In the long run, there's no doubt that as long as rates rise in a controlled manner ... it's a positive thing for banks and we will see rising net interest income because of it," Egeriis told Reuters.

Pakistan Rupee Falls Again, Deepening Economic Crisis



ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - The slide has deepened an already difficult economic crisis, as Pakistan struggles with depleting foreign currency reserves and a current account deficit.

Pakistan has signed a deal to secure a \$2.3 billion loan from China as progress continues on the revival of an IMF bailout program.

The Pakistani rupee fell 8% this week as it recorded an annual performance worse than nearly any other currency except those of bankrupt Sri Lanka and war-ravaged Ukraine.

The slide has deepened an already difficult economic crisis, as Pakistan struggles with depleting foreign currency reserves and a current account deficit.

On Friday, the rupee fell 0.68% against the dollar, taking its decline for the week 8% and for the year to over 21%, according to central bank data.

Interbank rates hit a historic intra-day low before recovering slightly to 228.37 rupees to the dollar from 226.81 rupees on Thursday.

It was at 210.95 rupees to the dollar when trading opened on the first trading day of the week, Monday and at 178.16 at the start of 2022.

The drop comes despite last week's staff level agreement reached with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the disbursement of \$1.17 billion under resumed payments of a bailout package.

Mohammad Sohail, head of Topline Securities, said investors worried whether the government would be able to take corrective actions requested by the IMF after losing provincial by-elections in the populous province of Punjab.

Pakistan's finance minister on Wednesday blamed the rupee's slide on political turmoil, saying he expects market jitters over the currency's sharp decline to subside soon.

Iran, Iraq Ink MoU for Cinema Cooperation

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian and Iraqi officials signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cinematic cooperation and joint movie products, particularly for adolescents.

According to the MoU that was inked at Iraqi National Theater on July 24, Iran and Iraq agreed to co-produce joint features, short films as well as documentaries.

Both sides also agreed to further enhance the mutual cooperation in the field of cinema, particularly exchanging research and information as well as releasing joint projects.

Promoting the technical knowledge of the two sides' artists, holding workshops, and exchanging experts for executing the cinematic projects were among the provisions of the MoU.



Europe Must Cut Gas Usage 20% to Survive Winter

LONDON (Dispatches) - After calling on all member states to reduce gas consumption by 15% in the face of the threat of a complete Russian gas cutoff, the IEA says the European Union will need to cut even more in order to get through the winter.

"Even if there is no single accident... #Europe still needs to reduce its gas consumption about 20% compared to today in order to have safe and normal winter months," IEA chief Fatih Birol said, issuing what he called a "red alert" for energy markets.

The short-term issue with the Nord Stream 1 pipeline may have been resolved, Birol told CNN, but "it's too early to be happy about this".

The amount Europe is receiving now from Russia is only about one-third of what it was receiving prior to the force majeure, and the IEA chief warned that even that reduced flow "can be cut anytime".

After a 10-day pause for regular maintenance, Russian gas flows via Nord Stream resumed on Thursday morning, with orders for gas set at around 40% of Nord Stream's capacity, the level from before the maintenance after Russia slashed flows in mid-June. Flows early on Thursday were at around 21.5 GWh, compared to 30GWh prior to the start of maintenance on July 11th, and compared to 70 GWh before Russia reduced supplies by 60% on June 13th.

On Wednesday, the European Commission unveiled measures for the bloc to conserve gas to pre-empt a Russian cutoff, asking member states to reduce consumption by 15% until next spring.

According to Birol, this won't be enough to ensure a smooth winter for Europe, and there is no alternative to consumption reductions.



Even assuming that the current Russian gas flow is maintained, and considering all the LNG Europe is getting from the United States and elsewhere, plus other natural gas sources, and even if there are no accidents that hamper supply, Europe still needs to reduce more, starting now, Birol said.

There is not enough gas around the world for Europe to rely on, the IAE chief said, and there is no choice but to reduce consumption to avoid shortages and rationing this winter. If the bloc waits, and fails to adopt a coordinated method, once we get into the winter months, the measures will be "more drastic".

