

Health Ministry Announced on Saturday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to **142,861 With **55** More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours**

IRAN NEWS

TEDPIX, the Main Index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Gained 18,635 Points to 1.467m on Saturday As Over 6.84b Securities Worth 41.518 Trillion Rials (About \$148.2m) Were Traded at the TSE

VOL. XXVIII, No. 7563 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

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Iran Sets Condition on Accepting EU Proposals On JCPOA Revival

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The European Union's proposals to revive the 2015 nuclear deal "can be acceptable" if they give assurances that Iran's key demands on various issues are met, an informed Iranian diplomat says.

"Europe's proposals can be acceptable if they give confidence to Iran on various issues, including political claims related to safeguards [issues], sanctions and guarantees on the durability of an agreement," IRNA on Friday quoted an Iranian diplomat familiar with the process of negotiations between Tehran and the P4+1 group of countries on the revival of the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Four days of Vienna talks between representatives of Iran and the five remaining parties to the JCPOA to salvage the deal culminated on Monday with a modified text on the table.

While the European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell claimed the "final text" had been reached, Iran emphasized it has conveyed its "initial response and reservations" on the draft text.

The Iranian diplomat told IRNA that Tehran was reviewing the EU proposals to make sure that all its key demands are guaranteed.

The top Iranian diplomat added that any final agreement must meet the rights and interests of the Iranian nation and guarantee sustainable and effective removal of sanctions imposed on the country.

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Iraq Seeking to Increase Import of Gas From Iran

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Spokesman for Iraq's Ministry of Electricity said that the country was negotiating for more electricity to be imported from Iran.

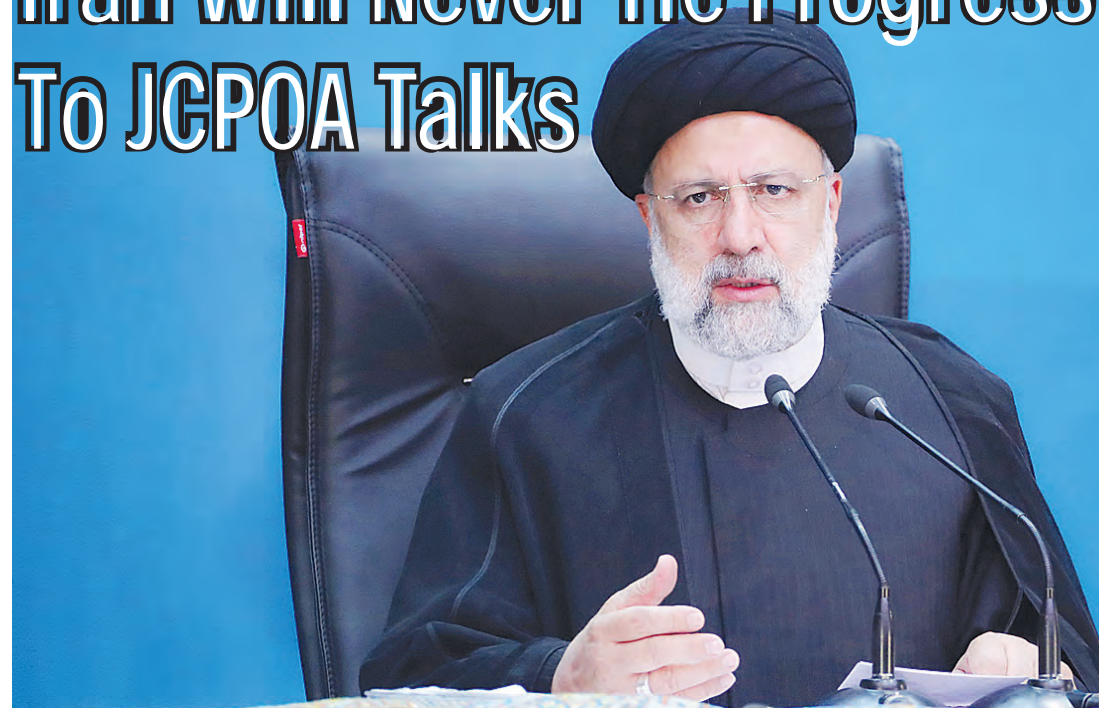
Ahmed al-Ebadi said in an interview with the Iraqi news outlet Middle East News on Saturday that Baghdad was negotiating with Iran to import more electricity.

Al-Ebadi said that the country's import of electricity from Iran increased to 45 million cubic meters after Iraq paid its due debts to Tehran.

However, he added, Iraq's current need was 50 to 55 million cubic meters and the ongoing negotiations with Iraq to meet the outstanding demand was aimed at improving Iraq's electricity supply.

Iraq recently settled 1.6 billion dollars of due debts to Iran for the gas imports.

Iran Will Never Tie Progress To JCPOA Talks



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi says the Islamic Republic will neither leave the negotiating table with the P4+1 group of countries on the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal nor tie its progress to the accord.

"We will not tie the country's progress and settlement of the problems to the JCPOA (the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action). The Iranian negotiating team will not leave the negotiating table, either," Raisi said in the southeastern Iranian province of Kerman.

He said Iran's progress and economy would never be kept back on account of other people's "smiles and scowls." The negotiating team, Raisi said, would continue its work based on "very strong" arguments.

"We will seriously address Iran's economic and cultural circumstances regardless of the path the [JCPOA revival] negotiations take and what will happen in the future."

Despite the enemies' wish, he said, Iran's affairs would be pursued with participation of the people and the elites and the country's future will be bright. "We will not let the enemies fulfill their objective, which is to paralyze production and destroy the Iranian economy and culture."

Negotiations have been held between Iran and the P4+1 group of countries - Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China - in the Austrian capital of Vienna since April last year to restore the JCPOA, which was ditched by former U.S. President Donald Trump in May 2018.

While offering his condolences for the days of mourning for Imam Hussein (AS), President Raisi said, "One of the important aspects of this great event is management implications of Imam Hussain (AS) in Ashura, which caused this event to remain alive forever and become the source of human transformations in the universe".

The President continued to consider Martyr Soleimani's school as an extension of the Ashura movement and said, "In the city and homeland of Martyr Soleimani, it is very important that the managers consider the different aspects of the school of this noble martyr, especially the manifestation of the belief of 'WE CAN', in their activities".

Raisi described the continuity of Martyr Soleimani's school as sincerity in action, striving to solve the problems of the people and philanthropy and said, "Today, the serious need of the country and the demand of the Supreme Leader is to solve people's problems, which cannot be realized except with a jihadist spirit and a revolutionary outlook".

The President stated that the existing poverty and deprivation is not what Kerman province deserves, and addressed the managers of the province, "The government is determined to change this situation and you have the duty to employ motivated and transformational personnel in this direction and pave the way to solve the problems".

Ayatollah Raisi said that the realization of the government's goals in Kerman province requires careful planning to use the capacities of this province, and criticising the fact that a large part of Kerman's mineral capacities remain unused, he said, "Why are 200 mines in Kerman province still inactive? The Supreme Council of Mines should immediately investigate the cause, if the fault lies with the user, the mine should be handed over to the competent people".

Confiscated Iranian Tanker to Return From Greece

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's Embassy in Greece says an Iranian oil tanker is to head back to the country soon, after a failed attempt by the United States to steal its cargo in line with Washington's sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

"The operation involving transfer of Iran's stolen oil [back] to the Lana vessel is underway in Greece's waters, and the vessel will soon head [back] to the country (Iran) with its complete cargo of oil," the diplomatic mission said in a tweet on Friday.

The Greek authorities confiscated the vessel back in April, handing over its cargo of crude to an American tanker.

The move took place as means of Athens' abiding by the sanctions that Washington returned against Tehran in 2018 after leaving a historic deal between the Islamic Republic and world countries.

Reacting to the development, the Iranian Foreign Ministry summoned the Greek chargé d'affaires in Tehran in May and conveyed the Islamic Republic's "strong protest" over the matter to the diplomat.

Later, the chargé d'affaires of Switzerland, which represents the US's interests in the Islamic Republic, was also summoned by the Foreign Ministry and notified about Tehran's protest at Washington's violation of free trade laws.

Last month, however, the Supreme Civil and Criminal Court of Greece upheld a verdict issued earlier by a court of appeal in favor of the return of the oil cargo to the Iranian vessel. Celebrating the development at the time, the Iranian Embassy called it "another fiasco for pirates!"

ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

Satan Doomed To Perish

On Friday afternoon, media outlets worldwide reported a shocking attack which was not at least shocking for those who sought justice to be carried out and the reports announced attack of a young man on Salman Rushdie, the author of a blasphemous anti-Islam book, and stabbing him.

Rushdie's condition was not immediately known, but video footage from the incident showed people rushing to his aid after he was attacked at the event in Chautauqua County, and according to reports he was taken to hospital to undergo medical treatment.

The man who is reportedly pro Martyr Qasem Soleimani fan rushed to the stage at the Chautauqua Institution and attacked Rushdie as he was being introduced during a ceremony, a witness told Reuters, adding the attacker was subsequently restrained.

Police said Rushdie suffered an apparent stab wound to his neck and was transported by helicopter to the hospital. So far officials have not pointed to the health condition of Rushdie but some media outlets have reported that Rushdie has undergone some surgeries due to the wounds.

Rushdie is the author of "The Satanic Verses", a blasphemous novel about Islam published in 1988 which sparked Muslims' outrage across the globe.

Following the publication of the book in 1988, the late Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic, issued a fatwa (religious decree) calling for Rushdie's death.

For years Rushdie has been living under tight security and protection and in panic because any moment he could be punished by Muslims whose feelings had been badly hurt because of Rushdie's insult to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Of course, since the publication of the Satanic Verses which angered Muslims worldwide, Rushdie has been living in panic because any moment he could face justice being carried out for his offence and it seems after 34 years it has happened.

Rushdie is famous for insulting either by his books or his offensive remarks under the name of freedom of expression and even when other media or writers tried to insult Islam, he used to jump to their support under the guise of defender of the freedom of expression.

We have not yet forgotten the insult of French weekly Charlie Hebdo through its publishing of satirical caricature which hurt feelings of Muslims worldwide.

