

Iran and the European Union's 27 Member States Reportedly Traded €2.59b Worth of Goods in the First Six Months of 2022, Registering A 15.23% Rise Compared With Last Year's Corresponding Period

IRAN NEWS

Health Ministry Announced on Sunday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to **143,387** With **55** More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

VOL. XXVIII, No. 7570 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

MONDAY AUGUST 22, 2022 - MORDAD 31, 1401

2 DOMESTIC

Gov't Not to Retreat From Nation's Rights In Any Talks



> SEE PAGE 2

3 DOMESTIC

Tehran, Tatarstan Explore Ways to Boost Economic Ties



> SEE PAGE 3

4 INTERNATIONAL

Blasts, Fresh Ukraine Drone Attacks Rock Russian-Held Areas



> SEE PAGE 4

8 SPORTS

Medvedev, Tsitsipas Set Up Cincinnati Showdown



> SEE PAGE 8

Iran Economy Continues Its Gradual Recovery

TEHRAN (IP) - Iran's economy has continued its gradual recovery in 2021-22, following the rebound in domestic and external demand, reads the latest executive summary of World Bank's new publication Iran Economic Monitor.

The summary highlighted that Iran's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 4.7% in 2021-22, marking seven consecutive quarters of year-on-year growth.

The recovery in global oil demand along with the pickup in Iran's oil exports drove a strong expansion in oil production of 10.1% YOY during this period. Less strict containment measures and an accelerated vaccination rollout led to a 6.5% expansion in services — the main driver of non-oil growth (3.9%) in 2021-22. However, unprecedented droughts and energy shortages led the labor-intensive agriculture and construction sectors to contract. As such, despite experiencing two years of economic growth, total employment has yet to recover to its pre-pandemic level, especially among women, it added.

See Page 7

West Seeks to Prevent Iran From Producing Nuclear Fuel



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) says the West has always sought to prevent the Islamic Republic from reaching the pinnacle of science and has left no stone unturned to stop the country from turning into a producer of nuclear fuel.

Mohammad Eslami made the remarks in an address to the Iranian education sector's directors in Tehran on Sunday. "Everyone should know that the nuclear fuel cycle is a power-generating one, and has nothing to do with building a bomb. They level spurious allegations against Iran and wrongfully accuse us of attempts to produce a nuclear bomb only because they do not want us to acquire nuclear technology," he said.

"Despite fierce opposition expressed in recent years to Iran's heavy water production, we have managed to build on our relevant expertise both in the atomic industry and molecular sector. Nuclear technology is a lucrative business and can be used in various spheres. It can be tapped to develop the country's power," Eslami said.

"The West is seeking to tighten the screws on Iran. We should act sensibly and reasonably so that the Islamic Republic continues to tread the path of progress and excellence on the basis of national interests, and improves in all arenas," he noted.

He said Western countries are using the pretext that Tehran is after developing a nuclear bomb and opposing Iran's production of heavy water as they know that it is a manifestation of its scientific power.

Eslami noted the West is against Iran's entry into the field of new and emerging technologies as such an achievement will place the country at the top echelon of powerful countries.

The AEOI chief said while Iran's nuclear industry accounts for less than 2% of the world's nuclear capacity it is subjected to the most restricted nuclear inspections, noting that 25% of the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) inspections have been conducted in Iran.

The United States, under former president Donald Trump, left the JCPOA in 2018 and returned the sanctions that the agreement had lifted.

Iran and the remaining parties to the deal resumed on-and-off talks on a potential revitalization of the deal in the Austrian capital of Vienna since last year, months after Joe Biden succeeded Trump, to examine the potential of the deal's revival and removal of the sanctions.

Revival of JCPOA to Expand Iran-Iraq Trade

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The possible revival of the 2015 nuclear deal will promote Iran and Iraq trade, said the chairman of Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce Yahya Ale Eshaq.

Iran exported about 7 million tons of commodity to Iraq during the first four months of the current Iranian year (started March 21, 2022), he said adding that the export is expected to increase to \$9 billion by the end of the current Iranian year, he said.

He indicated that an agreement to revive the landmark nuclear accord known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) will accelerate Iran's economic ties with neighbors and provide a ground for foreign investment.

According to the official, by lifting sanctions and solving the bank transaction issues Iran will have new opportunities to trade and have joint investments with European and American countries.

See Page 7

ViewPoint Zionists Too Weak To Mess With Iran

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

The fake Israeli regime in recent years has resorted to any means to weaken or unbalance the Islamic Revolution of Iran but its efforts have been futile and despite these efforts, the Islamic Republic has become much stronger and has strengthened its position in the region and in the world and for this reason Iran does not fear the Zionists' bullies and is ready for any due response to the Zionists' atrocities.

In recent years the Zionists have tried to normalize its ties with some Arab countries to show that it is getting stronger and strengthening its foothold in the region but what it does has no effect on the Islamic Republic's growing power and even it encourages Tehran to grow more to reply to the Zionists in practice and not in words.

On Saturday and reacting to recent developments in the region and resumption of ties between Israel and Turkey, Iran's IRGC reacted strongly and warned the Zionist regime of committing any mischievous act against Tehran.

The spokesman of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says the Israeli regime has reached the nadir of its security situation, stressing that the Islamic Republic is not impacted by the regime's actions.

"The Zionist regime is experiencing the worst security condition and is under intense pressure," Brigadier General Ramezan Sharif told reporters.

He added that the Zionists have repeatedly claimed that security prevails across the 27,000 square kilometers of occupied Palestinian territories that they control.

"Their (Israeli) measures have no impact on the Islamic Republic at all because they are unable to confront Iran," the IRGC commander said.

The Israelis have repeatedly claimed that if joined, the armies of Arab countries are unable to defeat the regime's army, Sharif said, adding, "However, we witnessed how Israel was defeated for the first time by [Lebanon's] Hezbollah [resistance movement] in the 33-Day War."

"The Israelis are extremely vulnerable and live in fear all the time. They keep saying that they have the Iron Dome (missile system) or cyber (systems), and this exposes their weakness," he emphasized.

Iran has urged Persian Gulf states to quit relying on foreign powers for their security and that regional security can be achieved only by neighboring states.

The commander of the IRGC Navy said on Friday that any cooperation with the Israeli regime poses a threat to and disrupts security in the Persian Gulf region.

See Page 7

Indian Official Visits Chabahar Port to Review Work Progress

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - India's Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Ayush, Sarbananda Sonowal paid a visit to the Shahid Beheshti port at Chabahar in Iran to review the progress in the development of the port on Saturday.

In an effort to invigorate the potential of Chabahar port, the Union Minister, Sarbananda Sonowal also handed over six mobile harbor cranes to Indian Ports Global Chabahar Free Trade Zone (IPGCFITZ) at the port.

The Union Minister was accompanied by the India's Ambassador to Iran, Gaddam Dharmendra. Dr Ali Akbar Safaee, Deputy Minister and Managing Director of Ports and Maritime Organization, Iran, led the Iranian delegation at the launch.

Sarbananda Sonowal and Dr Ali Akbar Safaee had a fruitful meeting on development of maritime and port cooperation between Iran and India. Both the delegation discussed the possibilities of trade & unlock trade potential between Central Asian countries with South Asian, ASEAN and even from Far East countries like Japan and Korea.

Sarbananda Sonowal reiterated the role Chabahar port can play in reducing distance, time and cost. It was decided to form a joint technical committee for smooth functioning of the port. The meeting also addressed the future course of action towards development of the port.

Speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister, Sarbananda Sonowal, said, "Our shared historical relationship has been the seedbed of Indo Iranian bilateral relationship. The sustained engagement and all round efforts in the preceding years provide an ideal platform for further expansion and deepening of the bilateral relation. India remains fully committed to develop the Chabahar port to realise the vision set during Indian PM Shri Narendra Modi ji's visit to Iran in 2016. The inauguration of the SIX mobile harbor cranes would act as a force multiplier for the operation of the Shahid Beheshti Port and further fuel impetus to the development of the Chabahar port. The strategic role of Chabahar port to unlock trade potential in the regional trade between Central Asia, South Asia & South East Asia is huge. We are continuously working towards making the International North South Transport Corridor as the preferred route of trade between the two regions."

See Page 7

Iran to Develop Oilfield Shared With Saudi Arabia In 3 years

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran says it will start pumping oil from a key oilfield that straddles the maritime border with Saudi Arabia in the Persian Gulf within the next three years.

An Iranian Oil Ministry official said that a contract will be awarded for the first phase in development works at Esfandiar oilfield, which is connected to Saudi Arabia's Lulu oilfield, in the very near future.

Alireza Mehdizadeh, who leads the Iranian Offshore Oil Company, said that a drilling rig and four production wells have been planned for the first phase of development project in Esfandiar which is located 95 kilometers to the southwest of the Iranian island of Kharg and is estimated to have more than 500 million barrels of oil.

"The fluid mixture produced in the oilfield will be processed in the nearby Abuzar oilfield before it is transferred to the Kharg Island," Mehdizadeh was quoted as saying by the Oil Ministry's news service Shana.

He said Iran also plans to drill an exploration well in Esfandiar to obtain more information about the structure of the oil reservoir and to have a better analysis of the next phases of the development project in the field.

See Page 7

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Iran Offers Condolences to Turkey Over Crash Incidents

TEHRAN (MNA) – Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani offered condolences to the Turkish government and nation over the death of dozens of Turkish people in the recent accidents.

Kanaani also wished forgiveness from God for the dead and a speedy recovery for the injured.

At least 34 people were killed and dozens injured in two separate road accidents Saturday, each in places where collisions had taken place shortly before, local media reported.

Gov't Not to Retreat From Nation's Rights In Any Talks

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi said Sunday that his country will not retreat from the Iranian nation's rights in any negotiations.

Speaking in the 17th edition of the International Day of Mosques on Sunday, President Ebrahim Raisi said that the enemies seek to frustrate the Iranian nation and disappoint them in their government while the mosques play a role in keeping hope alive in the society.

Raisi said that the Islamic Republic relies on people's support and it uses the power the people give them to secure the interests of the nation.