Birol is calling on Europe to develop an emergency plan, noting that Germany is the most vulnerable, followed by Italy and some Eastern European countries.

Time for UN to Decide on Removing Yemen's Economic Siege



TEHRAN (IRNA) - A senior aide to Iranian Foreign Minister, Ali-Asghar Khaji, said that it is now time for the United Nations to make a decision on removing the economic siege imposed on Yemen and extending the ceasefire.

Khaji made the remarks in a meeting with the Italian foreign ministry's special representative for Yemen and Afghanistan affairs while stressing the need for adopting a practical strategy to resolve the crisis in Yemen.

During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on the latest development of the Yemeni crisis and the peace process in the country.

The two officials also discussed the latest ceasefire situation in Yemen, calling for implementing the provisions of the ceasefire agreement, particularly humanitarian issues.

The Iranian diplomat elaborated on Iran's intermediary and humanitarian efforts to put an end to the imposed war against the defenseless and oppressed people of Yemen, as well as establishing a ceasefire and a fair peace.

From the onset, the Islamic Republic of Iran believed that the Yemen crisis had no military solution, Khaji said, adding that the crisis should be resolved through Yemeni-Yemeni political dialogue.

Iran supports any ceasefire and peace initiative that will end the suffering of the Yemeni people and bring lasting peace and security to the country, the senior Iranian diplomat further noted.

Luton Airport Runway Meltdown Shows Airports Vulnerable to Climate Change

LONDON (Dispatches) - The temporary disruption at London's Luton Airport last Monday when soaring temperatures caused a small section of the asphalt to lift is an example of the challenges airports face in making their infrastructure resilient to climate change, experts say.

Below is an explanation of how global airports are coping with extreme heat and what may be needed to prevent future interruption from further heatwaves.

The Luton runway was closed for nearly two hours on Monday, prompting airlines to delay or divert flights as temperatures rose above 37 degrees Celsius (98.6 Fahrenheit), adding to industry headaches in what has been a chaotic summer travel season in Europe.

A long-standing patch repair to a small section of the runway - the equivalent of 0.2% of the entire surface area - became so hot that it de-bonded and began to lift, a spokesperson for the airport said on Friday, adding it was repaired within two hours.

It is built to the same specification as others in Britain, meeting industry safety standards and regulations, the spokesperson said. "We continue to evaluate all options regarding the ongoing maintenance and long-term resilience of all of our infrastructure."

The spokesperson did not comment on questions about the timing of the runway's resurfacing, the type of asphalt used or any possible changes to the material.

Runways are typically resurfaced every 10 to 15 years.

-Luton's climate change adaptation report released in November 2021 warned one of the key risks was high temperatures causing infrastructure damage or impacting operations.

The airport said in the medium term it would need to ensure all airfield resurfacing projects considered the impact of increasing temperatures.

The surface materials used depend on the climate and local conditions as well as other factors such as cost.

Concrete is better than asphalt at withstanding extreme heat, though it is also more expensive and not as suitable in areas prone to ground settlement problems, Greg White, director of the Airport Pavement Research Program at Australia's University of the Sunshine Coast, said this week.

The United States has a mix of runway types, while in the Middle East, the biggest hub Dubai uses "multiple layers of asphalt," according to a Dubai Airports video on a recent runway rehabilitation project.

In Britain and Australia, asphalt runways are most common, he said, though they use different stiffness levels depending on the local climate.

Tehran-Yerevan...

FROM PAGE 1

He reiterated that road construction and tunnel construction is very important for the two countries and Armenian economy minister have visited some sample works of Iranian companies and Iran is keen to be present in the road construction field in Armenia because it provides Iran's access to northern countries and will replace Azerbaijan route.

Payman-Pak went on to say that the trade volume between Iran and Armenia is on the rise and called for revising the road tariffs for broadening ties.

He noted that Iran has been unsuccessful in barter trade with Armenia, adding that Iran has done a good job in barter trade with Turkey, Russia, India and China and it has barter trade with them worth of \$1.5b.