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Iranian Airlines Will Stop Flying to Malaysia Due to Sanctions

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Flights by all Iranian airlines to Malaysia will completely stop as of Saturday, August 23, due to impact of sanctions on refueling Iranian planes.

Secretary of Iran's Aviation Companies Association Maghsoud Asadi-Samani told ILNA on Friday that the last Iranian flight to Kuala Lumpur will be operated by Mahan Airlines, which was the only airliner apart from flag carrier Iran Air with the capability of direct flights to Malaysia because of the long distance.

The Iranian company Mahan Air was sanctioned by the U.S. in 2008 for links to the Quds (Qods) Force of Iran's Revolutionary Guard.

Noting that Malaysian airports do not provide fuel to Iranian planes anymore, he said that fueling companies at Malaysian airports work with U.S. companies, and these companies have been informed that they will be subject to punitive measures if they keep fueling the Islamic Republic's planes.

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Tehran to Test Launch New Satellite Carrier

TEHRAN (IFP) - Iran's minister of information and communications technology says the country is, in two weeks, set to test launch a new carrier rocket capable of placing satellites weighing 100 kilograms into orbit.

Issa Zarepour said that Iran would develop carriers that can send heavier satellites — between 500 to 600 kilograms — into orbit by the end of the current administration's term in around three years.

He said the country had currently the capability to send satellites weighing below 50 kilograms into an orbit of 500 kilometers above the surface of the Earth.

Iran, Russia Agree to Continue Aerospace Cooperation

TEHRAN (MNA) - Minister of Information and Communications Technology Isa Zarepour said on Saturday that Iran and Russia had very good agreements to continue aerospace cooperation.

Zarepour said that Iran was able to define joint work alongside the world's number one or two space powers and had very good agreements with the Russian Space Agency to continue aerospace cooperation.

Stating that active diplomacy of the 13th government in Iran led to the conversion of the contract for the purchase of satellites into contracts for transferring technology, the ICT minister noted that according to the agreements, Iran and Russia will jointly build three more versions of the Khayyam satellite.

With follow-ups, Iran and Russia were able to launch the satellite successfully with the Soyuz launcher into orbit in the past days, he added.

He underscored that the agreement with Russia has been done and its memorandum of understanding has been inked in the past months and has been welcomed by the Russian side.



Iranian “Khayyam” satellite has been launched into orbit from the Moscow-operated Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, marking what Iran called the beginning of “strategic” aerospace cooperation between Tehran and Moscow.

Equipped with a Fregat upper stage, the Khayyam satellite was sent into orbit on Tuesday by Soyuz-2.1b rocket, from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in neighboring Kazakhstan.

First telemetry data from the Khayyam satellite are reportedly received at the Iranian Space Agency's (ISA) Mahdasht space base.

According to the reports, the satellite will be placed in an orbit of 500 kilometers above the Earth's surface. It will send high-resolution images four times a day. Imagery from Khayyam will be used to monitor Iran's borders and improve the country's capabilities in management and planning in the fields of agriculture, natural resources, environment, mining, and natural disasters.

Official Questions Claims on Bolton Assassination, Rushdie Attack

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Adviser of Iran negotiating team in Vienna talks reacted to news on attack against Salaman Rushdi, and assassination attempt against John Bolton, just before a probable nuclear agreement, and said they are odd news.

“I won't be shedding tears for a writer who spouts endless hatred & contempt for Muslims & Islam. A pawn of empire who poses as a Postcolonial novelist,” Marandi tweeted.

“But, isn't it odd that as we near a potential nuclear deal, the US makes claims about a hit on Bolton... and then this happens?” he added.

According to the Associated Press, Salman Rushdie has been attacked onstage at an event in New York State.

Salman Rushdie, the apostate author of the Book of Satanic Verses, was attacked while he was in New York.

An Associated Press reporter witnessed a man storm the stage at the Chautauqua Institution and begin punching or stabbing Rushdie as he was being introduced.

The author was taken or fell to the floor, and the man was detained.

Rushdie is the author of “The Satanic Verses”, a blasphemous novel about Islam that was published in 1988.

The book sparked Muslims' outrage, which culminated in a fatwa by Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic, calling for Rushdie's death.

Supervising Power Consumption to Be Intensified in Tehran

TEHRAN (MNA) - Power Distribution Company of Tehran announced that supervising the electricity consumption in the administrative buildings and bank branches of the city is intensified as of Saturday.

According to the previous announcement and in order to control the expenses of the administrative subscribers, in accordance with the approval of the cabinet, from today, Saturday, the status of electricity consumption of the capital's administrative buildings and branches of banks will be monitored in a special way, the company said in a statement.

After the monitoring of the banks, the high-consuming banks that have not reduced their consumption by at

least 30 percent compared to the same period of the previous year, will be dealt with in accordance with the legal authority, the statement said.

Over the past decade, constant temperature rising and the significant decrease in rainfalls across Iran have put the country in a hard situation regarding electricity supply during peak consumption periods.

Iran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) has previously announced that the company is implementing a variety of programs for managing the situation and preventing blackouts in the country.

Gov't to Increase Fiber Optic Subscribers to 20m

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The administration of President Ebrahim Raisi is going to develop fiber optic technology to cover millions of households and businesses, an Iranian minister said.

Minister of Information and Communications Technology Eisa Zarepour told IRNA on Saturday that the development of fiber optic technology in Iran is being pursued by the administration seriously.

Nearly one year after the tenure of the 13th administration in Tehran started, the minister said that some 20 million Iranian households and businesses will be provided with fiber optic coverage by the end of the administration.

CBI Plans to Introduce Digital Rial

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Selling or buying cryptocurrencies in Iran is illegal, Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Ali Salehabadi said, adding that mining digital currencies and using them for import is legal.

He noted that the sale and purchase of cryptocurrencies or their use for investment is prohibited in Iran. Referring to the regulations on cryptocurrencies adopted by the administration two years ago, the head of the CBI noted that, with official permission, it is allowed to mine digital currencies for import.

He added that in cooperation with the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade, rules and regulations have been prepared to allow businesses to pay for imports in cryptocurrencies. He also revealed plans for the Iranian Central Bank to introduce crypto-rial or digital rial.

Earlier, the deputy minister of commerce said that Iran had registered the first import order using cryptocurrency as a payment method. According to Alireza Peymanpak, head of the Iranian Trade Facilitation Organization (OPT), the value of the official import order was about \$10 million.

Iran Ready to Export Covid Vaccine

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's health minister says the Islamic Republic is ready to export Covid vaccine to foreign countries.

Bahram Einollahi added that Iran is facing no Coronavirus vaccine shortages. Einollahi added that Iran is now capable of expanding its overall exports given a boost in its pharmaceutical products and medical equipment.

Einollahi then pointed to sanctions on Iran, saying the bans imposed by the country's enemies have failed in preventing Iran's economic progress. The health minister added that before Iran's Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iranians had to go abroad to seek treatment for ordinary diseases but now the nation has shown during the Covid pandemic that it performed way better than developed countries. Iran is now producing several types of Covid vaccines which have proved to be effective in inoculating people against the viral disease. Iranian experts began efforts to produce the jabs soon after the pandemic reached Iran and succeeded in doing so concurrently with developed countries like the US and Britain.

Tehran Ready to Increase Student Exchange With Moscow



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Organization of Student Affairs affiliated with the Ministry of Education of Iran has expressed readiness to expand the exchange of students with Russia.

Deputy Head of the scholarship and foreign students' affairs department of the Organization of Student Affairs Mohammad Javad Salmanpour said that the language of science is definitely one of the common languages, which helps develop cooperation between Moscow and Tehran, so the Islamic Republic would welcome Russian students to Iranian universities.

Salmanpour and his colleagues in the Student Affairs Organization – Mohammad Mohammadi Masoudi and Jafar Razaghi – held talks with Dmitry Kalinichenko, the representative of the Russian cooperation organization in Iran, and his companions in Tehran on Saturday morning.

The deputy head of the scholarship and foreign students' affairs department noted that the organization is keen on exchanging students with Russia, expressing hope that the meeting would end up in expansion of cooperation in this respect.

Kalinichenko, for his part, thanked the Student Affairs Organization, adding that there are 300 Iranian students with scholarships in Russia and that the number can increase in the future.

The Russian official went on to say that the Russian Cooperation Organization in Iran plans to select Iranian students to get scholarships at Russia's universities as well as to hold Olympiads and seminars.

He also said that Moscow is interested in exchanging students with Tehran, expressing readiness for teaching the Persian Language in Russia and Russian Language in Iran.

Jafar Razaghi, the director general of international students' affairs of the Student Affairs Organization, said that Iran hosts students from about 117 countries.

According to the official, given the fact that Russia and Iran enjoy amicable ties, it is necessary to expand scientific and student exchanges.

Mohammad Mohammadi Masoudi, the director general of scholarship of the Student Affairs Organization, called for creating a joint scholarship between Russian and Iranian universities.

Iran, Taliban Weigh Plans for War on Daesh

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The Iranian special envoy for Afghanistan hailed his recent constructive meetings with the Taliban officials, saying the two sides have stressed the need for close interaction in the fight against Daesh (ISIL or ISIS) terrorists.

In a post on his Twitter account, Hassan Kazemi Qomi said he has held constructive negotiations with acting first deputy prime minister of Taliban Abdul Ghani Baradar and acting minister of foreign affairs, Amir Khan Muttaqi, in Kabul.

“In these meetings, the two sides stressed the need for the promotion of positive interaction and expansion of relations in various fields, particularly the economic field, and called for the enhancement of security cooperation in the fight against Daesh (ISIS) and outlaws on both sides of the common border,” the Iranian envoy said.

He also noted that Iran and the Taliban emphasized the need for vigilance and caution in countering the common enemies, who seek to foment friction between the great Iranian and Afghan nations.

Afghanistan has been in turmoil since the Taliban, who had previously ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, took power again in August 2021 amid a chaotic US troop withdrawal from the war-torn country.

Since then, the country has been the scene of several terrorist attacks, some of which have been claimed by the Daesh terrorist group.

Iran Reports Drop in Number of “Red” Cities on Covid Map

TEHRAN (IFP) - The Iranian Health Ministry revises down the number of cities classified as ‘red’ on the country's color-coded map tracking Covid-19 from 130 to 78, signaling a slowdown in the spread of the coronavirus across Iran.