Emphasizing that despite the sanctions and threats, the government will continue the work seriously, the Iranian president added, "I would say with certainty and accurate knowledge of the capacities and capabilities that the country's future is bright."

"Today, the war is a war of wills, and the Iranian nation is resolved to defeat its enemies, and the Almighty God will surely help the Iranian nation."

Stating that with the support people have laid behind his government, it has been able to make sure that a significant part of Iran's demands is met by certain countries.

"We will not ignore the nation's rights in any meetings and negotiations. The government will try to improve the country and resolve the problems with might."

"We will not tie people's livelihood with any external factor and will diligently pursue solving the problems of the country and people."

In another part of his speech, Raisi advised the congregational prayer imams to



further strengthen the relationship with different sections of the people and said, "A close relationship with the people is part of the foundations of the revolution and the Islamic Republic system. Being in the field and directly listening to their words and concerns is a must for all of us. I have said many times that those who criticize us for being among people on provincial trips, have not understood the joy of being amongst people".

Emphasizing the necessity of continuing the government's provincial trips, the President added, "We will definitely continue the provincial trips and the second round of these trips will begin shortly. We are, and will be, from the people and with the people, and God willing, and by relying on our slogan, the country's problems will be solved".

Al-Aqsa Mosque to Remain Center of Anti-Zionist Resistance

TEHRAN (MNA) - On the occasion of the 53rd anniversary of the burning of Al-Aqsa Mosque by Zionists, the Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman described resistance as the only way to save Palestine.

In a tweet on Sunday, Nasser Kanaani wrote, "53 years ago on August 21, 1969, the Zionists set fire to Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first Qibla of Muslims, and this was not the first and last crime of the occupiers of Palestine."

He described resistance as the only way to save Palestine, adding that Al-Aqsa Mosque and all mosques in the world will remain the center of anti-Zionist resistance until the complete liberation of Palestine.

On August 21, 1969, the mosque was set on fire by an Australian settler in coordination with Israeli officials and military forces. The fire gutted the southeastern wing of the mosque.

Tehran Opens Largest Underground Train Terminal

TEHRAN (IP) - Iran's largest underground terminal was officially opened on Saturday in Tehran at a ceremony attended by high-ranking officials.

The capacity of the terminal, located at the Ekbatan metro station in western Tehran, is 21 trains, of which nine railway lines are for periodic maintenance and train services.

During the ceremony, Tehran's Mayor said: "Today we are opening the largest terminal in the country, and every Saturday, we shall be inaugurating large-scale projects until the end of the year, and the current 143 metro stations will increase to reach 155."

Alireza Zakani noted: A contract of 113 wagons has been signed through internal financing, and the government has allocated 77 million euros for this project.

Tehran, Beijing Discuss Security Ties, Fight Against Terrorism

TEHRAN (IFP) - Senior Iranian and Chinese officials have exchanged views on the expansion of security cooperation and well as the fight against drug trafficking and extremism.

In a tweet, Iran's Ambassador to China Mohammad Keshavarz-Zadeh said he met with External Security Commissioner of the Chinese Foreign Ministry Cheng Guoping to discuss bilateral ties.

He said relations between Tehran and Beijing would "find new dimensions" in light of the Islamic Republic's membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

"With Iran's full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, ties between the two countries will find new dimensions with regards to the fight against the three evil phenomena: Extremism, separatism, and organized terrorism."

Iran's bid to become a full member of the SCO was approved after almost 15 years by the bloc's seven permanent members in September, 2021. The organization accounts for about one-third of the world's land and exports trillions of dollars annually.

The technical and legal process of the membership bid — which may take up to two years — is currently in progress.

Tehran and Beijing already enjoy flourishing relations. They have signed a 25-year strategic partnership, which brings the pair closer in many fields ranging from economy to politics and culture.

Iran Important Regional Power, Role Player in World

TEHRAN (IP) - The adviser to the Commander-in-Chief and Leader of the Islamic Revolution on army affairs says the Islamic Republic has become a significant regional power and a role player in the world.

Brigadier-General Amir Hatami said in a speech at a meeting of commanders and senior managers of the army headquarters, which was hosted by the Army University of Medical Sciences, that the role the Islamic Republic of Iran played in the regional developments and its influence was against the evil goals of the arrogant powers and the domineering system in such a way that it had foiled US' plans and scenarios.

The advisor to the Commander-in-Chief on the affairs of the army added: "Without a doubt, the West Asian region is one of the most important regions that has attracted the attention of many international players, and its geopolitical, geostrategic position, and huge energy reserves are among the most important factors that made this region very important and each of the international, regional and extra-regional actors and organizations are competing for the expansion of influence and presence in the Middle East."

Gen. Hatami stated: "These actors are trying to achieve their own interests and goals in the region, and the Americans, as the most important extra-regional actor involved in the political, security and economic equations of this region, always try to implement colonial and beneficial scenarios by interfering in the internal affairs of countries and loot the national wealth of countries."

The top general considered the geopolitical and geostrategic position, energy reserves, access and control over the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman, and the transit position of Iran as the most important factors of the double importance of the country's position in this region and noted: "Today, our dear country, Iran, as one of the most important influential countries play a role in creating regional order and shaping the political, economic and security structures of this region."

JCPOA Revival Helps Enhance National Trade

TEHRAN (IFP) - A former Iranian oil minister says the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal will help increase Iran's foreign trade and can trigger a rivalry among Europe, the US, China, Japan and others for trade with Iran.

Mohammad Gharazi made the comments in an interview with ILNA just as Iran, the U.S. and the P4+1 group of countries — Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany — seem to be on the verge of reviving the nuclear accord, JCPOA.

He added that trade essentially means buying the better product at a lower price.

He said this means no political or military power should intervene in trade.

Gharazi added that any intervention in trade, which is rooted in Iran's past circumstances, will be damaging to the national economy and should be avoided.

The former minister added that such interventions that began with the Russian and British invasions of Iran some 100 years ago have led to devaluation of Rial against the dollar and have created a competition between the trade and production sectors, damaging the latter.

Gharazi called on the government to introduce a single-rate foreign currency to help foreign trade and prevent corruption caused by multiple rates of the US dollar and other foreign currencies.

30% of Registered Nano Patents in U.S., Europe Belong to Iran

TEHRAN (IRNA) - About 30 percent of total number of the patents registered at American and European offices have been allocated to Iran's Nano technology inventions, a 2021 report shows.

The report on the development of the Nano technology in Iran in the Iranian calendar year of 1400 (March 21, 2021 to March 20, 2022) indicates that the value of Iran's Nano sale stood at \$553m in 1399 (March 21, 2020 to March 20, 2021).

According to the report, some 12199 articles related to Nano technology progresses were indexed in the Web of Science (WoS) in 2021, equivalent to 5.41 percent of total number of Nano-related articles in that year.

So, such number of articles in this respect shows that Iran continued to be ranked four in 2021 just like its ranking in the year before. However, Iran's ranking was 58th in the world and sixth in the Middle East in 2000, when Iranian scholars and researchers published only 8 articles in the same year.

The University of Tehran published 843 Nano-related articles equivalent to 6.8 percent of Iran's Nano articles in 2021; so, the university ranked first and was followed by Amirkabir University of Technology, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, and Iran University of Science and Technology (IUST).

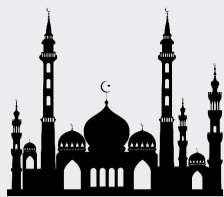
The set of Islamic Azad University published nearly one fifth of the total number of Nano-related articles. The number of Iranians' Nano-related articles published by top scientific journals increased from 88 in 2020 to 93 in 2021.

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PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:07
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:04
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:00
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:29

9. In the end We fulfilled to them Our Promise, and We saved them and those whom We pleased, but We destroyed those who transgressed beyond bounds.
10. We have revealed for you (O men!) a book in which is a Message for you: will ye not then understand?

Surah 21. The Prophets (9 - 10)

Tehran, Tatarstan Explore Ways to Boost Economic Ties

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – A trade delegation from the Republic of Tatarstan, led by its Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and Trade, attended Tehran Chamber of Commerce to explore ways for boosting bilateral trade with Iran and during the meeting they discussed different issues.



Tatarstan as well as cooperation in the field of fishery, mining and mineral exploration can strengthen bilateral economic ties.

He then announced full readiness of Tehran Chamber of Commerce for increasing cooperation, admitting that the current trade volume of Iran and Russia is not satisfactory despite capacities and good relations of Tehran and Moscow.

Then Tatarstan Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and Trade Mr. Oleg Korobchenko, for his part, introduced members of his delegation, representatives of 33 companies in fields of oil, gas and Petrochemicals. He then said that the trade volume of Iran and Tatarstan was around \$40m in 2020 while there are good potentials the volume to increase.

He then pointed to the fields that both countries can cooperate and said president of Tatarstan will pay an official visit to Tehran soon and expressed hope these meetings would lead to rise in the trade volume and boom in trade between Iran and Russia.

Then Deputy Head of Chamber of Commerce of Tatarstan Mr. Artur Nikolaev, for his part, pointed to the outcome of the visit of previous Tatar delegation to Tehran and said that eight companies which visited Tehran have found their Iranian trade partners and have started cooperation. He admitted that expansion of trade exchange is not a simple issue because there are huge problems both in transportation and money transfer.

He then pointed to the interests of Tatar companies for cooperation with Iran and said that Tatarstan seeks a fair trade which meets interests of both sides. He stated that in case the direct flight between Tehran and Kazan is launched, it will pave the way for cooperation in the field of tourism.

Meanwhile Secretary General of Tehran Chamber of Commerce Mr. Bahman Eshqi called for setting up a joint work group between chambers of commerce of Tehran and Tatarstan for deepening ties between Tehran and Tatarstan.

Tehran to Host Int'l Seminar on Reviewing Opportunities, Challenges Ahead of Broadening Trade With Neighbors

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – An international seminar on reviewing opportunities and challenges ahead of broadening trade with Turkey and North Cyprus will be held in Tehran in month of Mehr (Sept.23- Oct.22) by economic activists and business experts in the field of construction and modern technologies.