Then Armenia's deputy economy minister said that the trade volume between Iran and Armenia in the first half of 2022 has grown by 0.3%, adding that the trade between the two countries has reached \$245m and expressed it to grow more.

He also called for cooperation between Iran and Armenia in the field of pharmaceutical, noting that Armenia can export its home-made medicines to Iran.

Chabahar...

FROM PAGE 1

Iran has for long struggled, both economically and geopolitically, due to persistent sanctions imposed upon it, and the hostile attitude it has faced from the US and other Western countries but the development of the Chabahar Port has allowed Iran a lifeline to emerging as a hub of regional trade by promoting these maritime trading operations, political analyst Valerio Fabbri wrote in his blog for Russian International Affairs Council.

Amid the hesitancy of Central Asian states like Kazakhstan to support Russian efforts in Ukraine, Iran has built consensus around longer-term commitments to the Chabahar Port as a primary trading hub.

Moreover, at a recent India-Central Asia summit, Iran and India showcased their commitment to providing Central Asian countries a stake in the Chabahar Port, setting aside dedicated areas for their trading operations and an agreement was reached as well to simplify customs processes and rules to ensure unhindered movement of goods, stated Valerio Fabbri.

Iran's ability to project power through Afghanistan had been held in check by the presence of US forces in the country, but the U.S. withdrawal and the accompanying power vacuum left Iran with new ways to exert leverage, both diplomatically and through proxy militant groups, from Afghanistan into Central Asia.

Notably, the Chabahar Port exists in contraposition to Pakistan's Gwadar Port, which Pakistan hoped would emerge as a regional powerhouse, however, its location in an inhospitable region has proved a problem as the Pakistani authorities made a major error of alienating its local population in Balochistan by excluding the people from the benefits of Gwadar's development.

The operational aspect of Chabahar Port is significant because it unlocks trading routes that were unviable previously and will help Iran to establish novel trading routes and bring both prosperity as well as diplomatic leverage for Iran over Central Asia, the blog stated.

Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 1

During the visit of Prime Minister of Pakistan to Iran in April 2019, it was agreed that the legal teams from both sides would engage in finding out plausible legal solutions for the implementation of the project.

Accordingly, both sides executed an Amendment Agreement No. 3 to the Iran Pakistan Gas Sales and Purchase Agreement (IP-GSPA) with NIOC on 5th September, 2019 in Istanbul, Turkey.

Consequent to the signing of the Amendment Agreement No. 3, both sides have extended period of limitation for any claims under or in connection with the IP-GSPA as it is permitted under the applicable French law, allowing more time to the Parties to engage and further discuss the way forward on the IP project.

On joint projects between OGDCL and National Iranian Oil Company NIOC, the sources said, during 20th session of JEC, Pakistani side expressed OGDCL & PPL interest in evaluating the E&P opportunities in Iran.

According to sources, OGDCL has expressed the desire to work as joint venture partner with NIOC for exploration of hydrocarbons within Iran and worldwide.

ODGCL would also like to join hands with National Iranian Oil Company in evaluation of the potential of unexpected areas, shale gas, tight gas reserves, and enhanced oil recovery projects in Pakistan.

However, due to U.S. sanctions, no cooperation could have been materialized so far.

WAPDA and TAVANIR entered into a contract agreement for 30 years for 32-MW electricity on November 6, 2002 to meet the requirement of Makran Division in Balochistan.

The rates per kwh were revised from time to time. The last revision was made on March 15, 2019. TAVANIR has also shown an interest to supply power to other bordering areas.

Quetta Electric Supply Company is working on this and a response will be conveyed to Iranian side shortly.

The sources maintained that MoU was signed in April 08, 2007 for import of 1000-KW power from Zahedan, Iran to Quetta, Pakistan. Feasibility report concluded jointly was submitted to NTDC in 2010.

The estimated cost will be \$700 million. NTDC approved the MoU in 2012; however, the approval of ECC is awaited. After approval of ECC the PPA will be negotiated with Tavanir.