According to the latest updates to the map, released on Friday, there are now 184 cities categorized as ‘orange,’ where there are moderate risks of infection, while 174 cities are ‘yellow’ or ‘low risk.’

Twelve cities are also ‘blue,’ where the situation is normal.

Earlier, the spokesman for Iran's national task-force for fighting the coronavirus said authorities expect the upward trend in infections with coronavirus to subside from next week.

The country is said to be reaching the peak of the seventh wave of the spread, driven by the BA.4 and BA.5 sub-variants of the Omicron strain.

Official figures show more than 142,800 people have died of Covid-19 since its outbreak in Iran in early 2020. Unofficial say the number is higher.

Iran to Compete at 8th International Army Games 2022

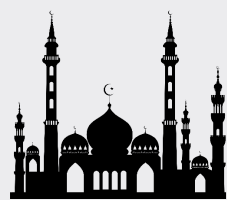
TEHRAN (IP) - Four military teams representing the Iranian Army, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), and the Iranian Police will join more than 260 teams from 35 countries at the eighth International Army Games 2022, kicking off on Saturday, August 13 in Russia.

The Iranian teams that have gone to Moscow for the International Army Games 2022 include navy commandos from the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), a tank biathlon unit from the Army, Law Enforcement Police, and a team from the IRGC competing in the army of culture contest.

The 8th International Army Games (IAG-2022) will be held at the military training grounds in twelve countries: Russia, Azerbaijan, Algeria, Armenia, Belarus, Venezuela, Vietnam, Iran, Kazakhstan, China, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan. The IAG is a series of field combat training competitions for military personnel from Russia and dozens of other countries.

The Russian Defense Ministry is the Games' organizer. During the Army Games, soldiers and officers representing different arms and services demonstrate their skills and abilities.

Since 2013, it has been held annually at the Alabino training ground near Moscow. Twenty-one countries will take part in the competition this time: Russia, Abkhazia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Venezuela, Vietnam, Zimbabwe, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Laos, Mali, Mongolia, Myanmar, Syria, Sudan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and South Ossetia. The two newcomers are Bolivia and Rwanda.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:09
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:14
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:51
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:23

62. Only those are believers, who believe in Allah and His Messenger. when they are with him on a matter requiring collective action, they do not depart until they have asked for his leave; those who ask for thy leave are those who believe in Allah and His Messenger. so when they ask for thy leave, for some business of theirs, give leave to those of them whom thou wilt, and ask Allah for their forgiveness: for Allah is Oft- Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Surah 24. Light (62)

Iran Foreign Trade Soars 37.8%

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – A high-ranking official in Iran Finance Ministry says Iran's foreign trade increased 37.8% last year comparing to the preceding year, adding that the monetary base growth at the beginning of the current government was 42.1% while it has fallen to 27.8% in June 2022.

Speaking on the economic performance and monetary statistics and liquidity growth during the current government in its first year in office, Ebrahim Siami said that the liquidity growth rate in June of this year reached 37.8% while the figure was 42.8% when the current government began its work in last October and it shows downward trend.

He added that monetary base is one of the effective factors in liquidity growth, emphasizing that in the early days of current government (in August 2021), the monetary base growth was 42.1% while the growth slowed down to 27.8% in this June. It means one of the policies of the current government was to control monetary base which is main reason behind liquidity increase in recent years.

Siami went on to say that according to the Customs Administration statistics, the value of non-oil exports of Iran grew last year by 39.6% in terms of value and 8.6% in terms of weight which shows a considerable growth comparing to the preceding year.

He also said that inflation rate also has slowed down during the current government because of reforming the preferential forex policy by the government, adding that after reforming the prices and implementing the project for publicizing the subsidies, prices rose but it was not predominantly for the sake of reforming the official forex rate of 4200 tomans but some of the price hike was because of the anticipated inflation in the society due to implementation of this policy.

He added that a review of inflation growth rate according to the Statistical Center of Iran



shows the annual inflation rate was 46% by September 2021 and it declined to 38.7% in April 2022 before implementation of preferential forex policy as the figure rose to 40.5% after it. He admitted that the current condition is not satisfactory for national economy and all should work together to reduce this inflation rate as much as possible.

Siami reiterated that the government has slowed down the pace of inflation rate after a rise in it in wake of implementing the preferential forex rate.

He then stressed that the foreign trade volume exceeded \$101b last year while the figure was \$73.7% in the preceding year as the figure shows 37.8% trade volume growth.

Touching upon fall in production and economic growth, he said according to the Central Bank report, the GDP improved in the second half of comparing the first half of last year, adding that the figure was 3.3% in first half and rose to 4.4% in the second half and GDP was 2.4% excluding oil revenues.

On the unemployment rate, Siami said that the rate has declined in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year and it is because of more investments and return of the production units to the pre-pandemic era.

He also pointed to the growth of foreign transit last year, adding that the transit was around 10m tons before the pandemic while it soared to 11.2m tons last year. He reiterated that 39% growth in foreign transit is the outcome of economic diplomacy with the regional states which has increased considerably comparing to the pre-pandemic era.

Weekly Trade on IME Exceeds 1.9m Tons

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) witnessed trade of 1,974,403 tons of commodities with a total trading value of almost \$377m on its physical market.



According to a report by the IME's International Affairs and PR, the exchange saw on its metals and minerals trading floor trade of 1,701,000 tons of commodities valued at more than \$237m.

On this floor the IME sold 762,102 tons of cement, 583,000 tons of iron ore, 236,375 tons of steel, 55,000 tons of sponge iron, 62,505 tons of zinc, 5,475 tons of aluminum, 700 tons of copper, 30 tons of precious metals concentrate and 50 kg of gold bars.

Furthermore, the IME witnessed on both domestic and export rings of its oil and petrochemical trading floor 264,614 tons of commodities worth more than \$136m.

Commodities traded on this floor included 53,988 tons of polymeric products, 108,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 18,000 tons of lube cut, 21,011 tons of chemicals, 500 tons of sulfur, 3,629 tons of base oil, 235 tons of insulation and 57,710 tons of bitumen.

The IME also traded within the same week 7,806 tons of commodities on its side market.

Pipe Laying Operation of 1st SP Phase 11 Platform Accomplished



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The subsea pipe laying operation of the gas transmission line from the first platform of South Pars phase 11 in the Persian Gulf to the onshore refinery has been completed, Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC) which is in charge of developing the field announced.

As reported by the POGC portal, the pipe laying operation of the gas transmission line from Platform 11B which started on July 28 was completed on Friday, August 12.

This operation included installing a 32-inch subsea pipeline for transmitting sour gas and a 4.5-inch mono-ethylene glycol injection pipeline both with an approximate length of 15 kilometers. The pipelines are connected to the offshore pipeline of platform 12C from South Pars phase 12 to transport sour gas from platform 11B to the mentioned phase's refinery on land.

The pipeline is constructed with the aim of transferring 28 million cubic meters of gas produced at South Pars platform 11B to the onshore phase 12 refinery in Pars 2 Kangan region.

When fully developed, the South Pars phase 11 project will have a production capacity of two billion cubic feet per day or 370,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day. The produced gas will be fed into Iran's gas network.

Iran had previously awarded the development of the phase 11 project to a consortium comprised of France's Total, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), and Petropars which is a subsidiary of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), however Total and CNPCI pulled out of the project in 2019 due to the U.S. sanctions.

Currently, Petropars is developing the phase 11 project after its partners left the contract.

The drilling operation for the first well of mentioned phase was officially started in December 2020. In the early production stage, the output of this phase will reach 500 million cubic feet (equivalent to 14 million cubic meters) per day.

South Pars is the world's largest gas field, covering an area of 3,700 square kilometers of Iran's territorial waters.

The giant field is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate.

The field is divided into 24 standard phases.

Gov't Promise on Construction House Possible Through Cooperatives



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – First Vice-President Mohammad Mokhber believes government's promise to construct houses is possible with assistance of the cooperative sector.

Addressing the opening of the 22nd Int'l Exhibition of Building and Construction Industry in Tehran on Friday, Mokhber said that if different parts of the cooperative sector help, the government can build houses more than what it has promised and the task of the government is to support and there is no other way.

He added that if one thinks the government can by itself produce one million houses, it is impossible but is possible through the public cooperation. He went on to say that the government has three priorities which are people's livelihood, health and housing which have been put on its agenda and good progresses have been made in the field of livelihood and prices as well as inflation in last year. He noted that if the cooperative sector helps, the government can build more than one million houses which will be more than what it has promised.

Then Head of Iran Chamber of Cooperatives Mr. Bahman Abdollahi addressing the opening ceremony pointed to the colorful presence of the knowledge-based companies in this exhibition and added that the link between research sector and construction industry has been created in this exhibition.

He also noted that this year's exhibition is its 22nd edition and is being held at Tehran's international permanent fairground and Iran Chamber of Cooperatives also held an exhibition on Iran Construction Industry in Algeria two years ago. He noted that this year's exhibition is the biggest exhibition event in the country that over 900 Iranian and foreign companies have attended it. He said that companies from Italy, France, Turkey, China and the UAE are among the participants in this event.

Abdollahi said that the exhibition will put on display the latest methods and equipment of construction industry and it is a good opportunity for knowing the domestic and international construction materials markets to study demands for those products. He stated that producers of construction materials with presenting their products and new ideas can grow in the domestic and foreign markets.

The 22nd Int'l Exhibition of Building and Construction Industry will be held from 12 to 15 August at Tehran's International Permanent Exhibitions.

Exhibit of Iranian Products to Be Held in Russia

TEHRAN (MNA) - An exclusive exhibition of Iranian products will be held in the Russian capital Moscow during September 7-10, concurrent with the inauguration of Iran's Trade Center in that country.

This exhibition will be held with the aim of boosting Iran's non-oil exports, with the presence of Iranian companies, as entrepreneurs and market experts from the member countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) are also invited.

Iran and Russia have been taking serious steps for boosting their mutual trade over the past few years. In late January, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said that the Islamic Republic and Russia have reached an agreement to boost the trade between the two countries up to \$10 billion.