Scientific Secretary of the event Mr. Alireza Najafi announced the news and said that the event is aimed at accelerating export development, developing commercial services and products, developing occupation and job-creation, reducing coefficient of error and preventing occurrence of crime with disseminating information and awareness regarding the dominating rules in the economic ties as well as achieving the first place in economy in the region.

Najafi expressed hope that gathering of economic activists and entrepreneurs in the regional level would lead to offering more services and knowledge-based products and improvement of production and job creation in the Islamic countries, and in case of need, it would lead to developing the sustainable economy through transfer of technology and investment in the neighboring states.

Meanwhile a member of strategic supreme council of the seminar and expert of architecture and interior designing Eng. Alireza Momeni, for his part, pointed to the lack of architecture in Iranian style in the field of construction and properties for the sales in the neighboring countries and said this event can help exchange of scientific and expertise views in the field of trade and economy and it can help considerable for having a sustainable cultural and economic ties.

Eng. Laleh Mohammadian, an economic expert in Iran-Turkey relations and a member of the strategic supreme council of the seminar, said that healthy interaction and trade in the framework of the laws and regulations would lead to sublime in economy and sustainable development in the region and the seminar would be an effective step in this line.

It is worth noting that in the special section of the seminar, exemplary entrepreneurs, service units, managers and top consultants and producers will be honored and some related workshops will be held.

Iran 95% Independent in Dam Building

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Previous Head of Iran's Water and Power Resources Development Company Mohammadreza Rezazadeh stated the nation is now more than 95 percent independent in barrier building.

"We are now more than 95 percent self-sufficient in the design and construction of dams in Iran, and we only import some parts and equipment for hydropower plants," Rezazadeh informed IRIB on Saturday.

He also said, dam building is as essential as other strategic knowledges such as nuclear energy, nano, stem cells and army tools.

Bringing up the nation's recent water lack difficulties, Rezazadeh stated: "In the country's water sector, it is necessary to move towards the use of a diverse resources basket, such as the use of sewage, desalination of seawater, use of deep water, etc."

"For example, the Persian Gulf coastal countries currently desalinate and use about 27 million cubic

meters of seawater on a daily basis and have a plan to increase the figure up to 32 million cubic meters, but our country, having vast beaches in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, only desalinizes about 600,000 cubic meters of water," he added.

On the cause for the completion of dam building in advanced nations and its continuation in Iran, he declared: "They started building dams 70-80 years earlier than us and built dams in all suitable geographical positions, but despite the great number of dams in our country, we still need to build dams in some regions."

"From 1900 to 1909, 545 dams were inaugurated in the world, and the figure reached 7,511 in the 70s," he continued.

Iran to Hold Six Exhibitions in Qatar

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Spokesman for the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade said that the country will organize six exhibitions in Qatari capital of Doha on the occasion of Qatar 2022 World Cup.

Five exhibitions in the field of introducing Iranian goods and products and one exhibition of Iranian handwoven carpets and handicrafts will be held in Doha, Omid Ghalibaf stated.

As licensed by the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) and Iran International Exhibitions Company (IIEC), these five exhibitions will be held in Oct. 2022 in the fields of foodstuff, carpet, handicrafts, furniture and chandelier, decorative, construction materials, Islamic fashion style, hotel management, catering, technical and engineering services.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Ghalibaf pointed to Iranian handwoven and handicrafts exhibition and said that this exhibition will be held at the initiative taken by the Iranian Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts in the Qatari capital of Doha concurrent with the organizing world's most prestigious sports event in this country.

In this respect, a direct shipping transportation line was launched between the two countries, he said, adding, "In addition, suitable ways have been paved for exchanging money through a non-banking system."

Growing Satisfaction of Auto and Part Makers From MSC Products

ISFAHAN – Manager of Sales and Marketing of Mobarakeh Steel Company (MSC)

says satisfaction of auto and part makers regarding the company's products has grown by 85% in the past 5 years and it is growing.

Mehdi Aqazini said that in the past five years, satisfaction of auto and part makers from products of MSC has grown by 85% and this trend continues.

He added that Mobarakeh Steel Company is the only producer of auto sheets in the country and in the past 15 years it has been one of the main suppliers of sheets for the national auto makers and it has been able to meet major part of their needs to the steel sheets.

He added that MSC has always improved quality of its products through interaction with big auto makers of the

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK



country and it produces its products with grades required by the auto makers and their new technologies for design.

Aqazili went on to say that by taking certain measures, he hopes the company would produce products with higher quality and supply the auto makers and other customers.

He added that the government wants to expand its cold rolling line as well as launching the second line of hot rolling and this will boost production in a way that it will meet the demands of almost 90% of auto maker companies to steel sheets.

Aqazili noted that the company wants to put an end to country's need for importing auto sheets especially with producing high quality products and it will be an effective step for creating jobs for the youths and saving the inflight of forex.

Capacity of Thermal Power Plants Rises Over 3,000 MW

TEHRAN (MNA) - The nominal capacity of Iran's thermal power plants has reached 72,027 megawatts (MW), registering an increase of 3,000 MW over the past 12 months, IRNA reported.

The government has managed to increase the capacity of the country's thermal power plants including steam, gas, and combined cycle power plants from 69,000 MW to over 72,027 since it took office in August 2021.

Combined cycle power plants account for the biggest share of the country's power generation capacity with a total capacity of 34,219 MW, followed by gas power plants with a capacity of 21,979 MW and steam power plants with a capacity equal to 15,829 MW.

Increasing the country's power generation capacity and preventing blackouts during peak consumption periods have been among the Energy Ministry's top priorities.

Back in August 2021, Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian announced that his ministry was planning to boost the country's power generation capacity by 35,000 MW over the next four years.

The mentioned figure would be achieved through the construction of thermal power plants with 15,000 MW of capacity, and renewable power plants with the capacity of 10,000 MW by the public and private sectors, as well as the construction of new power plants with 10,000 megawatts capacity by large industries.

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.

In this regard, the Energy Ministry has been following new programs to meet the country's power demand during peak periods and to prevent outages.

Khazar Sea Shipping Lines Ready To Carry Postal Parcels to Russia



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The CEO of Khazar Sea Shipping Lines Company says the company is ready to carry post parcels to Russia.

Speaking in a meeting with director general of Iran National Post Company's Communications Office and Manager of Ports and Maritime Authority of Guilan Province, Captain Davoud Abdari Tafti said that one of the important issues is the safe transit of postal parcels and insurance of goods, stipulating that fortunately Khazar Sea Shipping Lines can provide enough guarantee to the owners of the goods in both items. He added that the company has at least two voyages of vessels per week from Anzali Port to Astarakhan of Russia, adding that the company is able to have these voyages from entry point of Amirabad and Noshahr to Russia.

The captain reiterated that the most important issue in transportation is matter of time, adding that Khazar Sea Shipping Lines is able to manage the process of carrying the goods in favor of the owner of goods in terms of both factors of safety and time.

He added that the average time for carrying a parcel via sea between Iranian ports and Astarakhan Port of Russia is between five to seven days, emphasizing that the company is fully ready to carry the postal parcels to Russia.

Abdari Tafti noted that the company has taken into consideration a 20% discount for carrying tariff for imports and exports of postal parcels. He noted that to boost safety of the goods, the company earmarks special container for the postal parcels.

He stated that the company has some representative offices in different countries and it can help Iran National Post Company in carrying the parcels to Russia due to its experience regarding transportation, reiterating that one of the advantages of the sea transportation is its lower price comparing to other means of transportation.

Netherlands' Mosque Targeted by Arson Attack

EINDHOVEN (Dispatches) - A mosque in Veldhoven was targeted by an arson attack, near the Dutch city of Eindhoven early Saturday, according to an official statement.



The fire was brought under control in an hour, the fire department said in the statement.

The public news agency NOS reported that the police suspected arson and the building was severely damaged. The police have launched an investigation into the incident.

Turkey, Finland, Sweden to Hold 1st Trilateral Meeting

ANKARA (Dispatches) - The first meeting of the Permanent Joint Mechanism, established within the framework of the Tripartite Memorandum signed by Turkey, Finland and Sweden at the NATO summit in Madrid recently, will be held in Finland on Aug. 26, according to the Presidency's Directorate of Communications.

The Turkish delegation of the Permanent Joint Mechanism will be chaired by Presidential Spokesperson Ibrahim Kalin and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sedat Önal, while the representatives from the Justice Ministry, Foreign Ministry, Interior Ministry, National Defense Ministry and the National Intelligence Organization (MIT) are expected to take part.



Blasts, Fresh Ukraine Drone Attacks Rock Russian-Held Areas



KYIV (Dispatches) - Russia reported fresh Ukrainian drone attacks, a day after explosions erupted near military bases in Russian-held areas of Ukraine and Russia itself, apparent displays of Kyiv's growing ability to pummel Moscow's assets far from front lines.

The latest incidents followed huge blasts last week at an air base in Russian-annexed Crimea. In a new assessment, a Western official said that incident had rendered half of Russia's Black Sea naval aviation force useless in a stroke.

Russia's RIA and Tass news agencies, citing a local official in Crimea, said it appeared Russian anti-aircraft forces had been in action near the western Crimean port of Yevpatoriya on Friday night. Video posted by a Russian website showed what appeared to be a ground-to-air missile hitting a target. Reuters was unable immediately to confirm the video's veracity.

Tass cited a local official as saying Russian anti-aircraft forces knocked down six Ukrainian drones sent to attack the town of Nova Kakhovka, east of the city of Kherson. Ukraine says retaking Kherson is one of its main priorities. Separately, an official in Crimea said defences there had downed an unspecified number of drones over the city of Sevastopol.

"The Ukrainian armed forces treated the Russians to a magical evening," said Seriy Khlan, a member of Kherson's regional council disbanded by Russian occupation forces.

The night before, multiple explosions had been reported in Crimea - which Moscow seized in 2014 - including near Sevastopol, headquarters of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, as well as at Kerch near a huge bridge to Russia.

Inside Russia, two villages had been evacuated after explosions at an ammunition dump in Belgorod province, more than 100 km (60 miles) from territory controlled by Ukrainian forces.