Stano of Italy Wins World 35km Race Walk

EUGENE (Dispatches) - Italian Massimo Stano won the men's 35km race walk gold at the World Athletics Championships in Eugene.

Stano, who won the Olympic 20km walk in Tokyo last year, timed 2hr 23min 14sec, edging by 1sec Japan's Masatora Kawano, who took silver.

Sweden's Perseus Karlstrom, winner of the 35km title at the World Race Walking Championships in Muscat in March, claimed bronze in 2:23.44, just as he did in the 20km race walk.

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ISSN 1024-6053

P.O. Box: 15875-8551

Address: No 13, Pajouhesh St., Golestan II St, Golestan St.Marzdaran Blvd., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Printed by: Honar Sarzmin Sabz

Distributed by:

Cities of Iran Cultural and Artistic Institute

Managing Director: Fereydoon Taherpour Asl

PSG Agree Transfer of Mukiele From RB Leipzig

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Paris Saint-Germain and RB Leipzig have reached an agreement for the transfer of French international defender Nordi Mukiele to Paris, AFP learned on Sunday from a source close to the negotiations.

The two parties are committed to a full transfer and not a loan with an option to buy, as was initially indicated.

It now remains for the 24-year-old to undergo a medical examination before signing his contract with PSG.

Verstappen Wins French GP After Leclerc Crashes Out

PARIS (Dispatches) - World champion Max Verstappen took full advantage of Charles Leclerc crashing out of the lead to extend his advantage in this year's title race with a crushing victory ahead of Lewis Hamilton in Sunday's sun-baked French Grand Prix.

The 24-year-old Dutchman drove with flawless control in the searing heat to guide his Red Bull home 10.587 seconds ahead of Mercedes' Hamilton, in his 300th race, with George Russell, in the second Mercedes, beating Sergio Perez in the other Red Bull, for third.

It was Verstappen's seventh win this season and the 27th of his career and a blow to Leclerc's challenge in the opening race of the second half of the season.

After 12 of the 22 races, Verstappen leads Leclerc by 63 points in the drivers' standings. "We had good pace, but it was hard to follow here with the tyres overheating so we stayed calm," said Verstappen.

"You never know how it is going to go... It was unlucky for Charles and I'm glad he is ok."

Perez finished fourth ahead of a rampant Carlos Sainz, who drove from the back of the grid to finish fifth for Ferrari ahead of Fernando Alonso of Alpine and McLaren's Lando Norris.

Esteban Ocon was eighth in the second Alpine ahead of Daniel Ricciardo of McLaren and Lance Stroll of Aston Martin.

Hamilton was delighted to be second.

"It was a tough race as my drinks bottle didn't work so it was a great result for us, especially considering we're so far off the pace," he said. "Great reliability from the team and George did an amazing job."

On an afternoon of searing heat, with a track temperature of 52 degrees and the air 34 at the start, Leclerc made a clean start to lead into the first corner ahead of Verstappen, with Hamilton leaping clear of Perez into third.

Leclerc led by a second after the opening lap, which saw Yuki Tsunoda spin and recover while Sainz, from the back of the grid, began his charge.

Verstappen's superior straight-line speed powered him close behind



Leclerc's Ferrari at the end of the Mistral Straight, but the leader held firm, his car squirming for grip in the heat.

Having resisted Verstappen's early attacks, Leclerc held a lead of nine-tenths by lap 13. Sainz, praised for his progress by Ferrari, reached 10th on lap 14.

At the front Leclerc increased his pace to draw 1.7 seconds clear by lap 15, when the track temperature was recorded at 55 degrees.

"We are planning Plan B," Ferrari told Leclerc, refocusing on tyre wear and strategy.

Verstappen came in on lap 17 for a stop in 2.4 seconds, rejoining seventh. As he came back, Ferrari warned Leclerc his tyres were over-heating, but he held a 10-second lead ahead of Hamilton with Perez third, three seconds adrift.