"We agreed to remove trade barriers and boost the economic exchanges between the two countries. Currently, the level of mutual trade is not acceptable, so the two countries agreed to increase trade to \$10 billion a year," Raisi said on January 21, upon arrival to Tehran after a two-day visit to Moscow.

As major players in the world and West Asia's political and economic scene, Iran and Russia

have been expanding political and economic ties for many years, however, the relations between the two countries have entered a whole new level over the past few months.

The imposition of sanctions on both countries has been a major factor in bringing the two sides closer together, making them a strong alliance against U.S. pressures. Over the past few months, senior officials from the two sides have been meeting and visiting each other to consolidate bilateral cooperation in various fields, including energy, oil, gas, and transit, as well as diplomatic and political relations.

According to Kambiz Mir-Karimi, the deputy head of the Iran-Russia Joint Chamber of Commerce, the two sides have been implementing a preferential agreement that is applied to several commodity items since 2018, however, turning this preferential agreement into a free trade agreement would mean that 80 percent of the items exchanged between the two countries will be subject to free trade and will have zero tariffs.

"Negotiations on this issue are progressing rapidly, as Iran is also in talks with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) to reach a free trade agreement as well," he said.

Officials of PBO Visit HOSCO



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Deputy Head of Plan and Budget Organization on land use planning Mr. Alireza Rahmatnia as well as the caretaker of the organization in Hormozgan Province Mr. Ebrahim Shakerizadeh, Head of Projects and Plans Office of Trade, Mine and Industry Ministry Ms. Zeinab Rezaee as well as some other officials of the province paid a visit to Hormozgan Steel Company (HOSCO) and got acquainted with activities of the company, its achievements and problems.

According to reports, during the visit, Deputy Head of HOSCO on Technology and Development Mr. Alireza Kazemi pointed to the 1.5m-ton capacity of slab production in this company and said that electricity shortage is one of the most important challenges ahead of national steel industry. He then pointed to the condition of HOSCO especially its developmental projects and said that in case the development project of hot rolling of the company is carried out, the company will see rise in creation of more value added comparing to the intermediate products and by the way many jobs will be created in accordance with the created capacity.

He went on to say that the developmental projects in accordance with increasing the production capacity were kicked and some of the projects have been handed over to the contractors and some other are in the phase of choosing the contractors.

UN Rights Chief to Visit Rohingya Camps in Bangladesh

GENEVA (Dispatches) - Michelle Bachelet is to make the first visit by a UN rights chief to Bangladesh next week, including to the sprawling refugee camps home to nearly a million Rohingyas.

Bachelet's office announced Friday that the trip from Sunday to Wednesday was at the Dhaka government's invitation.

It will be one of the former Chilean president's final acts as the United Nations high commissioner for human rights before her four-year term expires at the end of the month.



Mexican Border City Violence Leaves 11 Dead

CIUDAD JUAREZ (Dispatches) - A wave of violence in a Mexican city on the border with the United States left 11 people dead, including a radio presenter, and businesses torched, authorities said.

In the first incident in Ciudad Juarez, two prison inmates were shot dead and 20 injured in a riot involving two rival gangs, Deputy Security Minister Ricardo Mejia told reporters.

Local media said both groups were linked to the Sinaloa cartel, whose former leader, Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, is currently serving a life sentence in the United States.

Later on, "innocent civilians were attacked as a kind of retaliation" by one of the gangs, President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said.



Author Salman Rushdie Attacked On Stage in New York State



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - British author Salman Rushdie, whose writings made him the target of Iranian death threats that forced him into hiding, was attacked on stage Friday in western New York state.

Video footage posted on social media showed people rushing to his aid after he was attacked at the event in Chautauqua County, with police confirming a stabbing while declining to immediately identify the victim.

"A most horrible event just happened at chautauquainstitution - Salman Rushdie was attacked on stage at chq2022. The amphitheater is evacuated," one witness said on social media.

Chautauqua County Sheriff's office said "we can confirm there was a stabbing," without giving further details. Rushdie's condition was not immediately known.

The author, now 75, was propelled into the spotlight with his second novel "Midnight's Children" in 1981, which won international praise and Britain's prestigious Booker Prize for its portrayal of post-independence India.

But his 1988 book "The Satanic Verses" brought attention beyond his imagination when it sparked a fatwa, or religious decree, calling for his death by Iranian revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (R).

The novel was considered by some Muslims as disrespectful of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH).

Rushdie, who was born in India to non-practicing Muslims and himself is an atheist, was forced to go underground as a bounty was put on his head -- which remains today.

He was granted police protection by the government in Britain, where he was at school and where he made his home, following the murder or attempted murder of his translators and publishers.

He spent nearly a decade in hiding, moving houses repeatedly and being unable to tell his children where he lived.

Rushdie only began to emerge from his life on the run in the late 1990s after Iran in 1998 said it would not support his assassination.

Now living in New York, he is an advocate of freedom of speech, notably launching a strong defense of French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo after its staff were gunned down by Islamists in Paris in 2015.

The magazine had published drawings of Mohammed that drew furious reactions from Muslims worldwide.

Threats and boycotts continue against literary events that Rushdie attends, and his knighthood in 2007 sparked protests in Iran and Pakistan, where a government minister said the honour justified suicide bombings.

The fatwa failed to stifle Rushdie's writing, however, and inspired his memoir "Joseph Anton", named after his alias while in hiding and written in the third person.

"Midnight's Children", which runs to more than 600 pages, has been adapted for the stage and silver screen, and his books have been translated into more than 40 languages.

Kenyan Media Slow Tally of Votes In Tight Presidential Race

NAIROBI (Dispatches) - Without providing any proof, the secretary-general of Kenya's governing party has said there was election rigging, fuelling public anxiety on Friday as media outlets significantly slowed down their unofficial tallies from Tuesday's tight vote.

Only the electoral commission is authorized to declare a winner, but the tallies done by media were seen as a bulwark against the kind of rigging allegations that have previously sparked violence.

While Kenya is East Africa's richest and most stable nation it also has a history of violent elections disputes. More than 1,200 people were killed after the 2007 elections and more than 100 after the 2017 elections.

The race is to succeed President Uhuru Kenyatta, who must step down after serving the maximum two five-year terms. Leading contenders are former political prisoner and veteran opposition leader Raila Odinga and Deputy President William Ruto. Kenyatta has fallen out with Ruto and endorsed Odinga.

Media tallies, which had nearly stopped by Friday morning, showed Odinga and Ruto neck and neck, just under the 50% mark they needed to win. Less than a percent was divided between two other marginal candidates.

If no candidate wins more than 50% plus one vote, the two frontrunners will have a run-off. On Friday the election commission chairman Wafula Chebukati blamed party agents for the slow pace of the official count, which has not yet topped 1.5% of the vote.

"Agents in this exercise cannot proceed in the manner which we are proceeding, as if we are doing a forensic audit," he told a news briefing at the tallying center.

"We are not moving as fast as we should. This exercise needs to be concluded as soon as possible."

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Rivals Rally in Politically Deadlocked Iraq

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Supporters of Iraq's powerful Shiite Muslim cleric Moqtada Sadr rallied at Friday prayers, as their opponents gathered for a rival demonstration in the politically-divided country.

The opposing demonstrations were the latest turn in a standoff which has so far remained peaceful in the war-scarred country.

Thousands of supporters of Sadr, who once led a militia against American and Iraqi government forces, gathered for the Muslim weekly prayers near parliament inside the normally secure Green Zone.

A week earlier, Sadr had called out tens of thousands of his followers for prayers in the area, home to government and diplomatic buildings.

For nearly two weeks, his supporters have since held daily sit-ins, first inside the legislature, and later on its grounds.

Their protest, triggered by a rival bloc's pick for prime minister, reflects months of failed negotiations by Iraq's political forces to form a new government after October elections.

Outside parliament Umm Hussein, a Sadr supporter in her 50s, said she was there to protest "the regime that for 20 years has done nothing for the people, except plunder and steal public money".

"Ninety percent of the population live in poverty, in sickness, in hunger," she complained, demanding "new faces" at the helm who would "serve the people".

On Wednesday, Sadr demanded the judiciary dissolve parliament by the end of next week, as part of his call for new elections.

His rivals in the Coordination Framework started a counter-demonstration later Friday.

Several thousand protesters waving the national flag gathered on a road leading towards the Green Zone, an AFP correspondent reported.

Loudspeakers played the national anthem.

A statement from the alliance demanded the "formation of a new government" that would provide public services and solutions to power outages and water shortages.

"We're here to protect the state and the constitution," said Abu Mehdi, a protest organiser from the city of Hilla, south of the capital.

"Give the Coordination Framework the chance to form a government."

Sadr's supporters also rallied Friday in the southern cities of Amarah, Kut and Nasiriyah. Their rivals demonstrated in the main northern city of Mosul, AFP correspondents reported.



Nuclear Accidents Can Happen in Europe Too



MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russian ex-President Dmitry Medvedev has issued a veiled threat to Ukraine's Western allies who have accused Russia of creating the risk of a nuclear catastrophe by stationing forces around the Ukrainian Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant.

Ukraine has accused Russia of firing at Ukrainian towns from the site in the knowledge that Ukrainian forces could not risk returning fire. It says Russia has shelled the area itself while blaming Ukraine. Russia says it is Ukraine that has attacked the plant.

"They [Kyiv and its allies] say it's Russia. That's obviously 100 percent nonsense, even for the stupid Russophobic public," Medvedev, now the deputy chairman of Russia's Security Council, wrote on his instant messenger Telegram channel on Friday.

"They say it happens purely by chance, like 'We didn't mean to'," he added. "What can I say? Let's not forget that the European Union also has nuclear power plants. And accidents can happen there, too."

The UN nuclear chief warned late Thursday that "very alarming" military activity at the nuclear plant could lead to dangerous consequences.

International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Grossi urged Russia and Ukraine, which blame each other for the attacks at the plant, to immediately allow nuclear experts to assess the damage and evaluate safety and security at the sprawling nuclear complex where the situation "has been deteriorating very rapidly".

He pointed to shelling and several explosions at Zaporizhzhia last Friday that forced the shutdown of the electrical power transformer and two backup transformers, forcing the shutdown of one nuclear reactor.