Kyiv has been withholding official comment on incidents in Crimea or inside Russia while hinting that it is behind them using long-range weapons or sabotage.

A Western official indicated on Friday that at least some of the incidents were Ukrainian attacks, saying Kyiv was consistently achieving "kinetic effects" deep behind Russia's lines.

Huge explosions on Aug. 9 at Russia's Saky air base on the Crimean coast had put more than half of the Black Sea Fleet's combat jets out of use, the official said, in what would be one of the costliest attacks of the war.

Russia has denied aircraft were damaged in what it called an accident, although satellite pictures showed at least eight burnt-out warplanes and several huge craters.

Moscow dismissed the head of the Black Sea Fleet this week.

Ukraine hopes its apparent new-found ability to hit Russian targets behind the front line can turn the tide in the conflict, disrupting supply lines Moscow needs to support its occupation.

A senior U.S. defense official said on Friday that U.S. President Joe Biden's administration was preparing another security assistance package for Ukraine valued at \$775 million and containing surveillance drones and for the first time mine-resistant vehicles.

UN Fails to Reach Agreement to Extend Taliban Travel Ban Waiver

KABUL (Dispatches) - A United Nations waiver allowing 13 Afghan Taliban officials to travel abroad expired on Friday, as the Security Council failed to reach an agreement on whether to extend the travel exemptions.

China and Russia have called for an extension, while the United States and Western nations have sought a reduced list of Taliban officials allowed to travel to protest against the Taliban's rollback of women's rights and failure to form an inclusive government as it promised.

Under a 2011 UN Security Council resolution, 135 Taliban officials are subject to sanctions that include asset freezes and travel bans. But 13 of them were granted exemptions from the travel ban to allow them to meet officials from other countries abroad for peace talks. In June, the 15-member UN Security Council's Afghanistan Sanctions Committee removed two Taliban education ministers from the exemption list over the regime's curtailment of women's rights.

At the same time, they renewed the exemption for the others until August 19, plus a further month if no member objected.

If no member of the council objects to the travel ban by Monday afternoon, it will come into force for three months.

The US on Thursday proposed reimposing the travel ban on seven of the 13 Taliban officials and keeping the exemption for six others, but limiting their travel only to Qatar, where US-Taliban talks have taken place, council diplomats said.

Reporting from the UN headquarters in New York, Al Jazeera's Kristen Saloomey said that China, backed by Russia, has argued that the travel ban exemptions are "as necessary as ever".

Russia and China made a rival proposal that all 13 Taliban officials be granted travel exemptions for 90 days, but only to go to Russia, China, Qatar and "regional countries," the diplomats said.

Russia and China objected to the US proposal, the diplomats said, and the United Kingdom, France and Ireland opposed the Russia-China proposal, insisting that the exemption cannot continue for all 13 officials because of the Taliban's lack of progress on meeting its commitments on women, forming an inclusive government and other issues.



UK Railway Staff Stage Latest in a Series of Strikes

LONDON (Dispatches) - Railway staff in Britain on Saturday staged the latest in a series of strikes, the second in three days, as decades-high inflation hit salaries and prompted walkouts across various industries.

The stoppage by tens of thousands of workers disrupted weekend leisure travel with only around one in five trains set to run and some areas having no services.

It comes during a summer of industrial action across Britain, with staff in various sectors pushing for pay rises and better working conditions.

"We cannot tolerate being bullied or hoodwinked into accepting a raw deal for our members," said Mick Lynch, general secretary of the Rail, Maritime and Transport union (RMT), which is among those striking.

"The government need to stop their interference in these disputes so the employers can come to a negotiated settlement with us."

He warned that further walkouts were likely unless a compromise could be reached over pay rises and working terms and conditions.

However, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said the unions' "co-ordinated approach" showed they were "hell-bent on causing as much misery as possible".

Saturday's stoppage, set to hit football and cricket fans headed to matches as well as festival-goers, tourists and holidaymakers, will spill over into Sunday morning.

It follows a similar walkout Thursday, and a strike across London's transport system on Friday.

Official data Wednesday showed UK inflation at a 40-year-high above 10 percent, as soaring food and energy prices hurt millions.

The Bank of England has forecast inflation to top 13 percent this year, tipping the British economy into a deep and long recession.

The rail strikes have divided opinion, with some voicing frustration but others supporting the workers.

"I've got all the sympathy in the world for them," recruitment consultant Greg Ellwood, 26, told AFP this week at an unusually quiet Euston station in London.

Finnish PM Takes Drugs Test After Party Video Causes Stir

HELSINKI (Dispatches) - Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin said she had taken a drugs test following the publication of video footage this week that showed her partying with friends, and vowed she had never used illegal drugs.

Marin, 36, also said her ability to perform her official duties had remained unimpaired on the Saturday night in question and that she would have left the party had she been required to work.

Video clips of Marin partying with well-known Finnish influencers and artists began circulating in social media this week and they were soon published by several media outlets in Finland and abroad.

"In recent days, there have been quite grave public accusations that I was in a space where drugs were used, or that I myself used drugs," Marin told a news conference.

"I consider these accusations to be very serious and, though I consider the demand for a drug test unjust, for my own legal protection and to clear up any doubts, I have taken a drug test today, the results of which will come in about a week."

Marin, who became the world's youngest serving government leader in December 2019, had faced calls



from members of her governing coalition as well as from the opposition to take a drug test after the videos emerged.

Social Democrat leader Marin said she had never taken drugs and that she had not seen anyone doing so at the party she attended.

While many have praised Marin for combining her demanding job with an active private life, others have questioned her decision to allow herself to be filmed even when promised that the videos would not be made public.

At a time when Europe has been unsettled by Russia's war in Ukraine, Marin has also faced criticism that her partying could interfere with her ability to quickly carry out her duties if a sudden crisis hit Finland.

"If there were to be a crisis situation, I would know about it before midnight on a Saturday evening," she told reporters, adding that the Finnish armed forces were well equipped to anticipate any military crisis that might affect the country.

Finland, which shares a long land border with Russia, has applied along with neighbouring Sweden to join NATO following the war in Ukraine.

At Least 12 Killed in Somalia Hotel Siege, Hostages Held

MOGADISHU (Dispatches) - At least 12 people have been killed in Somalia's capital Mogadishu after al Qaeda-linked militants attacked a hotel, seizing hostages that authorities were battling to free nearly 20 hours later, an intelligence officer said.

The attackers blasted their way into the Hayat Hotel on Friday evening with two car bombs before opening fire. Somalia's al Shabaab insurgents have claimed responsibility.

"So far we have confirmed 12 people, mostly civilians, died," Mohammed, an intelligence officer who only gave one name, told Reuters.

The gunmen were holding an unknown number of hostages on the second floor of the facility, Mohammed said, preventing authorities from using heavy weapons.

They had also bombed out the stairs to make it harder to access certain floors, he said.

The detonations sent huge plumes of smoke over the busy junction on Friday night, and the sound of gunfire still crackled across the capital by 0700 GMT on Saturday.

Russian Crops, Fertilizer Must Move Unimpeded



ISTANBUL (Dispatches) - Russian fertilizers and agricultural products must be able reach world markets "unimpeded" or a global food crisis could strike as early as next year, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said Saturday.

"It is important that all governments and the private sector cooperate to bring them to market," he said from the Joint Coordination Center (JCC). The JCC oversees the implementation of the Ukrainian grain export agreement signed in July by Kyiv and Moscow with the UN and Turkey as guarantors.

The agreement also guarantees Russia the right to export its agricultural products and fertilisers despite Western sanctions.

"What we see here in Istanbul and in Odessa is only the more visible part of the solution. The other part of this package deal is the unimpeded access to the global markets of Russian food and fertilizer, which are not subject to sanctions," Guterres said, adding that despite this, Russian fertilizer and agricultural exports still faced "obstacles."

"Without fertilizer in 2022, there may not be enough food in 2023. Getting more food and fertiliser out of Ukraine and Russia is crucial to further calm commodity markets and lower prices for consumers," he said.

Guterres travelled this week to Ukraine, where he met with the presidents of Ukraine and Turkey, Volodymyr Zelensky and Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in the western city of Lviv Thursday.

He headed to the southern city of Odessa on Friday. Earlier Saturday, he visited the first aid ship chartered by the United Nations to transport Ukrainian grain on the southern shores of Istanbul in the Sea of Marmara.

The Brave Commander left the Ukrainian port of Pivdeny on Tuesday with 23,000 tonnes of wheat before crossing the Bosphorus on Wednesday evening.

The UN chief vowed Thursday that his organisation would try to "step up" grain exports from Ukraine before the onset of winter, which are crucial for food supplies in many African countries.

Under the agreement signed in July, 650,000 tons of Ukrainian grain and agricultural products have left the Ukrainian ports of Odessa, Chornomorsk and Pivdeny since August 1.

Greenland Treads Softly on Tourism as Icebergs Melt



ILULISSAT (Dispatches) - As tourists flock to Greenland to take in its breathtaking icebergs and natural beauty, authorities are mulling ways to control crowds to protect the fragile environment, already threatened by global warming.

"It's a dream destination," said Yves Gleyze, a veteran off-the-beaten-track French tourist in his 60s as he arrived at the airport in Ilulissat.

Visitors to the third-biggest town in the Danish autonomous territory are met by a rugged, austere landscape of grey rock and sparse vegetation.

But mesmerizing views of massive icebergs come into view after just a short drive.

Breaking off from the Ilulissat glacier in the neighboring fjord, the majestic blocks of ice drift slowly by in Disko Bay, the occasional whale making an appearance.

The postcard views attracted 50,000 tourists in 2021, more than 10 times the town's population.

More than half make only a short pit stop during an Arctic cruise.

Numbers are expected to swell with the opening of an international airport in the next two years, a welcome boost to the island's revenues but also a challenge, given the delicate -- and melting -- ecosystem.

In the past 40 years, the Arctic has warmed nearly four times faster than the rest of the planet, according to a recent scientific study.

"We can see changes every day caused by climate change: the icebergs are getting smaller, the glacier is retreating," said mayor Palle Jeremiassen.

Thawing permafrost is also threatening the stability of some buildings and infrastructure.