Verstappen passed Norris swiftly for sixth, but Leclerc stayed out and then, on lap 18 crashed at Le Beausset, going heavily into the tyre barrier.

Charles Leclerc's car is taken away from the track after he crashed out while in the lead. He climbed out, apparently unhurt despite the estimated 175 kph impact.

The distressed Leclerc shouted that he had a throttle problem. It was his third exit from the lead this season, just as he looked capable of scoring Ferrari's third consecutive victory.

A safety car was deployed, Hamilton pitted and Verstappen took the lead.

Leclerc emerged later to admit the crash had been his fault.

"It was a mistake, my mistake," he said. "I was pushing too much and I lost the rear."

Frustrated in fourth, Sainz asked Ferrari for fresh tyres who told him to go for Plan D, then to stay out and finally, in mid-overtaking of Perez to pit.

"Not now," shouted the Spaniard who muscled through to third and then, on lap 43, pitted for tyres and to serve his penalty.

It seemed Ferrari, bafflingly, had thrown away a solid chance of third as Sainz rejoined ninth, while Russell and Perez battled for the final podium spot.



Musetti Stuns Alcaraz To Win Hamburg Open

HAMBURG (Dispatches) - Nobody will soon forget how Lorenzo Musetti won his first ATP Tour title.

The 20-year-old let slip five championship points in the second set of the Hamburg European Open final on Sunday before stunning top seed Carlos Alcaraz 6-4, 6-7(6), 6-4 in an all GenATP battle to lift the trophy.

"I have no words because it was a roller-coaster until the end. I had so many match points. Carlos was so good on the match points, [I had] so many chances," Musetti said in his on-court interview. "But I think the key of the match was to keep calm and [have] all the patience [with] myself because it was really not easy. Carlos was putting so much effort in the match points when he was down, so it was not easy to find the energy to come back."

"But I cannot describe what I am feeling right now. I think I am still dreaming."

Entering the week, the Italian had not advanced to a tour-level final. But Musetti showed his mental fortitude against Alcaraz, who will climb to a career-high No. 5 in the Pepperstone ATP Rankings, to triumph after two hours and 47 minutes.

England-South Africa Series Drawn

LEEDS (Dispatches) - South Africa opener Quinton de Kock's unbeaten 92 turned out to be in vain as rain scuppered hopes of a result in Sunday's third and final one-day international against England, with the series ending all square at 1-1.

The Proteas were 159-2 in the 28th over, with De Kock having struck 92 off just 76 balls, including 13 fours, when rain stopped play for the second time in the match at Headingley.

Both sides needed to bat for a minimum of 20 overs for a result to be declared under the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method for rain-affected white-ball games.

But the umpires deemed that would not be possible when they called the game off shortly after 4:00 pm local time (1500 GMT) as a series that had started during a nationwide heatwave ended in more familiar English conditions.

The abandonment meant left-hander De Kock was just eight runs shy of what would have been his 18th ODI century.

Final word - A giant screen at Headingley confirms the end of the third ODI between England and South Africa due to rain

Final word - A giant screen at Headingley confirms the end of the third ODI between England and South Africa due to rain Lindsey Parnaby AFP

England had gone into the game looking to avoid a third consecutive white-ball series defeat under new captain Jos Buttler, who succeeded now retired 50-over World Cup-winning skipper Eoin Morgan, following T20 and ODI reverses against India.

South Africa won the toss, with both sides unchanged after England's thumping 118-run win in a rain-affected match at Old Trafford which followed the Proteas' 62-run triumph at Chester-le-Street.

England made an early breakthrough when Janneman Malan (11) hit left-arm quick David Willey straight to Jason Roy at point to leave the Proteas 24-1.

But De Kock was in fine touch as he completed his first fifty of the series off just 39 balls, with the 29-year-old reaching the landmark by hitting boundaries off successive deliveries from leg-spinner Adil Rashid.



Ronaldo Surprised by New Man Utd Plan

LONDON (Dispatches) - Manchester United have come up with a cunning Cristiano Ronaldo plan. It's become clear to them as it has to the rest of us for a while that Ronaldo is not going to play for a team not competing in the Champions League.