Kyiv and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres have called for the area to be demilitarised, and the Group of Seven key economies have urged Russia to return it to Ukraine. But senior Russian legislator Leonid Slutsky, the chair of the lower house's Foreign Affairs Committee, said the idea of returning the plant to the control of Ukrainians was a "mockery from the point of view of ensuring safety".

What We Know of Symptoms and Spread of Monkeypox

PARIS (Dispatches) - With monkeypox surging across the world, experts are gathering more evidence on how people catch it and its typical symptoms.

Several months into the epidemic, it is clear the wave of infections is linked above all to sexual intercourse between men.

Nearly 28,000 cases have been confirmed worldwide in the last three months and the first deaths are starting to be recorded.

Here is a summary of what we know:

Monkeypox has been around in a dozen African countries for decades, but in contrast to previous outbreaks on the continent, the virus is now predominantly spread through sexual activity.

Some 99 per cent of US cases have so far been among men who have sex with men (MSM).

In Africa, the virus notably affects children.

In the last three weeks studies printed in leading medical publications — British Medical Journal (BMJ), The Lancet and New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) — painted a clinical picture of the current spike in infections, even if it is still early days and the results are based on only a few hundred cases.

In each study, the MSM community accounts for nearly all cases.

The male sex link was no surprise as it appeared from the first recorded observations and has been targeted by health authorities.

This leads to the sensitive question of whether the virus is transmitted through sexual activity.

The latest clinical reports leave little doubt.

“Our study strengthens the evidence for skin-to-skin contact during sex as the dominant mechanism of transmission of monkeypox, with important implications for disease control,” said The Lancet with data from several Spanish hospitals.

The viral charge had been found to be much higher in patients’ skin lesions than in their breathing equipment.

This observation seems to undermine the idea pushed by some researchers that airborne transmission was also playing a major role in the spread of cases.

At the same time monkeypox is not thought to be caught via sperm, and although that has not been totally ruled out, current research is far from proving it.

All three studies agreed on the main symptoms.

“The characteristics of the cohort we describe differ from those of populations affected in previous outbreaks in endemic regions,” the BMJ noted in the study of UK cases.

The two key elements are fever, often with muscular aches, and skin lesions which scab over.

But the details vary, probably because of the type of transmission, with recent cases heavily linked to sexual activity.

For all three studies, the lesions often break out in the anus, penis and mouth. One complication that has previously been rarely observed has been inflammation of the rectum or a swelling on the penis.

The Lancet found complications occurred in 40 percent of cases and the NEJM in some 20 per cent.

But there was also some good news about the gravity of the illness.

“Clinical outcomes in this case series were reassuring. Most cases were mild and self-limited, and there were no deaths,” the NEJM said.

“Although 13 per cent of the persons were admitted to a hospital, no serious complications were reported in the majority of those admitted.”



Low Rhine Deepens Germany's Energy Crisis

DUISBURG (Dispatches) - A hot, dry July made worse by climate change has raised the risk that the German economy could run aground as sinking Rhine waters make shipping along the river harder.

The prospect of severe, longer-term limits to traffic spells a new headache for the industries lined up on the river’s banks and threatens to further strain Germany’s efforts to wean itself off Russian energy imports as coal counts among key cargo moved on the waterway.

Roberto Spranzi, boss of DTG, a shipping cooperative, says the volumes that his fleet can carry are already limited by the unusually low water levels.

“At the moment we have a capacity where, we have to use three or four vessels where we would normally need one,” Spranzi tells AFP.

Pointing at the worrying ebb at the entrance to the inland port of Duisburg in western Germany, Spranzi notes that “currently it’s at 1.70 metres (5.6 feet). In theory, the normal water level is over two meters”.

Further up the river in Kaub, a noted bottleneck for shipping where the Rhine runs narrow and shallow, the reference level is forecast to go below 40 centimetres by the end of the week and squeeze traffic further.

“We supply factories on the Rhine with their raw materials. When that’s not possible any more -- or less often -- that’s a threat to German industry, too,” Spranzi says.

Around four percent of freight in Germany is carried via its waterways, including the Rhine, which winds its way from Switzerland, along the border with France, through Germany’s industrial heartland and the Netherlands to the sea.

As Berlin turns to mothballed coal power capacity to plug the gap after Russia curtailed its energy deliveries, the Rhine has taken on added significance as a key artery for coal transport.

But the sinking water level has already led energy providers to warn they may have to limit output.

Uniper has said the low level of the Rhine may lead to the “irregular operation” of two of its coal plants into September.

EnBW, which runs sites in the southwestern region of Baden-Wurtemberg, has warned that deliveries of the fuel could be restricted.

The dwindling waters have seen “transport costs per tonne rise”, EnBW said in a statement, adding that it had preemptively built stocks of coal earlier in the year.

Alternative routes were available -- either by road or rail -- but capacity was “tight”, EnBW said.

The Rhine freight restrictions have added to the supply chain disruption seen by industry and increased the risk of scarcity.

Across southern Germany, a shortage of fuel at the pump has been traced back to the dry weather, among other factors.

“Low water levels on the Rhine mean that in this area very important transportation of oil products, such as petrol, diesel or heating oil can’t operate as normal,” says Alexander von Gersdorff, spokesman for the German energy and fuel industry lobby.

A 2018 drought, which saw the Rhine’s reference depth at Kaub fall as low as 25 centimeters in October, shaved 0.2 percent off German GDP that year, according to Deutsche Bank Research.

“The low levels have come much earlier this time,” Deutsche Bank Research economist Marc Schattenberg tells AFP. “If the problems we are now observing last longer (than in 2018), the loss of economic value becomes all the more serious.”



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Iraq Extends Lebanon Fuel Deal for One Year

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Iraq's government has agreed to continue supplying Lebanon's electricity company with heavy fuel oil for another year, Lebanon's caretaker prime minister said, alleviating pressure on Lebanon's struggling power grid. Najib Mikati said he had made the request to Iraq's Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi, who agreed to extend the same terms of the agreement signed last year. In July 2021, Iraq offered the cash-strapped Lebanese government 1 million tons of heavy fuel oil a year in exchange for services including health care for Iraqi citizens. The deal was meant to alleviate Lebanon's acute power shortage, which last summer reached crisis levels when the government was unable to subsidize fuel imports.



Indian Companies Swapping Dollar for Asian Currencies to Buy Russian Coal

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - Indian companies are using Asian currencies more often to pay for Russian coal imports, according to customs documents and industry sources, avoiding the U.S. dollar and cutting the risk of breaching Western sanctions against Moscow. Reuters previously reported on a large Indian coal deal involving the Chinese yuan, but the customs data underline how non-dollar settlements are becoming commonplace.

India has aggressively stepped up purchases of Russian oil and coal since the war in Ukraine began, helping to cushion Moscow from the effects of sanctions and allowing New Delhi to secure raw materials at discounts compared to supplies from other countries.

Russia became India's third-largest coal supplier in July, with imports rising by over a fifth compared with June to a record 2.06 million tons.

In June, Indian buyers paid for at least 742,000 tons of Russian coal using currencies other than the U.S. dollar, according to a summary of deals compiled by a trade source based in India using customs documents and shared with Reuters, equal to 44 per cent of the 1.7 million of tons of Russian imports that month.

Indian steelmakers and cement manufacturers have bought Russian coal using the United Arab Emirates dirham, Hong Kong dollar, yuan and euro in recent weeks, according to customs documents separately reviewed by Reuters.

The yuan accounted for 31 per cent of the non-US dollar payments for Russian coal in June and the Hong Kong dollar for 28 per cent. The euro made up under a quarter and the Emirati dirham around one-sixth, the data from the trade source showed.

India's Ministry of Finance, which administers the customs board, did not respond to emails seeking comment confirming the documents. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry declined to comment.

The Reserve Bank of India also did not respond to requests for comment.

The RBI has approved payments for commodities in the Indian rupee, a move it expects to boost bilateral trade with Russia in its own currency.

The U.S. dollar has been the dominant currency for Indian commodity imports, traders said, and the greenback makes up most of the country's foreign exchange reserves.

For deals in a currency other than the dollar, lenders would potentially have to send dollars to bank branches in the country of the original currency, or banks they have tie-ups with, in exchange for that currency to settle the trade.

Two traders based in India that purchase coal for domestic customers and a trader based in Europe that deals with Russian coal said they expected the share of non-dollar transactions for Russian coal to increase as banks and other parties explore ways of cushioning themselves against any further tightening of sanctions.

China's Consumer Inflation Pushes Higher

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China's consumer inflation rose in July to a two-year high, official data showed, with a surge in pork prices pushing up the cost of food.

Compared with other countries, consumer costs in the world's second-biggest economy have not skyrocketed, largely spared the impact of a global surge in food prices after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. China's consumer price index (CPI), a key gauge of retail inflation, grew less than expected at 2.7 per cent from a year ago in July, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) data showed.

CPI rose slightly on-year "due to an increase in prices of pork, fresh vegetables and other food, as well as seasonal factors", NBS senior statistician Dong Lijuan said in a statement.

Food prices were up 6.3 per cent on-year, with pork spiking 20.2 per cent in July, she added.

Prices of the staple meat rose in part because of the reluctance of some farmers to sell — ostensibly to maximize profits — and a pick-up in consumer demand, according to the NBS.

While fuel prices were also higher than the same period last year, their growth rates have declined, Dong said. "The headline rate has been lifted by fuel inflation and, more recently, a rebound in food inflation," said Julian Evans-Pritchard, senior China economist at Capital Economics in a recent report.

He added that a weak labour market "may further sap price pressures", and that he expects inflation to fall later this year. The producer price index (PPI) — measuring the cost of goods at the factory gate — rose 4.2 per cent in July, down from 6.1 per cent in June, official data showed Wednesday.

U.S. Rethinks Steps on China Tariffs in Wake of Taiwan Response

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - China's war games around Taiwan have led Biden administration officials to recalibrate their thinking on whether to scrap some tariffs or potentially impose others on Beijing, setting those options aside for now, according to sources familiar with the deliberations.

President Joe Biden's team has been wrestling for months with various ways to ease the costs of duties imposed on Chinese imports during

predecessor Donald Trump's tenure, as it tries to tamp down skyrocketing inflation.