With the immaculate landscape so coveted by tourists changing, officials are determined to protect it without turning away tourists.

"We want to control the arrival of tourist ships here," said Jeremiassen, noting the risks posed by the highly-polluting vessels.

In order to protect the environment and community, Ilulissat should only welcome "one ship max per day, max one thousand tourists per ship," he said.

Recently, three cruise ships arrived on the same day, spewing out 6,000 visitors.

Jeremiassen said the town's infrastructure is not designed to accommodate such numbers, nor is it able to ensure that tourists respect protected areas, notably in the fjord.

Nearby Iceland, where the tourism industry has been flourishing for two decades, is an example of how not to do things, he insisted.

"We don't want to be like Iceland. We don't want mass tourism. We want to control tourism here. That's the key we have to find."

Greenland has enjoyed self-rule since 2009 but hopes to gain full independence from Denmark one day. To do so means it would have to get by without subsidies from Copenhagen, which currently make up a third of its budget. It has yet to find a way to stand alone financially, and for now, its main natural resource is the sea.

In Ilulissat, one in three locals live off fishing, which accounts for most of Greenland's revenues.

But climate change is having a big impact.

"Back when I was young we had pack ice we could walk on," said Lars Noasen, the captain of a tourist boat as he navigated deftly between iceberg debris in Disko Bay.

"Now the pack ice is not so solid anymore. You can't use it for anything, you can't dogsled on the ice and fish like in the old days."

Migrants Share Lessons With U.S. to Improve Climate Resilience



LONDON (Dispatches) - When Benetick Kabua Maddison moved to the United States from the Marshall Islands aged six, it was partly due to the effects of global warming: flooding had damaged his low-lying Pacific island home, and his family wanted better opportunities abroad. Two decades later, having settled in Springdale in northwest Arkansas - a haven for Marshallese immigrants - Maddison is once more part of a community rocked by wild weather growing more severe as the planet heats up.

The city of about 87,000 people is dealing with extreme cold and heat, flash flooding, and the fallout from a rare, devastating tornado that swept through the area in March. "The community was not prepared when the tornado hit," the 27-year-old said, recalling families struggling to deal with the devastation of collapsed roofs and smashed car windows.

"Climate change is something that's not going to happen tomorrow, next week, next month - it's already here," Maddison told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in a video call. From California to New York, parts of the United States that are seeing an influx of climate migrants have started turning to the newly displaced for lessons on how to become resilient to more frequent disasters fueled by rising temperatures.

Maddison is executive director of the Marshallese Educational Initiative (MEI), a nonprofit seeking to improve emergency response and communication on climate-related issues, among other cultural awareness efforts. "Part of what we've done at MEI is to educate the community, especially young people, about climate change. It's already impacting our country, our islands," said Maddison.

Such lessons are being taught nationwide - including in Buffalo, New York, where Asian and African immigrants have brought vertical farming techniques that can better withstand high levels of heat and other climate-related impacts. "It's really our immigrants and refugees who are able to grow an incredible amount of food in a 10x10 plot," said Rahwa Ghirmatzion, executive director of PUSH Buffalo, a social justice advocacy group.

"They're able to harvest three to four times in a season, and do it using a lot of re-used materials - it's a Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), is among the groups working to make sure immigrant voices are civil war. While many cite political instability as the reason for leaving their countries of origin, Ghirmatzion said climate stresses like heat waves and drought - and ripple effects on food supplies and civil conflict - are another major factor.

Many of its workers are migrants from Honduras who fled after climate-change impacts such as worsening hurricanes and drought also hurt the local economy, said the group's founder Saket Soni, who hails from New Delhi. He said their efforts had even managed to shift attitudes among immigrant-skeptic residents in the American South.

It has led to "unlikely" bonds between Honduran migrants and people who may never have spoken to an immigrant before, or saw them as a threat or "unwelcome in the community", Soni added. Such organizations are operating against a backdrop of growing pressures exacerbating climate-related displacement that only stand to worsen in the future as global temperatures rise.

More than a billion people globally are at risk of being uprooted by 2050 due to natural disasters, which could fuel more migration to developed nations such as the United States, found a 2020 report from the Institute for Economics & Peace. The Climate Justice Collaborative, an initiative within the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), is among the groups working to make sure immigrant voices are at the forefront of preparing to smooth this kind of upheaval.



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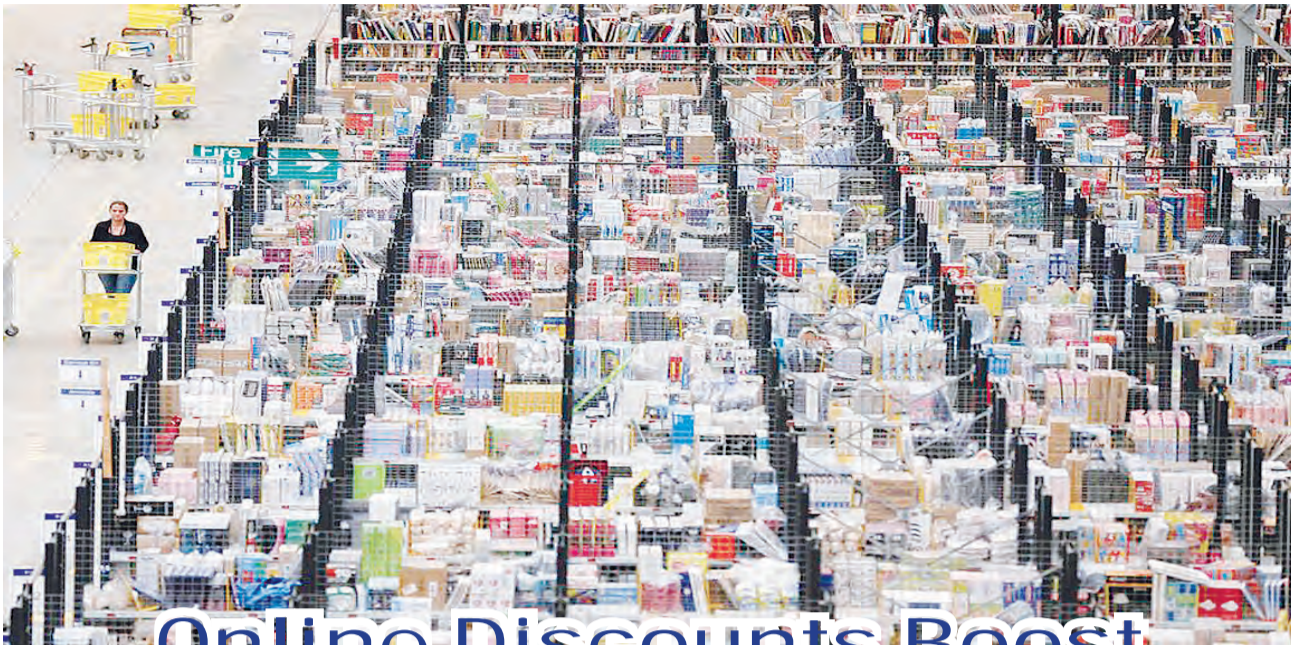
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German Dependence on China Growing "at Tremendous Pace"

BERLIN (Dispatches) - The German economy became more dependent on China in the first half of 2022, with direct investment and its trade deficit reaching new heights, despite political pressure on Berlin to pivot away from Beijing, according to research seen by Reuters.

At the same time, growth in German exports to China weakened significantly, the German Economic Institute (IW) said in its study, citing economists pointing to a trend towards more local production in the Chinese market. "The German economy is much more dependent on China than the other way round," said Juergen Matthes, who authored the study.



Online Discounts Boost Struggling UK Retailers in July

LONDON (Dispatches) - British shoppers spent more than expected last month after being enticed by online shopping deals, official figures showed on Friday, but sales volumes look set to resume their decline as households face the highest inflation in 40 years. Retail sales volumes, adjusted for inflation and the time of year, rose 0.3% on the month in July - their first increase in three months - in contrast to economists' expectations for a 0.2% drop in a Reuters poll.

Sales fell 1.2% over the three months to July - after sales in May and June were revised down from initial estimates - and were 3.4% lower than a year earlier, broadly in line with forecasts.

"Retailers told us that sales were boosted by a range of offers and promotions," ONS statistician Darren Morgan said.

Growth was overwhelmingly driven by a 4.8% surge in online and mail order volumes, the biggest monthly jump since December.

Amazon held its annual Prime Day promotion last month, which in previous years has coincided with an uptick in British retail sales, although the ONS said greater spending was seen at a range of online retailers, especially for household goods.

Other retailers had a poor month, with food volumes up just 0.1% after a boost in June from celebrations to mark Queen Elizabeth's Jubilee, while clothing sales fell 1.2%.

Motorists bought 0.9% less fuel, which the ONS attributed to people driving less during exceptionally hot weather.

The longer-term trend for sales was downward, the ONS said, and the Bank of England has warned high inflation is likely to tip Britain into recession later this year.

"With the squeeze on shoppers' spending power from high inflation intensifying and consumer sentiment low, the outlook for retailers still looks downbeat," said Martin Beck, chief economic adviser to EY ITEM Club.

Consumer price inflation jumped to an annual rate of 10.1% in July, its highest since 1982, from 9.4% in June, driven by an increase in food prices on top of previous sharp rises in household energy bills.

A GfK consumer survey showed households were "exasperated" by the surging cost of living, and their sentiment was the weakest since the series began in 1974.

Regulated household energy bills have doubled over the past year, and will increase again in October. Industry analysts forecast average annual bills will exceed 4,000 pounds (\$4,768) by January, up from about 1,000 pounds a year ago.

Supermarkets have reported shoppers switching to cheaper products, and frozen food chain Iceland this week said it would give interest-free loans of up to 100 pounds to its poorest customers.

France Favors Gas Terminals Over New Pipeline to Tackle Crisis

PARIS (Dispatches) - A third gas pipeline between Spain and France would cost at least 3 billion euros (\$3 billion) and take years to complete, making it a less attractive option to address Europe's supply worries than new terminals to receive fuel by boat, France's energy transition ministry said.