The striker still hasn't returned to United training as his agent Jorge Mendes knocks on club doors to find him an option for next year. Atletico Madrid appear to be the most likely (only) suitor and The Times claim they have put Antoine Griezmann up for sale to pave

the way for the 37-year-old's arrival at the Wanda Metropolitan.

And Mirror claim United would be willing to allow Ronaldo to leave for Atletico this season, but only on loan, and only if the Portugal international agrees to extend his contract by a year so he can return to Old Trafford next year for a final swansong, hopefully in the Champions League. It's an offer that's said to have 'taken Mendes and Ronaldo by surprise' and so far has 'not been rejected'.

United's preference is still for Ronaldo to stay this season, but it's claimed there is now an acknowledgement that 'it would be difficult and potentially disruptive to ten Hag's plans to keep an unhappy Ronaldo'.

Ruud Battles Back To Beat Berrettini In Gstaad

GSTAAD (Dispatches) - Top seed and defending champion Casper Ruud came from a set down to beat second seed Matteo Berrettini 4-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-2 in a high quality final of the clay-court ATP event in Gstaad.

It marked a ninth career title for Ruud - four of them coming in Switzerland - and his third of the year following successes in Geneva and Buenos Aires, also on clay.

"There is a big story here with Roger Federer, who is a reference for me and a lot of players in the world," said Ruud after the match which stretched just over two and a half hours.

"Switzerland is a country with a lot of history now in tennis, winning a lot of Grand Slams with Roger and Stan (Wawrinka) the last 18 or 19 years.

"So it's been an inspiration to everyone around the world, including myself, that they are able to come from a small country, sort of like Norway. Everything about Switzerland reminds me a little bit about Norway."

The French Open finalist dropped the opener but battled back to take the Italian world number 15 to a tiebreak for the second set.

Ruud lost the opening point on serve but then found his forehand clicking into gear as he took the next five points, the first sign of Berrettini's service wavering.

The world number five closed out the tiebreak 7-4 to level the match and take it into a decider.

The 23-year-old Norwegian then powered through the final set, breaking the 2018 champion twice to take the decider 6-2.

Berrettini, playing his first event since having to withdraw from Wimbledon with Covid, was bidding to win his third straight title after wins on grass at Queen's and in Stuttgart.

Ruud takes a 3-2 lead in their head-to-head record.



Raphinha Strikes Again as Barcelona Beat Real Madrid

LAS VEGAS (Dispatches) - Raphinha made it two goals in two matches as Barcelona defeated Real Madrid 1-0 on Saturday in their Las Vegas Clasico.

Raphinha, signed from Premier League Leeds United earlier this month for around \$60 million, followed up his debut in a 6-0 thrashing of Inter Miami with the lone goal of the high-profile clash at Allegiant Stadium, the \$1.97 billion, 65,000-seat home of the NFL's Las Vegas Raiders.

The Brazilian was perfectly placed to intercept an ill-advised pass from Real's Eder Militao along the top of the area. After one touch to settle he lashed a left-footed shot over Thibaut Courtois into the top right corner of the net to put Barcelona up 1-0 in the 27th minute

The fourth edition of the Clasico to be played outside of Spain -- the second ever held in the United States -- featured all the intensity of the long rivalry.

Real Madrid, playing their first pre-season friendly, nearly opened the scoring in the 18th minute but Federico Valverde was denied by the post in the 18th minute, seizing the ball after a poor clearance by Jordi Alba and blasting a volley from 25 yards out that beat Marc-Andre Ter Stegen only for the upright to intervene.

Two minutes later it was Barcelona who saw a chance get away when Eduardo Camavinga lost possession to Pedri in front of Real's goal. Pedri found Fati, who pulled Real keeper Thibaut Courtois off his line but put his shot just wide of the far post.

Overall it was Barcelona -- energized by the debut of Polish striker Robert Lewandowski after his move from Bayern Munich -- who controlled the tempo in the first half against the reigning Champions League and La Liga title holders.