It has considered a combination of eliminating some tariffs, launching a new "Section 301" investigation into potential areas for additional tariffs, and expanding a list of tariff exclusions to aid U.S. companies that can only get certain supplies from China.

Biden has not made a decision on the issue and all options remain on the table, the White House said.

The tariffs make Chinese imports more expensive for U.S. companies, which, in turn, make products cost more for consumers. Bringing down inflation is a major goal for Biden, a Democrat, ahead of the November midterm elections, which could shift control of one or both houses of Congress to Republicans.

But Beijing's response to U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit last week to Taiwan triggered a recalculation by administration officials, who are eager not to do anything that could be viewed by China as an escalation while also seeking to avoid being seen as retreating in the face of the communist country's aggression.

China's military for days took part in ballistic missile launches and simulated attacks on the self-ruled island of Taiwan that China claims as its own.

"I think Taiwan has changed everything," said one source familiar with the latest developments in the process, details of which have not been previously reported.

"The president had not made a decision before events in the Taiwan Strait and has still not made a decision, period. Nothing has been shelved or put on hold, and all options remain on the table," said White House spokesperson Saloni Sharma. "The only person who will make the decision is the president — and he will do so based on what is in our interests."

Asked why a decision was taking so long, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo referred to the complicated geopolitical situation.

OPEC, in Contrast to IEA, Sees Lower 2022 Oil Demand Growth



LONDON (Dispatches) - OPEC cut its 2022 forecast for growth in world oil demand for a third time since April, citing the economic impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, high inflation and efforts to contain the coronavirus pandemic.

The view from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries contrasts with that of the International Energy Agency, the adviser to industrialized countries, which earlier on Thursday raised its 2022 demand growth outlook.

OPEC in a monthly report said it expects 2022 oil demand to rise by 3.1 million barrels per day (bpd), or 3.2%, down 260,000 bpd from the previous forecast. The IEA raised its forecast by 380,000 bpd to 2.1 million bpd.

Oil use has rebounded from the worst of the pandemic and is set to exceed 2019 levels this year even after prices hit record highs. However, high prices and Chinese coronavirus outbreaks have eaten into OPEC's 2022 growth projections.

"Global oil market fundamentals continued their strong recovery to pre-COVID-19 levels for most of the first half of 2022, albeit signs of slowing growth in the world economy and oil demand have emerged," OPEC said in its report.

OPEC cut its 2022 global economic growth forecast to 3.1% from 3.5% and trimmed next year to 3.1%, saying that the prospect of further weakness remained.

"This is, however, still solid growth, when compared with pre-pandemic growth levels," OPEC said. "Therefore, it is obvious that significant downside risk prevails."

Oil prices held on to an earlier gain after the OPEC report was released, finding support from the IEA's view on demand and trading above \$98 a barrel.

OPEC and allies, including Russia, known collectively as OPEC+, are ramping up oil output after record cuts put in place as the pandemic took hold in 2020.

In recent months OPEC+ has failed to fully achieve its planned production increases owing to underinvestment in oilfields by some OPEC members and by losses in Russian output.

The report showed OPEC output in July rose by 162,000 bpd to 28.84 million bpd, a smaller increase than pledged.

OPEC's take on the outlook for 2023 suggests that the market could remain tight. OPEC left its 2023 world demand growth projection unchanged at 2.7 million bpd and expects supply from non-member countries to rise by 1.71 million bpd, meaning OPEC will need to pump around 900,000 bpd more to balance the market.

While the 2023 outlook for overall non-OPEC supply was left steady, OPEC sees a slight acceleration in U.S. shale growth.

Supply of U.S. tight oil, another term for shale, is expected to rise by 800,000 bpd in 2023, up from 740,000 bpd in 2022, although this year's forecast was revised down.

Asian Currency Bears Retreat as Inflation View Improves



LONDON (Reuters) - Bearish bets on emerging Asian currencies eased on hopes that monetary tightening will cool red-hot inflation, with short bets on the Thai baht falling sharply after the first rate hike in the country in nearly four years, a Reuters poll found.

Short positions on all emerging Asian currencies fell, with bets on China's yuan at their lowest since late-April, according to the fortnightly poll of 12 analysts.

Short bets on the Philippine peso, the Singapore dollar and the Indonesian rupiah also fell to multi-month lows.

An unchanged U.S. inflation print for July, the first notable sign of relief after persistently rising prices, also helped improve the sentiment in the region.

Short bets on the Thai baht slipped to their lowest since early June after the Bank of Thailand (BoT) on Wednesday raised its interest rate by 25 basis points, kick-starting its tightening cycle after lagging regional peers.

Thailand, which is heavily reliant on tourism, has started to see signs of a gradual economic recovery as tourists return, allowing the BoT to manoeuvre its monetary policy.

Analysts widely expect the BoT to continue gradual policy normalization through the rest of the year.

The baht, among the least shorted currency in the poll, looks set on a recovery path, having appreciated nearly 4% since the start of this month. The currency depreciated by 10.2% in the first seven months of the year.

Most of the poll responses came in after the Thai central bank announced the rate hike.

The Indonesian rupiah also featured among the least shorted currencies, as the country's economy remains on track for recovery but rising inflation and global recession risks have prompted calls for Bank Indonesia (BI) to hike interest rates.

UN Expects Big Uptick in Applications to Export Ukraine Grain

LONDON (Dispatches) - The United Nations expects a "big uptick" in applications to pick up grain cargoes at Ukrainian ports and export desperately needed supplies to world markets through the Black Sea, a senior official said.

The statement comes after Russia, Ukraine, Türkiye and the U.N. agreed on the transit procedures this Monday for a landmark deal struck in July to resume Ukraine's Black Sea grain and fertilizer exports. The procedures include a 10 nautical mile (18.5 nautical kilometers) protection zone for ships.

Frederick Kenney, an interim U.N. Coordinator at the Joint Coordination Center (JCC) in Istanbul, which oversees the grain agreement, said ship owners have shown "tremendous interest" in exporting grain from Ukraine — one of the world's key breadbaskets — under the deal aimed at helping ease the global food crisis sparked by Russia's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine.

The center is receiving "literally dozens and dozens of phone calls every day and emails asking when can we get ready to go," said Kenney, director of legal and external affairs at the International Maritime Organization and a retired U.S. Coast Guard rear admiral and judge advocate who is leading the U.N.'s efforts at the center to get grain shipped from three Ukrainian ports, namely He said detailed procedures on shipping and inspections were sent out to the industry on Monday and their dissemination "is also going to drive a surge in requests, but it is early days."

"We're expecting to see a big uptick in applications for transit," Kenney told a virtual news conference from Istanbul.

He said ship owners had shown "tremendous interest" and that there were a number of empty grain vessels anchored in Türkiye waiting for sales to be arranged so they could travel to Ukraine to collect cargo.

"Indeed, we're aware that there are a number of empty grain vessels sitting at anchorage in Turkish anchorage

areas waiting to arrange the contracts. And once they have their deals arranged, they'll be transiting northbound."

"The goal of getting between 2-5 (million) metric tons is achievable," he noted, referring to monthly exports.

Ukraine signed an agreement with Türkiye and the U.N. on July 22, clearing the way for Ukraine to export 22 million tons of corn and other grain stuck at ports and in silos since the Russian invasion and to make room for the export of the upcoming harvest. A separate memorandum between Russia and the U.N. signed the same day is aimed at clearing roadblocks to its food and fertilizer shipments to world markets.



Drilling of Changuleh Oil Field's 1st Exploratory Well to Begin

TEHRAN (MNA) - The drilling operation of the first exploratory well of Changuleh oil field in Iran's western Ilam Province is going to begin soon, a senior official with the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) said.

Mehdi Fakour, the Director of Exploration at NIOC, said the drilling project has currently reached 40 percent progress and is going ahead of schedule, Shana reported on Saturday.

"We are now 11 percent ahead of schedule in this project and this confirms that we can complete the well sooner than expected," Fakour said.

According to Fakour, the project valued at about 233 billion rials (over \$832,000) has been awarded to a local firm and it is expected to be completed by the eighth Iranian calendar month of Aban (starts on October 23).



Rainwater Unsafe to Drink Due to Chemicals

STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) - Rainwater everywhere on the planet is unsafe to drink due to levels of toxic chemicals known as PFAS that exceed the latest guidelines, according to a new study by Stockholm University scientists.

Commonly known as 'forever chemicals' because they disintegrate extremely slowly, PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) were initially found in packaging, shampoo or makeup but have spread to our entire environment, including water and air.

"There is nowhere on Earth where the rain would be safe to drink, according to the measurements that we have taken," Ian Cousins, a professor at the university and the lead author of the study published in Environmental Science and Technology, told AFP.

A compilation of the data since 2010 that his team studied showed that "even in Antarctica or the Tibetan plateau, the levels in the rainwater are above the drinking water guidelines that the US EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) proposed", he said.

Normally considered pristine, the two regions still have PFAS levels "14 times higher" than the US drinking water guidelines.

The EPA recently lowered its PFAS guidelines significantly after discovering that the chemicals may affect the immune response in children to vaccines, Cousins noted.

Once ingested, PFAS accumulate in the body.

According to some studies, exposure can also lead to problems with fertility, developmental delays in children, increased risks of obesity or certain cancers (prostate, kidney and testicular), an increase in cholesterol levels.

Cousins said PFAS were now "so persistent" and ubiquitous that they will never disappear from the planet.

"We have made the planet inhospitable to human life by irreversibly contaminating it now so that nothing is clean anymore. And to the point that's it's not clean enough to be safe", he said.

"We have crossed a planetary boundary", he said, referring to a central paradigm



for evaluating Earth's capacity to absorb the impact of human activity.

However, Cousins noted that PFAS levels in people have actually dropped "quite significantly in the last 20 years" and "ambient levels (of PFAS in the environment) have been the same for the past 20 years".

"What's changed is the guidelines. They've gone down millions of times since the early 2000s, because we've learned more about the toxicity of these substances."

Cousins said we have to learn to live with it.

"I'm not super concerned about the everyday exposure in mountain or stream water or in the food. We can't escape it... we're just going to have to live with it."

"But it's not a great situation to be in, where we've contaminated the environment to the point where background exposure is not really safe."