The European Union is bracing for any further fall in gas flows from Russia, which had been the 27-nation bloc's biggest supplier before it invaded its neighbor Ukraine in February and trade was disrupted.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said last week that building a pipeline from Portugal through Spain and France to the central European states that are more reliant on Russian gas would "massively relieve the supply situation".

Spain hosts Europe's largest fleet of terminals that can receive liquefied natural gas (LNG) from countries such as the United States and Qatar, but has limited capacity to take that on to other countries.

The French ministry said in a statement that new LNG terminals, which can be made to float, in Northern and Eastern Europe, particularly Germany, would be a quicker and cheaper option than a new pipeline.

Discussions around new infrastructure have included reviving a project to build a pipeline across the Pyrenees that was partially constructed before being shelved in 2019.

Regulators on both sides of the border decided at the time the project did not meet market needs. It met local opposition in the Rhone Valley and from environmental associations, the French ministry said, adding:

"Such a project would take many years to become operational ... and would therefore not respond to the current crisis."



Spanish officials have recently talked in more concrete terms about the project, stipulating that the European Union would have to pay. Gas grid operator Enagas has said the whole thing could be finished in 2-1/2 years at a cost of 600 million-700 million euros.

Broader aims to slash planet-warming carbon emissions must also be taken into account, the French ministry said, underlining the use of hydrogen, which can be produced with renewable electricity, is in its infancy.

Enagas and other European operators are working on preparing the continent's infrastructure to carry hydrogen.

China Set to Lower Lending Benchmarks to Revive Wobbly Economy

SHANGHAI (Dispatches) - China is widely expected to lower its benchmark lending rates on Monday, a Reuters survey showed, with a vast majority of participants predicting a deeper cut to the mortgage reference to lift the ailing property sector and the overall economy.

The loan prime rate (LPR), which banks normally charge their best clients, is set by 18 designated commercial banks who submit proposed rates to the People's Bank of China (PBOC).

Twenty-five out of 30 respondents in the Reuters snap poll predicted a 10-basis-point reduction to the one-year LPR.

All 30 participants expected a cut to the five-year tenor, with 27, or 90% of them, forecasting a reduction larger than 10 bps. Among them, 15 traders and analysts predicted a 15 bps cut, 10 forecast a 20 bps cut, and the remaining two tipped a 25 bps reduction.

Most new and outstanding loans in China are based on the one-year LPR, which now stands at 3.70%, after a reduction in January. The five-year rate, which was last lowered in May, influences the pricing of home mortgages and is now at 4.45%.

The market consensus of LPR cuts this month comes as the PBOC earlier this week unexpectedly lowered two key interest rates for the second time this year, to try to revive credit demand in the COVID-hit economy.

"We think this may translate to more transmission of easing into the real economy, via potential LPR cuts next week," said Peiqian Liu, chief China economist at NatWest, as the LPR is now loosely pegged to the central bank's medium-term lending facility rate.



Record Jump in German Producer Prices Adds to Gloomy Outlook

BERLIN (Dispatches) - German producer prices jumped at the fastest pace on record in July, underscoring the gloomy outlook for Europe's largest economy, which is stuck in a stranglehold of soaring costs and weakening growth due to the Ukraine war.

Producer prices -- a leading indicator for inflation -- surged 37.2% on the year, the biggest rise since records began in 1949, the federal statistics office said on Friday. The month-on-month rise, 5.3%, was also the highest on record.

"The outlook for the further development (of the economy) is currently noticeably gloomy," the finance ministry said in its August monthly report, published on Friday, adding that it was marked by "a high degree of uncertainty".

The record increases in producer prices were primarily driven by skyrocketing energy prices, which as a whole were up 105% compared with the same month last year, the office said.

The German economy stagnated in the second quarter, with the war in Ukraine, soaring energy prices, the COVID-19 pandemic and supply disruptions bringing it to the edge of a downturn.

"The significantly lower gas supplies from Russia, the persistently high price increases for energy and, increasingly, other goods, as well as the longer-than-expected supply chain disruptions, also in connection with China's zero-COVID policy, are weighing heavily on the economy's development," the finance ministry said.

Feeding into already high energy costs, the German government will impose levies on gas consumers from Oct. 1 that will add several hundred euros to the average family's annual energy bill. To cushion the blow, sales taxes on gas are set to be reduced to 7% from 19% while the levies are in place.

Bank Indonesia to Wait One More Month to Pull Rates Lever

BENGALURU (Dispatches) - Bank Indonesia (BI) is expected to leave its policy rate unchanged at record lows, a small majority of economists estimate in a Reuters poll. BI is one of a few major Asian central banks that have not lifted interest rates from pandemic-era levels despite many policymakers around the world raising them to battle high inflation. In an Aug. 12-19 poll, 16 of 27 economists, or nearly 60%, said it would keep its benchmark seven-day

reverse repurchase rate unchanged at 3.50% at its Aug. 23 meeting.

Eleven economists expect the central bank to raise rates by 25 basis points to 3.75%.

While growth in Southeast Asia's largest economy has stayed strong there are signs of price pressures heating up.

Calls for a rate hike gathered pace after last quarter's growth showed the economy had outperformed expectations. However, Dody Budi Waluyo, the central bank's deputy governor told Reuters BI would only raise rates when it sees a persistent rise in core inflation.

While headline inflation rose to a seven-year high of 4.94% in July, core inflation was 2.86% and within the BI's 2% to 4% target range.

"The main reason for BI to hold rates is due to benign core inflation, reflecting that demand recovery is not yet robust enough for a rate hike cycle. BI will wait until core inflation heats up," said Irman Faiz, economist at Bank Danamon Indonesia.

"On top of that, IDR is quite resilient."

Among 13 of the 16 economists who said the central bank would keep policy rates unchanged at the upcoming meeting and provide long-term forecasts, 10 said it would move in September. The remaining three forecast it would wait to raise rates in the fourth quarter. Several economists have warned about capital outflow pressures if Indonesia keeps rates on hold as other countries raise rates, adding further pressure on the rupiah which is down about 4% this year.

The poll found economists expect further tightening ahead. The rate was seen reaching 4.25% by end-2022, with eight of 22 forecasting rates to go even higher. Among the smaller sample of respondents who had a view until end-2023, 10 of 15 saw rates at 4.75% or higher, including six who forecast borrowing costs to reach 5.00% or higher - where they were before the pandemic.

Pakistan PM Encourages Turkish Businesspeople to Invest in Country



ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed optimism that the country's trade with Turkey will increase after the signing of the Preferential Trade Agreement last week.

Speaking to a delegation of Turkish businesspeople at Prime Minister's House in Islamabad, Shehbaz said the two nations have friendly relations and that both sides are eager to enhance cooperation in the fields of trade, investment, energy, and communication.

"The Preferential Trade Agreement has been signed between Turkey and Pakistan recently, which has created new avenues for goods, services and investment," the prime minister told the visiting team, according to a statement issued by his office.

"After this agreement, the volume of joint trade between Turkey and Pakistan will further increase," he said.

PM Shehbaz also mentioned his June visit to Ankara, when he observed that Turkish businesspeople were keen to make investments in Pakistan.

When the delegation expressed interest in investing in the energy sector, the premier assured them that his administration would provide them with all necessary facilities.

The two countries on Friday signed the "Trade in Goods Agreement" aimed at increasing bilateral trade to \$5 billion.

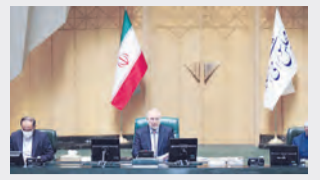
Under the terms of the agreement, Turkey will provide concessions to Pakistan on 261 tariff lines, including immediate zero rating on 123 items.

In turn, Islamabad will grant Ankara rate discounts on 130 tariff lines.

No Power Can Prevent Iran's Deterrence Power Increase

TEHRAN (IP) – Majlis Speaker stresses that Iran's deterrence and defense capability is based on ideology so that no power can prevent its advancement.

Speaking on Sunday on the occasion of 'National Defense Day,' Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf stated: "The achievements of the country's defense industry, is a symbol of the failure of the sanctions of the enemies of Iran, and indicates that by trusting the country's young experts, we can overcome problems."



More Japanese Firms Raise Wages to Combat Labor Shortage

TOKYO (Dispatches) - More large Japanese companies are now raising wages to attract workers and cope with chronic staff shortages, a monthly Reuters poll showed, a tentative sign Japan Inc. may be slowly addressing pay that has been flat for decades.

Still, the corporate survey found that higher wages aren't yet the go-to tactic for companies, with digitalization seen as the most popular among the multiple measures firms say they are using to address the labor crunch.

Japanese companies have typically avoided boosting wages because decades of deflation made it difficult to pass on higher costs to consumers. That might now be changing, as the double whammy of higher commodities prices and a weaker yen drive up living costs, and highlight the strain on workers. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has also called on companies to hike wages.

"Overall we are facing labor shortages and we are struggling to lure part-timers at stores in particular. We are responding by raising wages but there's a limit," the manager of a wholesaler wrote in the survey, on condition of anonymity.

The poll of 495 big non-financial firms, taken Aug. 2-12, highlighted what appeared to be a growing willingness by companies to increase wages. The hiking of wages or starting salaries was picked by 44% of respondents as one of the multiple tactics they were adopting.

That compared to just 25% of companies that said in a 2017 survey that they would increase salaries.

A full 59% picked going digital and other measures to save manpower as one of their tactics.

"The tide is changing as labor shortages have prompted more and more companies to raise wages albeit gradually," said Koya Miyamae, a senior economist at SMBC Nikko Securities.

"Now is just the beginning, as the population increasingly ages and dwindles, the momentum to hike wages will gather steam," he said.

A majority of companies, 54%, said they faced a labor crunch with the shortage most pronounced among non-manufacturers, 59% of which said they were squeezed for staffing.

"We have not been able to do anything" to secure workers, said another manager at a wholesaler.

Companies also called for a better working environment, including year-round hiring and delaying retirement to encourage the elderly to work until their later years.

The dwindling pool of workers has been a concern for years in the world's No. 3 economy and has served as a cautionary tale for other advanced economies including in Europe. Policymakers, meanwhile, have stopped short of allowing widespread immigration.