Study on Serotonin And Depression Sparks Fierce Debate



PARIS (Dispatches) - A controversy in the scientific community over a recent claims anti-depressants can be ineffective at treating depression has highlighted the difficulties in understanding mental health conditions.

One of the prevailing theories currently focuses on serotonin. Depression has been linked to a lack of the molecule, which is involved in transmitting emotions to the brain.

Claims that depression has no link to a chemical imbalance in the brain related to serotonin, casting doubt on the need for anti-depressants, have sparked fierce reaction.

A study by psychiatrists Joanna Moncrieff and Mark Horowitz in the journal Molecular Psychiatry in July concluded that there was no proven link between a lack of serotonin and depression.

The authors said it queried the underlying assumption behind the use of anti-depressants, which are mostly developed to alter serotonin levels, undoing a theory that for decades acted as a framework for research.

The study is based on several previous publications, but it quickly attracted criticism -- particularly its presentation by Moncrieff, known for her scepticism towards biological explanations of depression and her radical stance against the pharmaceutical industry.

"I'm broadly in agreement with the authors' conclusions about our current efforts, though I lack their adamant certainty," psychiatrist Phil Cowen said on the Science Media Centre website.

"No mental health professional" would endorse the view that a complex condition like depression "stems from a deficiency in a single neurotransmitter", Cowen added.

Some peers have questioned the methodology, which measured an indirect trace of serotonin rather than taking direct measurements of the molecule.

Moncrieff, who wants to break with what she calls "mainstream" psychiatry, believes the serotonin theory still occupies an important, albeit less prominent, place in the profession.

"Even if leading psychiatrists were beginning to doubt the evidence for depression being related to low serotonin, no one told the public," the British psychiatrist wrote on her blog.

The connection between depression and serotonin is firmly rooted in the popular imagination. French author Michel Houellebecq gave the title "Serotonin" to his 2019 novel in which the main character is depressed.

Moncrieff's undermining of the serotonin theory to argue against current anti-depressants, going beyond the conclusions of her own study, has sparked the most vehement criticism.

Swiss psychiatrist Michel Hofmann told AFP her study was "serious" and contributed to expert debates about depression.

"But I don't think it is an article that should have any impact in the short term on the prescription of anti-depressants," he said.

Ice-Age Footprints Shed Light on North America's Early Humans

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - Footprints laid down by Ice-Age hunter-gatherers and recently discovered in a U.S. desert are shedding new light on North America's earliest human inhabitants.

Dozens of fossilized prints found in dried-up riverbeds in the western state of Utah reveal more details about how the continent's original occupants lived more than 12,000 years ago -- just as the frozen planet was starting to thaw.

The fossils could have remained unnoticed if not for a chance glance out of a moving car as researchers Daron Duke and Thomas Urban drove through Hill Air Force Base chatting about footprints.

"We were talking about 'what would they look like?'," Duke told AFP. "And he said: Kind of like that out the window."

What the two men had found turned out to be 88 distinct prints left by a mixture of adults and children.

"They vary between just looking like discolored patches on the ground and... little pop ups, little pieces of dirt around them or on them. But they look like footprints," Duke said.

What came next was a painstaking few days of very careful digging -- sometimes lying on his belly -- to ensure that what they were looking at was as old as it appeared.

"What I found was bare feet of people... that had stepped in what looks to be shallow water where there was a mud sub layer," Duke explained.

"The minute they pulled their foot out, the sand infilled that and has preserved it perfectly."

Duke, of the Nevada-based Far Western Anthropological Research Group, had been in the area looking for



evidence of prehistoric campfires built by the Shoshone, a people whose descendants still live in the western United States.

He had brought Urban over from Cornell University because of his expertise in uncovering evidence of ancient humans -- including the discovery of human tracks in New Mexico's White Sands National Park that are thought to be up to 23,000 years old.

The new fossils add to a wealth of other finds from the area, including stone tools, evidence of tobacco use, bird bones and campfire remains, that are starting to provide a more complete record of the Shoshone and their continuous presence in the region beginning 13,000 years ago.

"These are the resident indigenous people of North America, this is where they lived, and this is where they still live today," Urban said.

For him personally, finding the footprints has been a professional high point.

"Once I... realized I was digging a human footprint, I was seeing toes, I was seeing the thing in immaculate condition... I was just kind of awestruck by it," he said.

"Nothing beats the sense of discovery and awe that maybe as an archaeologist, you are actually chasing your whole career."

And sharing the discovery with the distant descendants of the people who made the prints was immensely rewarding, Urban said.

"You realize the same thing is happening -- what the connection is to such a distant past and to something so human, I think it gets to everybody in one way or another eventually."

Arctic Warming Four Times Faster Than Rest of Earth

PARIS (Dispatches) - The Arctic has warmed nearly four times faster than the rest of the planet over the last 40 years, according to research published Thursday that suggests climate models are underestimating the rate of polar heating.

The United Nations' climate science panel said in a special report in 2019 that the Arctic was warming "by more than double the global average" due to a process known as Arctic amplification.

This occurs when sea ice and snow, which naturally reflect the Sun's heat, melt into sea water, which absorbs it instead.

While there is a long-held consensus among scientists that the Arctic is warming quickly, estimates vary according to the timeframe studied and the definition of what constitutes the geographic area of the Arctic.

A team of researchers based in Norway and Finland analysed four sets of temperature data gathered by satellite studies since 1979 -- the year when satellite data became available -- over the entire Arctic circle.

They found that on average the data showed the Arctic had warmed 0.75C per decade, nearly four times quicker than the rest of the planet.

"The take in the literature is that the Arctic is warming about twice as fast as the globe, so for me it was a bit surprising that ours was so much higher than the usual number," Antti Lipponen, co-author from the Finnish Meteorological Institute, told AFP.

The study, published in the journal Communications Earth & Environment, found significant regional variations in warming rate within the Arctic circle.

For example, the Eurasian sector of the Arctic Ocean, near the Svalbard and Novaya Zemlya archipelagos, has warmed as much as 1.25C per decade -- seven times faster than the rest of the world.

The team found that even state-of-the-art climate models predicted Arctic warming to be approximately one third lower than what the observed data showed.

They said that this discrepancy may be due to previous modelled estimates being rendered out of date by continued Arctic modelling.

"Maybe the next step would be to take a look at the models and I would be really interested in seeing why the models do not reproduce what we see in observations and what impact that is having on future climate projections," said Lipponen.

As well as profoundly impacting local communities and wildlife that rely on sea ice to hunt, intense warming in the Arctic will have worldwide repercussions.

Satan Doomed... FROM PAGE 1

Now it seems the justice has been done through this young man who decided to bring down the Satan despite tough security regarding protection of this blasphemous author.

Of course no one likes or supports such attacks but since there is no action against the committed blasphemies by the judiciaries and government worldwide, people have to carry out the law by themselves.



Most countries in the world have approved laws to punish racism or denial of the Holocaust but when it comes to Islam and insulting this religion, they jump to defend insult as the sign of freedom of expression and this attitude has made Muslims and even other freedom-seeking people in the world believe that laws are selective and are approved in favor of some certain groups and they should not expect at least from the Westerners to take action against insulters to Islam and its beloved and dear Prophet (PBUH).

So attack on Rushdie once again proved the world that justice will be done sooner or later and offender will be unable to escape his punishment and the news of attack made Muslims worldwide happy who sought punishment for Rushdie for his offences but he was under production of heavy security to continue his live without punishment.

Now it seems after the attack, Western media have started a new wave of Islamophobia to paint a savage picture of Islam to justify Rushdie's offences and condemn the attack.

As long as the West or any country supports blasphemy against any religion and does not take action against it, the world will witness such reactions and attacks because people will decide to carry out the laws by themselves.

Rushdie and his likes now will realize that they will not be able to escape unpunished by insulting religions and people under the name of freedom of expression, and justice will prevail sooner or later no matter the offender is under heavy protection, because if there is a will there is a way for bringing the offenders to justice like what happened for Rushdie and this author saw the implementation of justice in a country which is itself one of the main offenders of the human rights and needs to be punished by the world and it will happen soon as the country is witnessing gradual decline.

Iran Sets Condition on... FROM PAGE 1

Russia's chief negotiator in the Vienna talks, Mikhail Ulyanov, also on Friday rejected claims that Moscow opposes the restoration of the JCPOA, saying the final agreement would lower tensions within the Persian Gulf and elevate unilateral sanctions against Iran.

"Russia does not like illegitimate extraterritorial sanctions. We consider this an outrage and illegal action. We sympathize with the people of Iran, who have been under sanctions for so many years," Ulyanov, who serves as Russia's Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna, said in an interview with the Russian Izvestia Daily.

Pointing to the EU proposals, he said, "In principle, we can assume that the text has been agreed almost completely. The Iranian side had separate questions regarding just a few words, a few lines. Everything else is considered agreed."

"There will most likely be no lengthy negotiations in the foreseeable future. It all depends on whether all the states participating in the negotiations, including Iran in the first place, agree to the version of the package solution that was circulated on August 8," the senior Russian diplomat stated.

Ulyanov expressed hope that no "stumbling block" would happen during discussions about the details of a final agreement.

In an earlier post on his Twitter account, Ulyanov threw his country's weight behind the JCPOA restoration as "the only reasonable and effective way ahead."

Iranian Airlines... FROM PAGE 1

Describing it as yet another blow that hit the country's aviation industry due to the U.S. sanction, he said domestic airlines will lose the revenues of passenger transportation on this route, and "we will lose one of the bases in Southeast Asia."

Before the Covid-19 pandemic hit the world, demand for this route was high, and two to three flights were made per week, but during the health crisis, flights to Malaysia were temporarily suspended, and after that, there was only one flight per week.

Fury Announces Intention To Retire From Boxing

LONDON (Dispatches) - WBC heavyweight champion Tyson Fury said he is retiring from boxing on his 34th birthday, having previously performed a number of U-turns over his future in the sport. "Massive thanks to everyone who had an input in my career over the years & after long hard conversations I've finally decided to walk away & on my 34th birthday I say Bon voyage," Fury posted on Twitter. The announcement has been greeted with skepticism as Fury has previously stated his intention to retire only to return to the ring.

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Juventus Sign Kostic From Eintracht Frankfurt

TURIN (Dispatches) - Juventus have signed Serbian international midfielder Filip Kostic from German side Eintracht Frankfurt on a deal until June 2026 for €12 million (RM55 million), the Italian Serie A club said. Juve could pay a further €3 million in add-ons to Frankfurt for the versatile 29-year-old, who played 171 matches for the German club after arriving in 2018. He scored 33 goals and made 64 assists for Frankfurt. He played his first game for Serbia's national side in 2015 against Azerbaijan and has earned 48 caps, scoring three goals.

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SPORTS

SUNDAY AUGUST 14, 2022

Kyrgios Downs Compatriot de Minaur

MONTREAL (Dispatches) - Australian Nick Kyrgios produced another extraordinary performance to demolish compatriot Alex de Minaur 6-2 6-3 at the Canadian Masters, a day after stunning world number one Daniil Medvedev.

The fiery Wimbledon finalist has been playing the best tennis of his career and is showing no signs of slowing down in Montreal, where he won the first four games of the opening set in which de Minaur won scarcely more than half of his first-serve points.

The pair traded breaks to open the second set but 27-year-old Kyrgios would not be denied, breaking de Minaur on the third try in the third game and again in the seventh.

Kyrgios briefly appeared agitated when he gave up a break in the penultimate game but found his composure to get the job done in a little over an hour, breaking back to love in the final game.

The win will move Kyrgios high enough in the rankings to be seeded at the U.S. Open later this month.

"I did what had to be done. He's a hell of a player if you play to his strengths, he's one of the best players from the back in the game, he's just so fast," Kyrgios said of de Minaur.

Kyrgios has won 15 of his last 16 matches and a day earlier produced a serve-and-volley masterclass to stun Medvedev 6-7(2) 6-4 6-2. He said the effort had certainly taken a toll. read more

"Incredibly tough, after yesterday's big high-playing Daniil. The crowd was amazing, it's a day I'll probably never ever forget," he said.

"Today was really hard for me mentally to play Alex, we're such good friends and he's been having such a good career so far carrying the Australian flag. It's just tough mentally, it's never easy to play a friend like that, especially if they're an Australian."

Kyrgios next faces Poland's Hubert Hurkacz, who edged Spaniard Albert Ramos-Vinolas 6-7(6) 6-2 7-6(3) to advance to the quarter-finals.

In other matches, Felix Auger-Aliassime harnessed his mighty serve to down Briton Cameron Norrie 6-3 6-4 to delight his home crowd, while Norwegian Casper Ruud outlasted Roberto Bautista Agut in a closely-fought three sets.



The 22-year-old Auger-Aliassime sent down 15 aces and won all but three of his first-serve points, breaking in the penultimate game of both sets on Centre Court.

British number one Norrie made five double faults and never had the momentum against a clinical Auger-Aliassime, who collected his first ATP title in Rotterdam this year and wrapped up Thursday's affair in a tidy 72 minutes.

"Montreal people are really proud people," Auger-Aliassime said, crediting the crowd with helping his performance. "We are a small community in the world. We support each other in what we do, especially in professional sport."

The U.S. Open semi-finalist will next face Ruud in the quarter-finals after the world number seven saw off Spain's Bautista Agut 6-7(4) 7-6(4) 6-4.

Briton Daniel Evans fought back from a disastrous second set to overcome American Taylor Fritz 7-6(5) 1-6 7-5, producing a remarkable defense as he fended off a dozen break points.

Britain's Jack Draper, who upset third seed Stefanos Tsitsipas in his previous round, booked a quarter-final spot when France's Gael Monfils retired in the second set with what appeared to be an injury to his right ankle.

Draper, 20, will next meet Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta after the 2020 U.S. Open semi-finalist defeated Italian seventh seed Jannik Sinner 6-2 6-4.



NYON (Dispatches) - Real Madrid's Karim Benzema and Thibaut Courtois and Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne are in the running for UEFA's 2021-22 men's player of the year award after topping a 15-player shortlist, European football's governing body said.

The winner will be announced with the UEFA men's coach of the year and women's player and coach of the year at the 2022-23 Champions League group stage draw in Istanbul on August 25.

Benzema and Courtois helped Real seal a record 14th European title last season while De Bruyne guided City to the Premier League title — his fourth crown in seven seasons at the club.

Among other nominees for the award are Barcelona's Robert Lewandowski, Real's Luka Modric and Bayern Munich's Sadio Mane.

Real's Carlo Ancelotti, City's Pep Guardiola and Liverpool's Jurgen Klopp were among the nominees for the male coach of the year. Uefa will name nominees for the women's awards next week.

Liverpool Will Only Sign the Right Players

LONDON (Dispatches) - Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said that a mounting injury list at the club was a concern but that he would not splurge in the transfer market just for the sake of strengthening his squad.

Liverpool, who were held to a disappointing draw by promoted Fulham on the opening weekend, have been hit with injuries to several key players, including Thiago Alcantara, Naby Keita, Diogo Jota, Ibrahima Konate and Kostas Tsimikas.

"We have injuries, that's how it is. It is a question of how long will the players be out," Klopp told reporters ahead of Monday's home fixture against Crystal Palace.

"There are different solutions for it. One of them is the transfer market. That only makes sense if we can bring in the right player — the right player, not a player. In some cases it is not possible, in other cases extremely difficult."

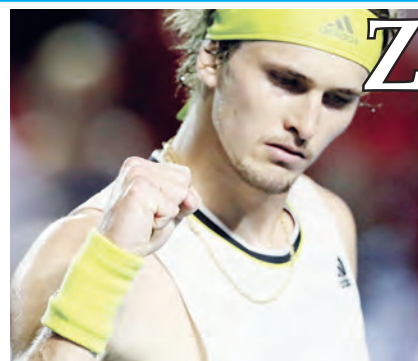
Tsimikas will return to training later today while Keita is expected to be back on Monday. Thiago, a crucial figure in central midfield, is likely to be out for four to six weeks after injuring his hamstring against Fulham.

"All the other solutions are inside the squad... if we had the right solution (in the transfer market) then we would have done it already. We are not stubborn," said Klopp.

The absences offer an opportunity for young midfielder Harvey Elliott, who signed a new long-term contract at Anfield.

"He is a fantastic boy and a super player. He had a good pre-season and is always in contention to start... of course he is (in my plans)," added Klopp.

The German bemoaned his side's slow start against Fulham and said they needed to be switched on from the outset against Palace, who fell to a 2-0 defeat by Arsenal in their opener.



Zverev Hopes to Play in U.S Open

LONDON (Dispatches) - Alexander Zverev expects to be back from injury to play for Germany in the Davis Cup in September but said there was a real chance of returning earlier at the U.S Open.

The 25-year-old world number two has had surgery after damaging ligaments in his right ankle during this year's French Open semi-final against Rafael Nadal but hopes he

might be ready for this year's final Grand Slam.

"Of course, I will still try to make the U.S Open, although it will be very, very close," Zverev told reporters at a news conference ahead of the major which starts on Aug. 29.

"Every day it really gets better. That's why I don't want to say that I'm not playing the U.S Open yet."

Germany face France, Belgium and Australia in Group C of the Davis Cup in Zverev's home city of Hamburg from Sept. 13-18.

If they progress from the group phase they will play in the knockout stage of the finals in Malaga in November.

Swiatek Upset by Haddad Maia in Canadian Open

TORONTO (Dispatches) - Polish world number one Iga Swiatek was stunned by Brazil's Beatriz Haddad Maia 6-4 3-6 7-5 at the Canadian Open, while Jessica Pegula beat holder Camila Giorgi to join Coco Gauff and Simona Halep in the quarter-finals.

In the opening set of their last-16 clash, Swiatek struck a double-fault to hand the unseeded Haddad Maia a 3-2 lead and the Brazilian leaned on her powerful serve and groundstrokes to close out the frame without facing a break point.

Swiatek fended off five break points to hold serve in a 15-minute opening game of the second set and later consolidated a break for a 5-2 lead before going on to force a decider.

World number 24 Haddad Maia broke Swiatek three times in the third set, including in the final game on her fourth match point when the Pole sent a forehand wide.

"I knew that all the matches here would be very tough, not only top 20 players, like the first round was a very, very tough round and I won in three sets as well," Haddad Maia said.

"Tennis is like that. It doesn't matter where you are playing, which court and with who. You need to push yourself to improve your game and I think that was the key for both (of my three-set) victories and I am very proud of myself."

French Open champion Swiatek, who had a run of 37 straight wins halted in the third round at Wimbledon last month, said she struggled with the windy conditions.

"Next time maybe I'm going to be able to find, even though the conditions are going to be bad, more solutions and just play more solid. Because I did a lot of mistakes that I kind of don't accept," she said.

Haddad Maia, 26, will next meet Olympic champion Belinda Bencic, who converted all four of her breakpoint chances against two-time major winner Garbine Muguruza of Spain to complete a 6-1 6-3 win in a late match.



Man City to Sign Gomez From Anderlecht

LONDON (Dispatches) - Manchester City will sign Spanish defender Sergio Gomez from Belgian club Anderlecht, manager Pep Guardiola said as the Premier League champions look to address their lack of depth in the left back position.

After Ukrainian international Oleksander Zinchenko moved to Arsenal, City began their title defence with Portugal's Joao Cancelo as their only senior left back.

Midfielder-turned-left back Gomez, 21, will compete for a place in the first team, Guardiola told reporters, after impressing at Anderlecht under former City captain Vincent Kompany last season.

"He's a talented young player from the Barcelona academy, went to Borussia Dortmund but didn't have many minutes and in the last year was given a chance by Kompany," Guardiola said. "He played well, we targeted him to bring him here."

Gomez played 30 times for Anderlecht since joining them in June 2021. He has also represented Spain at youth level, including at the Under-17 World Cup in 2017 where they lost to England in the final.

British media reported City and Anderlecht had agreed a deal worth an initial £11 million (RM59 million) for Gomez.

"He's an exceptional player," Guardiola added. "He's going to stay with us, alongside Joao."

Guardiola said new signing Kalvin Phillips, who made his Premier League debut as a substitute in last week's win over West Ham, will not feature in tomorrow's home game against Bournemouth due to injury.