A total of 19% of firms said they were securing foreign workers, compared to 13% in the 2017 survey.

Separately, three-fourths of companies said they wanted Kishida's government to deploy another round of big stimulus to help the economy cope with rising living costs.

A total of 44% of firms said they wanted to see fresh fiscal stimulus, the most popular choice. Only one in five said they wanted to see further monetary stimulus, highlighting the dwindling support for the Bank of Japan's massive easing program.

The survey results came as gross domestic product (GDP) to June saw a third straight quarter of expansion, but analysts say the resurgence of the coronavirus and a slowdown in the U.S. and Chinese economies cloud the outlook.

In the survey, a vast majority of Japanese firms saw the virus's resurgence posing a downside risk to the economy in the latter half of this fiscal year to March 2023.

The poll, conducted for Reuters by Nikkei Research, canvassed 495 large non-financial Japanese firms, half of which replied during the Aug. 2-12 period. Managers usually reply on the condition of anonymity, allowing them to express opinions more freely.

Zionists Too Weak...

FROM PAGE 1

Addressing a meeting with IRGC commanders and officials, Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri underscored the importance of security in Iran and the neighboring countries, warning against allowing Israel and its Western allies to gain a foothold in the region.



It seems the Zionist regime's tactic of sabotage inside Iran has failed and it is now trying to besiege Tehran through normalizing its ties and strengthening its foothold around Iran and recently it has tried to boost its cooperation with Turkey.

But the Zionists should know this fact that Iran has never bowed down and will never do it against any bullying country and it will give due response to any atrocities no matter it comes from Israel, the U.S., EU or other regional or neighboring countries.

Tehran has always called for peace and security in the region and has reiterated that the root of all instabilities and conflicts in the region is the Zionists and the Western states, and it has reiterated that the country will do anything to defend its sovereignty and security.

So the Zionists are recommended to pack their bag from the region and return to the occupied lands for their illegal existence as their existence is being numbered and soon Palestinians will bring them down and get back their lands which have been occupied by the Zionists.

The world is gradually waking up and in the near future the Zionists and their supporters will face the heat of global awakening which will harden their dirty existence which is based on bloodshed, sowing the seed of rift among nations and planning plots in the countries.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is fully ready for any proper action regarding the Zionists' plots and its assistance to resistance front nations will continue till the moment the Zionists are brought to their knees.

Iran Economy...

FROM PAGE 1

The full text of the summary follows:

Despite a more accommodative fiscal policy in 2021-22, higher oil and tax revenues have improved the fiscal deficit-to-GDP ratio. In 2021-22, the government's general budget resources (expenditures plus acquisition of financial assets) grew by 78% within the range of the two scenarios envisioned in the budget. The growth in expenditures was driven by an increase in public sector wages, adjustments to pension payments to compensate for the loss of purchasing power due to inflation, and rising import costs. On the revenue side, planned oil revenues are reported to have been fully realized in 2021-22 due to higher oil prices and oil export volumes in the second half of the year.

Despite some challenges, efforts toward domestic revenue mobilization and expanding the tax base helped improve non-oil revenues. Tax revenues met their planned budget target, in part aided by the impact of inflation on the nominal growth of the tax base. As a result, the fiscal deficit is estimated to have moderated to 5.3% of GDP in 2021-22 from 6.3% of GDP in 2020-21.

Consumer price inflation accelerated due to a combination of supply-push and demand-pull factors, adding to pressures on the welfare of lower-income households. In 2021-22, Iran marked its third consecutive year of annual inflation of above 35%, driven by rapid growth in monetary aggregates, inflationary expectations, and rising global commodity prices. The headline and core inflation climbed to 40.2% and 36.7% in 2021-22, respectively, with headline inflation registering the highest rate in a decade. The surge in food prices following the war in Ukraine added to inflationary pressures and increased the fiscal burden of subsidized food imports. In response to the growing food import bill, the authorities ended the import subsidies for some essential goods, increased the guaranteed purchase price for domestically produced wheat, and raised the administered price of certain food items to reduce smuggling.

To mitigate the impact on consumers, these measures were combined with the introduction of additional cash transfers and announced plans for the deployment of electronic coupons for the purchase of essential food items. These measures led to monthly inflation increasing to 12.2% in June 2022 month-on-month (MOM) — a record high for monthly inflation. Food prices increased by 25% MOM, which was felt most by lower income deciles and in rural areas.

Iran to Develop...

FROM PAGE 1

Iran has mobilized its domestic resources to develop oilfields that are shared with neighboring countries as restrictions imposed on the country's petroleum sector because of American sanctions have dissuaded foreign firms from investing in major oil and gas projects. The Iranian Oil Ministry announced in March that it will start drilling at a disputed gas field that is shared with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait after the two Arab countries said they had reached an agreement to build out the field.

Britain Faces Humanitarian Crisis As Energy Costs Soar



LONDON (dispatches) - Britain faces a "humanitarian crisis" this winter when the difficult choices forced upon low-income households by soaring energy bills could cause serious physical and mental illness, a healthcare lobby group said on Friday.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has resisted calls to provide more support to households struggling with higher bills, insisting his government will leave major fiscal decisions to the next prime minister who takes office in early September.

"The country is facing a humanitarian crisis," said Matthew Taylor, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, which represents organizations across the healthcare sector.

"Many people could face the awful choice between skipping meals to heat their homes and having to live in cold, damp and very unpleasant conditions," Taylor said in a statement.

The situation could cause outbreaks of respiratory conditions, mental illness, worsen children's life chances and add to pressure on the already stretched state-run National Health Service (NHS), he added.

A spokesperson at Britain's health department said the government was already helping households through a 37-billion-pound (\$44 billion) cost-of-living support package announced in May and was also working to increase NHS capacity.

Britain's average annual household energy bills — covering both gas and electricity — look set to double again to more than 4,000 pounds (\$4,766) by January, exacerbating inflation which already topped 10% in July.

Facing growing pressure, Johnson's government said last week it was working on a cost-of-living support package for the next prime minister to consider, while the opposition Labour Party wants to recall parliament to freeze energy bills.

The NHS Confederation said it was concerned that "fuel poverty", in the absence of further government support, would cause more deaths associated with cold homes, which are currently estimated at around 10,000 a year.

Chinese City dims Lights in Heatwave Power Crunch

BEIJING (Dispatches) - A provincial capital in southwest China has dimmed outdoor advertisements, subway lighting and building signs to save energy, official announcements said, as the area battles a power crunch triggered by record-high temperatures.

The mercury has soared beyond 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) in Sichuan province this week, fueling massive demand for air conditioning and drying up reservoirs in a region reliant on dams for most of its electricity.

Factories including a joint venture with Japanese car giant Toyota in provincial capital Chengdu have been forced to halt work, while millions in another city Dazhou grappled with rolling power cuts.

"Hot and muggy weather has caused the city's electricity supply for production and daily life to be pushed to its limit," Chengdu's urban management authorities said in a notice on social media Thursday.

Faced with a "most severe situation", the city -- home to over 20 million people -- ordered landscape illumination and outdoor advertising lights to be switched off in notices issued Tuesday, the statement said.

Building name signs will also be darkened.

And Chengdu metro said in a video on China's Twitter-like Weibo platform that it would also turn off advertisement lights and "optimize" the temperature in stations to save energy.

Photos circulating on Weibo showed dimmed lights on metro platforms, walkways and in malls, with commuters walking in partial darkness.

The searing heat is also drying up the critical Yangtze River, with water flow on its main trunk about 51 percent lower than the average over the last five years, state media outlet China News Service reported Thursday.

Sichuan's power woes could also have ripple effects on the wider Chinese economy -- the province is a key supplier of energy generated by hydropower, including to eastern industrial powerhouses like Jiangsu and Zhejiang.

Revival of JCPOA...

FROM PAGE 1

In January 2016, JCPOA was launched between Iran and the P5+1 group (US, Russia, China, UK, France, and Germany) in connection with Iran's nuclear program. In May 2018, the US announced its withdrawal from the deal and imposed sanctions on Iran in November of the same year.

To preserve the agreements reached as part of the JCPOA, the European signatories of the deal started in January 2019 that a financial mechanism for maintaining trade with Iran called INSTEX was formed.

On May 8, 2019, Iran announced that it had ceased

fulfilling its commitments regarding the sale of over 300 kilograms of uranium, as stated in the deal, basing its decision on the other signatories that have not fulfilled their obligations. On July 7, Iran announced that it will not be fulfilling its commitments regarding the enrichment of uranium at 3.67 percent and the reconstruction of the Arak Heavy Water Reactor Facility as stated in the deal.

Iran announced that it will enrich uranium using next-generation centrifuges and will not mix it with the enriched uranium residues as part of the third step of reducing commitments in JCPOA on Sept.5.

Indian Official...

FROM PAGE 1

Since India Ports Global Private Limited (IPGPL) assumed operations of Shahid Beheshti Port, it has handled over 4.8 million tons of bulk cargo.

The trans-shipment of goods were from varied countries including Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Germany, Oman, Romania, Russia, Thailand, UAE, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

With close cooperation between India's IGPL and Iranian stakeholders including Iran's Port and Maritime Organisation, Iranian Customs Administration and the Chabahar Free Zone Authority, Shahid Beheshti Port Authority & other stakeholders, the Port is likely to act as a catalyst to unlock the huge trade potential in the region.

The meeting was also attended by Sepahi, Provincial Deputy Governor and the Governor of Chabahar City, Ebrahimi, Interim CEO of Chabahar Free Trade Zone Organisation among other senior officials from Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Government of India, the Indian Embassy and the officials from Islamic Republic of Iran.

Sarbananda Sonowal is on a three days official tour to Iran and UAE where he is slated to visit Chabahar Port in Iran and Jebel Ali Port in UAE. The visit is aimed at strengthening the ties and maritime relationship between the two nations. The visit also intends to highlight the importance of Chabahar port as a gateway for Indian trade with Europe, Russia and CIS countries.

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ISSN 1024-6053
P.O. Box: 15875-8551
Address: No 13, Pajouhesh St.,
Golestan II St, Golestan St.Marzadaran
Blvd., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Printed by:Honar Sarzmin Sabz
Distributed by:
Cities of Iran Cultural and
Artistic Institute
Managing Director: Fereydoon Taherpour Asl

Warholm Retains European 400m Hurdles

MUNICH (Dispatches) - Norway's Karsten Warholm made up in part for the disappointment of his performance at the world championships by retaining his European 400m hurdles title in Munich.

Warholm, who set a sensational world record of 45.94sec when winning Olympic gold in Tokyo last year, has struggled with injury this season and came in seventh in last month's Eugene worlds.

Shaheen Shah Afridi out of Asia Cup, England T20Is

KARACHI (Dispatches) - Pakistan's frontline fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi has been ruled out of next week's Asia Cup and the following Twenty20 international series against England with a knee injury, doctors said.

The injury to the 22-year-old is a major blow to Pakistan's chances in the six-nation Asia Cup starting in the United Arab Emirates from August 27.

Shaheen's injury has already forced him to miss the second Test in Sri Lanka last month.

Medvedev, Tsitsipas Set Up Cincinnati Showdown

CINCINNATI (Dispatches) - World number one Daniil Medvedev and fourth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas defused big-serving American threats Taylor Fritz and John Isner to reach the semi-finals of the Cincinnati Open.

Medvedev, champion in Cincinnati in 2019, sharpened his game for his upcoming U.S. Open title defence with a 7-6 (1) 6-3 win over 11th seeded Fritz, while Tsitsipas could manage only a single break chance in a three set slugfest with Isner but it was enough to clinch a 7-6 (5) 5-7 6-3 victory.

Medvedev's win was powered by 18 aces while a misfiring Fritz, one of the game's big-hitters, had just three offset by three double-faults.

Isner, the biggest server in men's tennis with nearly 200 more aces than his nearest rival Nick Kyrgios, also had 18 aces but it was still not enough to put away his patient Greek opponent. While it looked a comfortable win for Medvedev it was anything but, with the Russian saving three set points in the opener before finally prevailing 7-1 in the tie-break.

From that point on Medvedev took charge, grabbing the only break of the match early in the second, and that would be all that was required to advance to the last four in Cincinnati for the second consecutive year.

"The first set he was on top of me a little bit," admitted Medvedev. "He had many more chances than I did on my serve, but I managed to stay in."

"There were some set points where I could have missed and no one would have talked about it, it would have been normal."

"But I managed to stay in the set and that helped me win the match"

Breaks were just as scarce in the Tsitsipas and Isner match.

After an opening set without a single break chance for either player, Tsitsipas grabbed the lead taking the tie-breaker 7-5. The first break opportunity would finally



come in the 11th game of the second set when Isner would need three chances to convert and take a 6-5 lead, then holding serve to send the contest to a decider.

Up 4-3 and with Isner serving, Tsitsipas would finally get his one and only break chance, and he made it count - punching the air in delight as he watched the American's return sail long for a 5-3 lead.

"I think the most important thing with him is to try and stay patient because there will be a lot of situations you cannot really control," said Tsitsipas, who next takes on Medvedev for a spot in Sunday's final.

"It all came to a very few points at the end... I was just able to hang in there and play one more ball back and not give him much to work with."

British number one Cameron Norrie held off third seed Carlos Alcaraz to claim a 7-6(4) 6-7(4) 6-4 win and book his place in the semi-finals, where he will face Borna Coric after the Croatian saw off Felix Auger Aliassime 6-4 6-4.

Norrie squandered a 4-1 lead in the second set before roaring back from 1-3 down in the decider to topple the 19-year-old Spaniard in just over three hours.



Tuchel Given One-Game Ban

LONDON (Dispatches) - Thomas Tuchel has been given a one-match suspension and fined £35,000 after the Chelsea manager was sent off following his furious clash with Tottenham boss Antonio Conte, the Football Association (FA) said.

Tuchel's touchline ban has been suspended temporarily, pending the full written reasons for the decision, allowing the German to take his place in the dugout for the clash at Leeds.

Conte has been fined £15,000 after both managers admitted improper conduct following a pair of angry exchanges during last Sunday's stormy 2-2 draw at Stamford Bridge.

Tuchel and Conte were booked after they first squared up to each other when the Italian celebrated Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg's equaliser close to the Chelsea technical area.

Then, after Harry Kane headed Tottenham's second equalizer deep into stoppage-time, Tuchel shook hands with Conte at the final whistle in such an aggressive way that it drew a fiery response from his counterpart.

The feuding bosses had to be separated by players and coaching staff, but were both sent off by referee Anthony Taylor.

Saka Will Sign New Arsenal Contract

LONDON (Dispatches) - Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta is "very confident" Bukayo Saka will commit his long-term future to the club by signing a new contract.

Saka has two years remaining on his current deal, but the England winger's emergence as a key figure in Arteta's side has convinced Arsenal to open talks over improved terms.

The 20-year-old finished as Arsenal's top scorer last season as he shrugged off the racist abuse he endured after missing a penalty in England's Euro 2020 final defeat against Italy.

"I am very confident that we as a club and Bukayo, his family, his agent, everybody, we are very much aligned in what we want to achieve. And now it is about putting it on a piece of paper," Arteta told reporters.

Saka has been instrumental in Arsenal making a flying start to the Premier League season with two successive wins.

With the prospect of Saka playing in the World Cup in Qatar this winter potentially adding to value, Arteta is keen for the star to put pen to paper as soon as possible.

"I would like that to get done. I don't want the player or anybody distracted while we are in the middle of the season," Arteta said ahead of Saturday's game against Bournemouth.

Vardy Extends Leicester Contract Until 2024

LEICESTER (Dispatches) - Leicester City striker Jamie Vardy has signed a one-year contract extension that will keep him with the Foxes until June 2024, the Premier League club said.

Vardy had been linked with a possible move to Manchester United.

The 35-year-old, who joined from non-league side Fleetwood Town in 2012, is third on Leicester's all-time goalscorer list with 164 strikes from 387 games in all competitions.

"I'm obviously over the moon. Once I heard it was something the Club was looking at, there was only one thing that was going to happen, and I was going to sign it," Vardy told the club website.

Ten Hag Calls for Unity Among United Fans



United have come under fire from fans after losing both their opening games to sit at the bottom of the league table and also failing to secure transfer targets in the close season.

"I can only say the owners want to win and the fans, we want them behind the club," Ten Hag told reporters.

"And I can understand sometimes but I am not that long in the club to see all the backgrounds. We have to fight together and be unified."

United, who won the last of their record 20 English league titles back in 2013, will be looking for their first top-flight points under Ten Hag when they host Liverpool on Monday.

LONDON (Dispatches) - Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag urged fans to stay unified ahead of Monday's Premier League clash with Liverpool as some supporters plan to protest against the club's American owners, the Glazer family, before the game.

They have been handed an early boost with forward Anthony Martial back in training after missing the last two games with a hamstring injury, though it remains to be seen if he will be involved in the match.

Ten Hag was asked about Cristiano Ronaldo's future at the club and the Dutch manager reiterated that the Portugal forward remains in his plans, amid intense speculation over the 37-year-old's future.

"I don't know why he's a particular focus after Saturday, it was the team performance and the whole team's attitude, including Ronaldo," Ten Hag said. "He's in our plans, that's what I can say."

Ten Hag said the team would stick to their game plan against Liverpool, who are 12th after getting a draw in both their games so far.

"I know the rivals, we are the rivals. We have to win every game, especially this game," he added.

"It's not different to motivate this team because my experience with them is they work really good on the training pitch."

Two Appointments at Asian Dodgeball Federation

IRAN NEWS SPORTS DESK

TEHRAN - In a ceremony held at National Olympic Academy, President of Asian Dodgeball Federation (ADF) Mr. Reza Khosh Sarvar announced two appointments in the ADF.

In two separate decrees, Mr. Khosh Sarvar announced the new appointments in the federation. According to the decrees, Mr. Alireza Najafi was appointed as the head of economic committee and Mr. Majid Talimi was appointed as the head of the public relations committee of the ADF.

Speaking among officials and sports champions, Mr. Khosh Sarvar said that dodgeball with having world federation is one of traditional Iranian games which has been common as a popular and vivacious game among all walks of life. He added that this sport has notable number of enthusiasts among different group ages and it has been welcomed as a family and low-cost sport among different walks of life.

Khosh Sarvar noted that of skills and capabilities of this sport one can point to skill in implementing transitional moves (throwing, receiving, passing, running and jumping), reinforcing cooperative spirit, precision, increasing lever of alertness and assistance, creating coordination among nervous system and muscles, creating coordination between eyes and other body organs during targeting, improving other physical readiness factors (resistance, power, speed, strength, agility, action and reaction, balance flexibility).

He went on to say that several Asian countries have submitted their bids to hold Asian Dodgeball Championship that soon the qualified host will be chosen soon.



Ferguson Lauds Giggs' Temperament At Assault Trial

LONDON (Dispatches) - Former Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson told a UK court Friday that ex-star Ryan Giggs had never lost his temper or shown violence during his more than two-decade tenure at the club.

Giving evidence at Giggs' trial for assaulting and coercively controlling an ex-girlfriend, Ferguson said the former player had consistently exhibited a "fantastic temperament".

He was "the best example we had at the club," Ferguson told Manchester Crown Court, where Giggs has denied physically assaulting former partner, PR agent Kate Greville, and her sister nearly two years ago.

Giggs also denies controlling Greville during their rocky years-long relationship.

Giggs, 48, says that injuries sustained by Greville were an accidental result of a three-way tussle with her and her sister over a mobile phone.

The former winger has admitted he "may have caught her and her sister", but has used his long playing career, in which he had an excellent disciplinary record to argue he was not violent.

Ferguson, 80, told the court he had known Giggs since the player had joined Manchester United as a youngster.

Ferguson said he had sought to protect the teenage player from media attention after he was compared to brilliant but wayward 1960s club legend George Best.

"When someone's saying you're the next George Best, it's a big issue. But the boy was great, no problems," Ferguson said.

"To have a career as long as he had in a difficult position, in terms of energy, he fulfilled everything we ever wished for."

